

# EPPING HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOL



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Revised 2010

This policy sets out the requirements for dealing with bullying behaviour at Epping Heights Public School. It includes specific strategies for identifying, reporting and dealing with bullying behaviours. The Anti-bullying Plan is a key part of the school's planning for student wellbeing and effective learning. It complements the school's Student Welfare and Discipline Policies.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

- Schools exist in a society where intimidation and harassment occur. Bullying must be taken seriously and is not acceptable in any form.
- Students have the right to expect that they will spend the school day free from the fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation.

## **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

- Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure.
- Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships. Bullying can involve all forms of harassment (including sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender), humiliation, domination and intimidation of others.

### **Bullying behaviour can be:**

- **verbal** eg name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical** eg hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social** eg ignoring excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** eg spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

## **A STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

- Students attend school to participate in quality education that will help them to become self directed, lifelong learners who can create a positive future for themselves and the wider community.
- Any inappropriate behaviour that gets in the way of teaching and learning at the school and interferes with the wellbeing of students cannot be accepted.
- Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to create a safe and happy environment, free from all forms of bullying.

### **Students can expect to:**

- know that their concerns will be responded to by school staff
- be provided with appropriate support (for both the subjects of and those responsible for the behaviour)

- take part in learning experiences that address key understandings and skills relating to positive relationships, safety, gender equity, discrimination, bullying and harassment. These experiences will be guided by the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education syllabuses and other Key Learning Areas.

**Students have a responsibility to:**

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- follow the school Anti-bullying Plan
- respond to incidents of bullying according to their school Anti-bullying Plan.

**Schools have a responsibility to:**

- develop an Anti-bullying Plan through consultation with parents, caregivers, students and the community, which clearly identifies both the behaviours that are unacceptable and the strategies for dealing with bullying in the classroom and playground
- inform students, parents, caregivers and the community about the School Discipline Code and Anti-bullying Plan
- provide students with strategies to respond positively to incidents of bullying behaviour, including responsibilities as bystanders or observers
- provide parents, caregivers and students with clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behaviour, and the consequences for inappropriate behaviour
- communicate to parents and caregivers that they have an important role to play in resolving incidents of bullying behaviour involving their children
- follow up complaints of bullying, harassment and intimidation.

**Teachers have a responsibility to:**

- respect and support students in all aspects of their learning
- model appropriate behaviour
- respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school Anti-bullying Plan.

**PROCEDURES AND STANDARDS**

All schools must have strategies in place to prevent and deal with bullying.

**Strategies to prevent bullying**

Strategies must be in place in all schools to effectively teach the skills and understandings that will lead to eliminating bullying behaviours.

These strategies must:

- be taught across Key Learning Areas
- be reinforced consistently through school practices that promote respectful relationships.

These strategies will:

- empower the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying and harassment
- contribute to the general health and wellbeing of all students.

### **Strategies to deal with bullying:**

- Schools must deal with bullying quickly and effectively.
- Strategies for dealing with bullying must be described clearly in the Anti-bullying Plan and implemented consistently by school staff.
- Strategies for dealing with bullying must be linked to the School Discipline Policy and encompass the range of options available to deal with unacceptable behaviours, including suspension and expulsion.
- In dealing with bullying behaviour, schools need to recognise the repeated and recurring nature of bullying and have mechanisms in place to identify patterns of repeated offending.
- Students, their parents and caregivers must be encouraged to be proactive in dealing with bullying, so that appropriate support can be provided to those students involved in any incident.

### **The Anti-bullying Plan must include specific strategies for:**

- reporting (by students, parents, caregivers and teachers)
- intervening (by students, parents, caregivers, teachers and other school staff)
- accessing help and support (by students, parents and caregivers)
- communicating Departmental appeal procedures (for students, parents and caregivers)
- professional learning (for teachers and other school staff).

## **RESPONSIBILITIES AND DELEGATIONS**

Principals are responsible for leading the development, implementation and evaluation of the Anti-bullying Plan and for ensuring that the Plan is readily accessible to all members of the school community.

## **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The Anti-bullying Plan must be reviewed on a regular basis, so that all members of the school community are aware of and remain committed to it. The Plan should reflect the current teaching and learning practices at the school. The review will provide opportunities for reflection and renewal.

Strategies to review the school Anti-bullying Plan include:

- gathering and analysing all relevant information on the nature and extent of bullying and harassment, including data that highlights patterns and trends, such as suspension data
- evaluating the extent to which the school's Anti-bullying Plan has been effective in addressing bullying and harassment and promoting a safe and secure environment.

Schools should develop and implement a revised Plan, if necessary, following a review. Schools should continue to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Plan on an ongoing basis.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – The Anti-Bullying Plan

Appendix 2 – Brochure for students and parents

Appendix 3 – Resources to support the Anti-Bullying Plan

Appendix 4 – Dealing with Harrassment