Anti-bullying Plan
Hallidays Point Public School
Bullying:
Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy (2011)

The NSW Department of Education and Communities rejects all forms of bullying. No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environments of the Department.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.

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.

The term “bullying” has a specific meaning. The school’s Anti-bullying Plan sets out the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying. The school has a range of policies and practices, including welfare and discipline policies that apply to student behaviour generally.

Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility of all departmental staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community.

School staff have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- have knowledge of school and departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school’s Anti-bullying Plan.

In addition, teachers have a responsibility to:

- provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- follow the school Anti-bullying Plan
- behave as responsible bystanders
- report incidents of bullying according to their school Anti-bullying Plan.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour
- be aware of the school Anti-bullying Plan and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Plan
- report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to:

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- support the school’s Anti-bullying Plan through words and actions
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.
Our School Anti-Bullying Plan

This plan outlines the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying in our school and reflects the Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy of the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities.

This Anti Bullying Plan has been constructed with consultation from parents, students and staff.

This plan was introduced to the school P&C prior to development. Information and procedures placed in this plan have been ratified by the P&C and staff. Parents have been given the opportunity to have input into its construction. Ideas and concerns have been raised with key personnel prior to the completion of this document. Student data from the school Bully Audit and Planning Room data have been used to inform the writing process.

On completion, this document will be introduced to staff and its implications for class management will be discussed. Parents will access this document through the school web site and during Kindergarten enrolment. Parents of new students will be provided with a copy of the Anti-Bullying Plan on enrolment of their child. Any changes made to this document would be made using the same or similar consultative process.

Statement of purpose

It is the purpose of this document to empower students, parents and staff to make a stand against the anti-social behaviours that bullying displays.

Bullying is unacceptable in our school, in any form, as this school believes that everyone has the right to safety and respect. It is also our belief that bullying is a destructive social behaviour for all involved, including the bully. The school will use all powers available to it to diminish bullying behaviours and support those who become involved, whether they are victim, bully or bystander.

Protection

Bullying occurs most often in the last years of Primary and the first two years of secondary school. The school community understands that any behaviour that makes a student feel unsafe, over a period of time, can be defined as bullying. Victims of bullying may find it very difficult to report the incidents and many may not be reported. Bullying may impact on different aspects of a student’s life and may include but not be restricted to:

- Physical bullying: being hit, tripped, kicked, pinched.
- Verbal bullying: being called names, teased, put down.
- Psychological bullying: being threatened, stalked, gestured.
- Social bullying: being ignored, having rumours spread about you, excluding someone.
- Sexual bullying: unwanted touching or brushing against someone, picking on someone because of their sexual orientation.
- Cyber bullying: insulting someone in chat rooms, sending cruel or threatening emails/text messages or using the web, chat rooms or mobile phones to spread rumours or information about someone.

Each incident of bullying behaviour, once investigated and proven, needs to be dealt with in consideration of the students involved. Support, disciplinary action and management of the behaviour need to be coordinated for the most effective result for all parties.

Each member of a community plays a role in the identification and treatment of bullying behaviours. Notification is a key element in dealing with incidents of bullying. Proven incidents will require actions to be taken for each member involved in the incident.
The victim will need supportive mechanisms put in place to counter the effects of the bullying and restore their self worth.

The bully will be referred to the planning room for disciplinary action and support mechanisms which will improve their ability to operate successfully in society.

Where bystanders are involved, their actions and the subsequent impact of the incident will be assessed. From this point, supportive mechanisms and/or coaching will be implemented in order to improve social competencies.

**Maintaining a Positive Climate**

The school continually rewards positive social and academic behaviour through the use of ‘Win Bin’ tickets, positive reinforcement, stickers, stamps and an award system that includes; yellow awards, achievement awards, merit certificates and levels of medallions.

This is supplemented with social competency lessons in positive thinking and cooperation, taught through our ‘Friendly Schools and Families’ program. Students are also involved in a Peer Support program during one term and cover personal development topics as part of the curriculum.

**Prevention**

Our ‘Friendly Schools and Families’ program has an “Understanding Bullying” unit which is taught in term 1 of each year. The age appropriate program covers:

*Identifying bullying behaviours.
*The roles that each person plays in bullying.
*Connections to feelings.
*How to respond to bullying.

In every aspect of school life, the principles of fair play and respect are reinforced. Respect is one of our school core values and fair play is an important component in our class rules (Aussie Fair Rules). The Aussie Fair rules are displayed and used, as a uniform approach, in every classroom.

**Early Intervention**

Student welfare is part of our weekly staff meeting and provides opportunity for staff to discuss concerns about student behaviours. Once identified, appropriate actions can be taken to cater for the needs of particular students. These may vary according to the student and their needs. This may include, monitoring during breaks, employing a teacher’s aid to organize and promote social activity, personal targets, rewards and planning room intervention. As part of the enrolment process parents must notify of suspensions and/or aggressive behaviour. Before enrolment the school contacts the student’s previous school to identify any social or discipline issues. Where necessary special behaviour plans are developed before enrolment is completed. This allows the school to plan effective transition into our school situation.

**Response**

Friendly Schools, Friendly Families – Bullying unit is taught annually in term one. Another unit encouraging effective social skills is taught in term three. The community is kept informed of issues around bullying and school procedure designed to minimise bullying.

Students are encouraged to try to resolve social issues by themselves, using the skills taught. However, if they are unable to resolve the issue or the behaviour is severe, as in the case of violence, then students report the incident to the duty teacher. The duty teacher conducts an investigation into the incident and may try to resolve the incident immediately. If the incident is severe and requires further investigation or involves repeated non-compliance with school rules then the matter is referred to the Planning Room by the duty teacher. The duty teacher records details of the incident on a behaviour card which is then sent to the Planning Room duty teacher. Details of the incident are recorded on a school spreadsheet and the parents/guardians are notified by letter. This ensures that data is available to inform staff during planning and that the
parents/guardians have the opportunity to be a part of the corrective process.

**Reporting Incidents**

Bullying incidents may be reported from parents, students or staff to the principal or Planning Room duty teacher. An investigation needs to follow the report so that allegations can be proven. A decision is then made by the principal and/or welfare personnel as to what actions are appropriate. Actions may include, suspension, removal from the playground, restricted use of the playground, referral to the Planning Room with its procedures, or a combination of the above.

All reported incidents are dealt with as soon as possible. Most incidents should see a response within 48 hours but occasionally this may not happen due to the absence of key persons, resulting in the inability of a fair process to proceed.

**Interventions for Bullying Behaviours**

It is impossible to cover every conceivable scenario of bullying but the following can act as a guide to the types of procedures and interventions that may take place.

- **Violence with intent to harm a less able student** – Suspension
  - Return from Suspension meeting to outline:
    - expectations of student behaviour;
    - consequences to be faced;
    - agreements reached to enable the return to school of the student;
    - one week in the planning room and off the playground;
    - two weeks on a monitoring book which tracks the students behaviour in class and on their return to the playground; and
    - use of the monitoring book to inform parents/guardians of their child’s behaviours.

- **Verbal bullying** –
  - Referral to the planning room which would include:
    - writing an account of the behaviour, accepting responsibility for the behaviour, recognizing the school rule that has been broken and discussing alternative behaviours to be used in the future;
    - a letter sent home notifying the parents/guardians;
    - an apology may form part of the restitution process;
    - a mediated conference with all parties may also be necessary; and
    - placement on Level 1 of the discipline system.

The support strategies used for students who have been effected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying may include but not be limited to:

- support and monitoring by the class teacher;
- discussions with staff around the impact of bullying on the lives of all those involved;
- building a support friendship group;
- employing external personnel to support student socialization;
- referral to the (LST) Learn Support Team;
- receiving counselling from the school counsellor and the application of consistent consequences for inappropriate behaviours.

As part of the school’s response to bullying incidents parents are kept informed if their child is directly involved. For offenders this may begin with notification by phone or letter while the parents of victims would be contacted by phone to confirm that action is being taken. The frequency of that contact would depend on the incident and the action required to remedy the problem.
Reporting Incidents to Police

While Hallidays Point Primary School experiences very little bullying the police service is always seen as a supportive mechanism which could be called upon to intervene in extreme cases of ongoing assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment. Forster Police Station would be contacted directly by phone should the need arise.

The Procedures for contacting the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services.

1. Report is documented;
2. Investigating officer investigates the circumstances gaining information from victim, bystanders and perpetrator;
3. Investigation officer identifies any pattern of bullying behaviour emerging as evidenced in school data records and involves the principal;
4. Initial contact made with parent or caregiver of victim and perpetrator. This may provide additional information;
5. Through ongoing communication a negotiated plan for addressing the behaviour will be developed. This may include an individual program to provide additional strategies for the victim and the perpetrator to address their behaviour, strategies to empower bystanders involved and interagency intervention; and
6. Depending on the severity of the incident the following may be implemented:
   i. The principal must suspend immediately and consistently any student who is physically violent, resulting in injury, or whose violent behaviour seriously interferes with the safety and well-being of others. The matter must also be reported to the School Safety and Response Unit where advice will be provided on managing and reporting the incident.
   ii. The principal must suspend immediately and consistently any student who is in possession of a firearm, prohibited weapon,
Interagency Intervention

The Child Wellbeing Unit for the Department of Education and Communities can support schools to identify risk of 'significant harm' to their students in many areas including bullying. The unit works with the Child Wellbeing Units for Health, Police, and Human Services (which includes Juvenile Justice, Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Housing and Aboriginal Affairs).

As mandatory reporters, teachers will contact the unit with any concerns about harm to their students. It provides advice on plans of action and interagency contacts.

By following the Mandatory Reporting Guide, school staff is able to access support and ensure procedural fairness.

Monitoring and reporting on the Effectiveness of the Plan

The school conducts welfare meetings, welfare sessions at staff meetings and an annual student survey of bully behaviour. Information from this survey is used to identify:
- the types of behaviours that take place;
- the location of bullying incidents;
- students displaying bullying behaviours; and
- the frequency of such events.

The bully survey is followed up with discussions with staff and students identified in the survey.

Reported bullying behaviours are monitored through the Planning Room which is a component of our Discipline Policy. Responses to bullying behaviours would be aimed at ensuring the safe participation of students, staff and parents. These responses may include but not be restricted to:
* ensuring staff are aware of incidents;
* provide staff with training in dealing with bullying;
* altering playground duty procedures;
* restricting or removing students from play areas;
* mediation of students involved;
* placing students on in-school suspension;
* securing behaviour support personnel;
* contacting local police;
* enforcing the Enclosed Lands Act;
* counselling; and
* referring to outside agencies.

This Anti-bullying Plan will be included in the school Prospectus which will be distributed during Kinder enrolment and placed on the school website.

Other information will be provided as necessary through the school newsletter and special notes.

The school conducts a bullying survey annually. Students give information regarding their experiences with bullying behaviour. Students who are nominated in the survey, more than three times, as displaying bullying behaviours are followed up by a member of the Welfare Committee. Information from this survey and the Planning Room is used to guide reviews of the Anti-bullying Plan in order to maintain an effective approach.

Parents are surveyed annually regarding many aspects of school life, including student welfare. The plan will be evaluated annually by staff in light of this information.

Data / information can be placed in the School Newsletter, shared with the P&C and staff.

Teaching staff will review the Anti-bullying Plan annually on completion of the student survey. Any suggested alterations to the existing plan would be ratified by the P&C as representation of the parent body. Updated copies of the plan would be distributed, as with the previous plan, through the school prospectus and the school website.
Additional Information
Forster Police Youth Liaison Officer – Manning Great Lakes Command
Brad Barry -Taree: 6552 03499, Forster : 65551299
Student Services – Lower North Coast Department Of Education and Communities, Forster - 6591 7600
Department Of Community Services - 133627
Child Well Being Unit - 92337616
School Safety and Response Unit -1300 363 778
Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800
Budd:e E-security Package
www.staysmartonline.gov.au

Principal’s comment
At Hallidays Point Public School we understand that bullying is an emotive issue. We also understand that while ever bullying exists in the wider community, it will be an issue for our school.

We do feel that the school is both proactive and reactive in its approach to minimising bullying. We have programs in place to educate students in bullying prevention strategies. When bullying does occur, we react promptly to address the issue and the effect on those involved. This document is the result of cooperation between the staff, students and parents. Ongoing cooperation and communication will ensure success in minimising the incidence of bullying at our school.

Gerry Hobbs – School Principal
George Ingram – Assistant Principal (Welfare)
Bopha Brabant – President of the Parents and Citizens Association

School contact information
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Discipline Procedures **Overview** – Hallidays Point Public School (Feb 2012)

Incident  

**NB:** The Planning Room doesn’t operate during wet weather lunches.  

Investigation  

Student seated OR Accompany Teacher  

Teacher Restriction  

Planning Room Issue  

Record incident on a playground incident card  

Incident card sent to Planning room duty teacher  

Further investigation - verify facts.  

Incidents reported to the Admin. Staff meeting.  

Student completes an incident plan + discussion.  

Letter sent home. Student remains in the planning room until letter returned.  

Second offense** within a week = second letter home and extended period in the planning room.  

**Third offense** within a week = third letter home. Parent interview. This **may** include a formal suspension warning. Further incidents may require suspension. Suspension is **NOT** the punishment, it gives the school time to get advice and/or reassess their strategies for the behaviours being displayed.  

Letter returned. Student resumes normal play unless multiple offences.