



Hinton Public School



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"Every little one counts"

THIS DOCUMENT REPLACES THE ANTI-BULLYING PLAN 2011

RATIONALE

At Hinton Public School we value respect and show tolerance of others in a safe and supportive environment. We foster positive relationships through strong welfare programs. As part of our school's Welfare and Discipline Policy, our Anti-Bullying Plan aims to deal effectively with and prevent incidences of bullying.

OUR DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurting, threatening, or intimidating another person repeatedly **over an extended period of time**. Bullying is a misuse of power by an individual group towards one or more persons. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies. What is bullying for one person may not be the same for another.

Bullying takes many forms. Our school considers the following behaviours as examples of bullying:

Physical

- Pushing / shoving
- Hitting / punching / pinching
- Kicking
- Throwing objects
- Taking others' belongings / stealing from others
- Damaging others' belongings
- Spitting at others
- Intimidation – making someone do something they don't want to do

Verbal

- Threatening
- Name calling / teasing
- Swearing at others
- Ridiculing (making fun of) another person because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics, disability or cultural background

Indirect (including cyber-bullying)

- Spreading rumours
- Excluding others
- Writing notes
- SMS messages / emails / social network (e.g. Facebook, twitter)
- Inappropriate use of camera phones

WHAT BULLYING IS NOT

There are many negative behaviours which, although being distressing to those involved, are not classified as bullying. These instances often may require teacher intervention and management. The following situations are often confused with bullying:

Dobbing: is trying to get someone into trouble and not trying to solve the problem yourself.

Mutual conflict: In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students, but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict may evolve into a bullying situation at some point if it is not resolved; for example, when one person becomes targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

Social rejection or dislike: Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, poor behaviour, random acts of aggression or intimidation: Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, this does not constitute being bullied. This does not, however, lessen the seriousness of the incident or the subsequent consequences.

OUTCOMES OF THE POLICY

- To raise the school community's awareness of bullying
- To outline the responsibilities of students, parents and staff in reducing bullying
- To empower students with strategies for resolving conflict in a non threatening way
- To promote a culture of positive behaviour and citizenship
- As a staff and school community we have a responsibility to take a positive and consistent actions to deal effectively with bullying.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with

- DEC Suspension and Expulsion of School Students Policy and Procedures
- HPS Excursion Policy
- HPS Student Welfare and Discipline Policy
- *Method of Shared Concern* Document (attached)

RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff's Responsibilities

- To model appropriate behaviour (words and actions) at all times;
- To respect and support students;
- To monitor and track incidences of bullying and take appropriate action;
- To implement school programs and departmental policies which promote positive relationships that incorporate strategies to deal with bullying (*Method of Shared Concern*);
- To respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to this policy and
- To communicate bullying incidences with parents when needed.

Parents' Responsibilities

- To support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy;
- To take an active role in their child's school life and watch for signs that their child may be being bullied;
- To encourage their child to adopt learnt strategies to deal with bullying;
- To instruct their child to 'tell' if they are bullied;
- To inform the school if any bullying is suspected and
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Students' Responsibilities

- To show consideration, respect and support others. Students also have a responsibility to behave appropriately, respecting individual differences;
- To behave as responsible citizens in an ever increasing cyber world;
- To 'tell' if they are being bullied or if they see someone being bullied – both at school and on the way to and from school;
- To attempt to use learnt strategies to deal with bullying incidents and
- By understanding and following the Anti-Bullying School Plan.

ANTI- BULLYING PROGRAMS

Each year, all classes K-6 will discuss bullying and strategies to cope with bullying behaviours. This program may incorporate the **"You Can Do It" Program Achieve** where students will learn about building Resilience, Confidence, Persistence, Organisation and Getting Along skills. Other programs can be developed from the **Positive Behaviour for Learning Program (PBL)**. Students will cover a range of topics in the term, exploring different themes including:

What is bullying, Power in relationships, Types of Bullying, Strategies to cope with bullying, Bystanding and Changing Behaviours to eliminate bullying in the school.

Students may also be exposed to anti-bullying strategies through the Student Representative Council's **Peer Support Program**, using the DEC resource *Taking Action, Keeping Safe* and participating in special events such as *National Day of Action against Bullying* and visiting performances.

A whole school education about bullying, as part of the PD/H/PE Scope and Sequence, will be taught to assist students with the meaning of bullying and the methods children can use to cope with bullying.

Other strategies may include

- encouraging students to employ strategies taught during Personal Development Programs;

- creating positive classroom environments;
- consistently rewarding positive behaviour and effort (PBL);
- delivering lessons via the Child Protection, Drug Education, Life Education and Peer Support Programs and others;
- developing positive student leadership programs through the SRC such as the *Taking Action, Keeping Safe* Program.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

All classes will have regular class meetings to discuss issues as they arise. Students will be encouraged to report all bullying as it occurs. Students will be able to report incidents to the staff or complete a bullying notification form (See Appendix 3). All bullying will be placed on a bullying database (Sentral) and reviewed by the school executive regularly. Students who appear to be bullying on a regular basis will be referred to the school Learning Support Team and may face disciplinary action, depending on context, frequency and severity.

CONSEQUENCES

When a bullying incident is reported or observed, the school may:

1. Have discussions with the students involved;
2. Take appropriate action e.g. detention, time-out in the classroom, recording in the bullying section on Sentral;
3. Report to parents of major bullying incidences and
4. Possible suspension

Repeated bullying will be looked at on an individual basis to determine appropriate action/response.

DISTRIBUTION

This policy will be distributed to families and community members at P&C meetings and through the school newsletter. Relevant components of this policy will be discussed with students of Hinton Public School at the beginning of each term, commencing Term 1 2014 (implementation).

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES

DEC Bullying Interventions – Information for school executive, Learning Support Teams or Student Welfare Teams.

Bullying. No way! website www.bullyingnoway.com.au/ideasbox/things-work/info-manage-2-1.shtml

Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy.

Principals: Reporting Incidents Involving Assaults, Threats, Intimidation and Harassment.

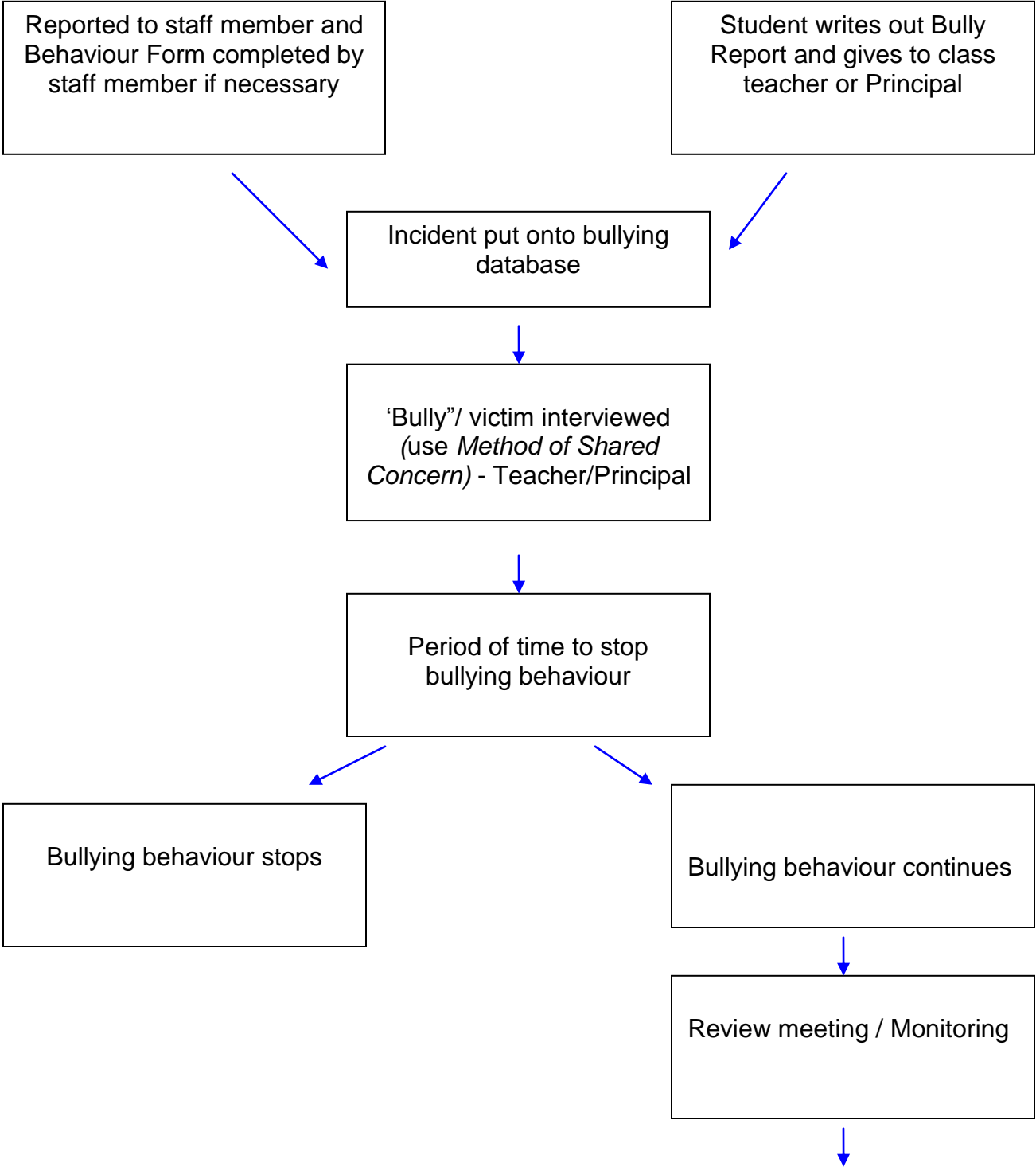
You Can Do It – Program Achieve.

Method of Shared Concern (attached)

EVALUATION

Incidents of bullying will be monitored on an ongoing basis.
Student Welfare Programs will be evaluated annually.
This plan will be reviewed in 2015.

BULLYING INCIDENT FLOWCHART



Appendix 1

Strategies for Students on How to Deal with Bullying Behaviours

- Use an “I” message. Express your feelings in an assertive way. E.g. ‘I want you to stop’ or ‘Please don’t do that. I don’t like it’
- Look at the person. Try to speak in a strong voice. Say something like: ‘You might think that, but I don’t’ or ‘Why are you doing this?’
- Stand up against bullying. If you see, or hear, anyone being bullied, act now. Use messages such as ‘I don’t like what’s happening here, please stop.’
- Stay in sight of peers and adults
- Try to stay calm. Practise keeping calm and walking away
- Try to show you are not upset. Practise this
- Walk away quietly, without looking back
- Go to a safe place e.g. with other children, near a teacher
- Talk to someone who can help you. Tell them what has happened, what you have said to end the bullying, how you feel and what they can do to help. Remember, this is not dobbling!
- Use humour if appropriate.

**Most people have been bullied at some time,
so do not be ashamed to
SPEAK UP.
IT IS OK TO TELL!**

Appendix 2:

Bullying: Signs to watch out for

Unless we are observant and watch for the signs of bullying, we may never know that our children are involved.

Signs that your child may be being bullied

- Dislikes school
- Lowered school performance
- Gets into trouble more often at school
- Wants to be taken to school even though it is close
- Takes the long way home or walking instead of catching the bus
- Possessions are damaged or missing
- Seems unhappy or depressed – cries easily and for no reason
- Unable to explain bruises or scratches
- Complains of stomach aches to avoid school
- Asks for, or steals extra money
- Doesn't seem to have any friends
- Has bad dreams
- Sleeps badly
- Wets the bed
- Gets angry with brothers or sisters
- Sudden mood swings and outbursts of temper
- Uses put-down language when speaking about others

Signs that your child may be bullying others

- Aggressive behaviour – both inside and outside the home (teasing, threatening, hurting others)
- Difficult to manage
- Oversensitive – feels that everyone is out to get him/her
- Unhappiness
- Loses temper often
- Quietness or depression
- School work is suffering
- Disturbing stories about the child – from other students, their friends or other adults

- Sensing that other parents (whose children have contact with your child) are avoiding you, or hinting at things you don't know

Appendix 3:



Student Notification: Possible Bullying Behaviour

BULLYING. NO WAY!

Student Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

Incident/Behaviour Causing Concern: _____

What would you like to see happen: _____

Student signature: _____ Class teacher Signature: _____



Student Notification: Possible Bullying Behaviour

BULLYING. NO WAY!

Student Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

Incident/Behaviour Causing Concern: _____

What would you like to see happen: _____

Student signature: _____ Class teacher Signature: _____

The Method of Shared Concern

Anatol Pikas, a Swedish psychologist, was the originator of a method of intervention that he called the Shared Concern Method in the 1980s. Since then, it has been used in many parts of the world with some modifications.

Step 1: Individuals involved in a bully/victim problem are identified. Reliable information is needed in relation to (i) the person or persons being bullied by another individual or group and (ii) the person or persons engaged in carrying out the bullying. Ideally this information is obtained through observations and/or by receiving reports, rather than through someone talking directly with the person being targeted.

Sometimes, however, the child or parent may report the incident to a staff member. In these cases, the child may be at risk from the bullies and care needs to be taken to ensure their protection. The risk is reduced when it is made clear to all concerned that no punishment is intended.

Step 2: Students are identified as likely to have taken part in the bullying, or to have supported it in some way. These students are the 'suspected bullies', that is, students who may or may not have engaged in the bullying. At no stage are steps taken to establish blame and to convict anyone.

Step 3: Each student is seen in turn, starting (if known) with the likely ringleader. Under some circumstances, other students aware of the problem, bystanders, may be included, as they may sometimes play an important role in influencing the bullying.

The interview must take place in private and without interruptions. The meeting begins with the interviewer inviting the student to sit in a chair opposite (without an intervening desk) and waiting for eye contact before the interaction begins. At these meetings with individual students, it is important not to make any accusations.

The practitioner explains their role – to help children feel safe at school, then points out that it has been noticed that a particular student has been having a hard time at school with other students.

The practitioner clearly describes what is known about the concerns of this student, for example, being upset, isolated or staying away from school. Once the concerns of the practitioner have been sincerely conveyed, the student is asked to say what they have noticed or know about that student's situation. (Typically the suspected bully acknowledges the person's distress, but is *not* asked what part he or she might have played).

As soon as the student has acknowledged some awareness (not guilt or remorse) relating to what has been happening, they are asked directly what can be done to help improve matters. The practitioner is not trying to 'get to the bottom of the matter' and lay blame, but to produce a constructive response that will help to change the situation.

Commonly, suggestions are made about what can be done by the student. But if they are not, the practitioner may make suggestions, ones that are not difficult to carry out. Strong approval is expressed for any constructive proposals; then another meeting (at an agreed time) is arranged to see how things have gone. Importantly, at this meeting no threats are made nor any warnings.

given. The remaining students in the group are seen, again individually, and the procedure repeated.

Step 4: Once the 'suspected bullies' have been seen, the targeted person (known as the 'target') is interviewed.

The practitioner begins by explaining their role and asks how things are going, expressing concern, sympathy and support over what has been happening. It is important that a trusting relationship is developed. However, questions need to be asked to find out whether the target has been doing something to bring on the bullying – that is, by acting as a provocative victim. Importantly, no blame should be directed at the student. This line of questioning must be done sensitively. Often the victim is wholly innocent. The practitioner then discloses that they have actually talked with the 'suspected bullies' individually and there has been an undertaking to do some things to improve the situation. The target is asked to look out for signs of change. Arrangements are made to meet again to monitor progress.

Step 5: Several days later, follow-up meetings are held with individual bullies (as previously arranged). The aim here is to ascertain whether the 'suspected bullies' have carried out actions, as promised, to improve the situation.

Step 6: When the practitioner is satisfied that progress is being made, a meeting can be convened with the whole group of suspected bullies.

Here, the group are acknowledged for having taken steps to improve the situation and each member is asked to describe what they have done to try to improve the situation. This commonly has the effect of promoting further positive social interactions. It is possible to elicit further possible suggestions and to prepare the group for the final or summit meeting to which the target is to be invited.

The practitioner should bear in mind that sometimes the group members may believe that the target has been, in some ways, provocative or unreasonable, and concessions or adjustments may be required. Discussion is needed to consider any reservations that the group or members of the group may have about how to relate to the target. Importantly, the practitioner may help them formulate a plan or proposal to put to the target. Each member of the group is asked to indicate what they are prepared to say at the final meeting. Such preparation of the group for this meeting is essential.

Step 7: At a subsequent brief meeting with the target, they can normally be encouraged to join the group for a final meeting, with assurances that progress can be made. However, if the target is not willing to come along, their feelings and decision must be respected.

At the meeting with the 'suspected bullies' and the target present, the students are encouraged to express their thoughts about how they wish to proceed to resolve the issue. Typically, the 'suspected bullies' will have experienced a sense of genuine concern about the target's plight and have taken steps to improve relations, the meeting serves the purpose of confirming that the problem has been successfully addressed. The practitioner is, however, expected to discuss with the students what they might do if there is a relapse – and emphasise the need to keep channels of communication open.

There are occasions when each side harbours some resentment and is not ready to call a closure to the problem. This can occur when the target has behaved provocatively and the 'suspected bullies' want to see a change in the target's behaviour. In such circumstances the 'suspected bullies' are given the opportunity to put forward their agreed proposal, as formulated with the practitioner's assistance at the previous meeting. (Some preparation for this meeting may also be carried out previously with the targeted person).

At this stage, the practitioner plays the role of the mediator. Typically, adjustments take place on each side. The aim here is to help the students reach an acceptable agreement about how each will behave towards the other in future. This may take the form of a written contract which everyone signs.

Method of Shared Concern

1. Individual “chats.”

- Reported main offender first – targeted student last.
- Private, non-blaming, non-investigative, non-punitive.

2. Follow up “chat” one week later.

3. Group Meeting/s.

Individual “Chats”

STAGE 1

“I’ve heard that ‘X’ is having a hard time at school. Can you tell me about it?”

- Let them talk
- Avoid closed questions.
- Don’t question if they complain about the targeted student.

STAGE 2

“It sounds like ‘X’ is having a bad time.”

- As soon as they agree, move on to stage 3.
- If they blame the targeted student point out that they are still having a bad time.
- If they are unable to agree say “It seems like you aren’t ready to talk about it, I will see you about it at a suggested later time.” (not in a disciplinary manner)

STAGE 3

Acknowledge their agreement and elicit solutions

“Good on you – I was wondering what you could do to help improve ‘X’s situation?”

- Accept suggestions, don’t bargain or question.

STAGE 4

Create expectation that there will be follow up to see what has been happening.

“That sounds great –I will come and see you next week to see how you are going with that?”

- Re-state their ideas with enthusiasm not in a disciplinary manner