



# HUNTER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

## 4.3 ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Prepared by	Malcolm East (Principal)
Date authorised	1/2/21
Authorised by	HCS School Board
Monitored by	Malcolm East (Principal)
Suggested review date	2024
Reference documents / legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">NSW Dept. of Ed. Bullying of Students – Prevention and Response Policy</a> (2020)</li><li>• <a href="#">Australian Fair Work Commission Anti-bullying benchbook</a></li><li>• 4.1 HCS Staff Code of Conduct</li><li>• 4.3 HCS Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure</li><li>• 4.4 HCS Discipline Policy, Guidelines and Procedures</li><li>• 4.5 HCS Parental Code of Conduct</li></ul>
Publicly posted	Yes – a summary is required by NESA to be publicly available on school website
Policy Framework Category	4.3 Establishing a Safe & Supportive Environment

Version	Date	Amended by	Notes
1.1	12/2/21	Malcolm East	Previous policy outdated
1.2			
1.3			

## 4.3 HCS ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### 1. Introduction and Purpose

The vision of Hunter Christian School is to stand with families and the Church in equipping and empowering children to attain their full potential in Christ, within a loving, serving, caring school community.

As a Christian School, we follow the guidelines set out in the Bible;

*"Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, brawling and slander along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other."* Ephesians 4:31

*"Live in harmony with one another be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble, do not repay evil for evil or insult with insult, but with blessing because to this you were called so that you would inherit a blessing".* 1 Peter 3:8-9

As a school community we value actions that;

- Honour Christ
- Learn without limits
- Unite in community
- Serve selflessly &
- Live courageously

Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. Bullying is harmful and may be a criminal offence if there is physical violence or threats, made either in person or online. Hunter Christian School does not tolerate bullying in any form. It is a shared responsibility of all staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the school community to prevent and respond to bullying behaviour in the school environment.

The purpose of this policy is to minimize bullying at all levels of our community, and to have none of it wherever possible. The School actively promotes positive social interactions in the curriculum. The Anti-bullying Policy augments the Codes of Conduct for staff, students and parents in addition to the Discipline and Grievance policies and procedures.

### 2. Scope of who the policy applies to

This policy applies in all cases of bullying behaviour, including cyber bullying, that occurs in the school; and off school premises, and outside of school hours, where those involved can be clearly identified as current members of the school community and school is the primary point of contact. As such, this policy applies to interactions between;

- School Staff
- Parents and Carers of students (in their interactions with staff)
- Students

### 3. Definitions of key concepts

3.1. **Bullying** (as defined by the NSW Department of Education): Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying has three main features:

- involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- is ongoing and repeated, and
- involves behaviours that can cause harm.

## 4.3 HCS ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, beliefs or practice of religion.

- 3.2. **Bullying behaviour:** Bullying behaviour can be:
  - **verbal**, e.g. repeated name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
  - **physical**, e.g. repeated hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
  - **social**, e.g. repeated ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
  - **psychological**, e.g. repeated spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.
- 3.3. **Cyber bullying:** Cyber bullying is causing hurt via modern technologies such as the internet and other forms of social media, and through the use of smart phones and other mobile devices.
- 3.4. **Workplace bullying:** Workplace bullying occurs when an individual or group of individuals repeatedly behaves unreasonably towards a worker or a group of workers at work, AND the behaviour creates a risk to health and safety. Reasonable management action conducted in a reasonable manner does not constitute workplace bullying.
- 3.5. **Harassment:** Harassment is on-going verbal or physical attacks or unwanted sexual advances directed to another person.
- 3.6. **Procedural fairness** is a basic right of all when dealing with authorities. Procedural fairness refers to what are sometimes described as the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision'. Specifically, the person against whom an allegation has been made has a right to:
  - know the allegations related to a specific matter and any other information which will be taken into account in considering the matter
  - know the process by which the matter will be considered
  - respond to the allegations
  - know how to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations
  - impartiality in an investigation and decision-making
  - an absence of bias by a decision-maker.
- 3.7. **What is not bullying** (as defined by the NSW Department of Education): Some behaviours, while not bullying, are conflicts that still need to be addressed and resolved. Examples include:
  - mutual arguments and disagreements
  - not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
  - one-off acts of meanness or spite
  - isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.
- 1.2. **Reasonable Managerial Action:** Legitimate management decisions or actions that are undertaken in a reasonable way and with respect and courtesy are not bullying. The following are examples of what may constitute management action:
  - performance appraisals
  - ongoing meetings to address underperformance
  - counselling or disciplining a worker for misconduct
  - modifying a worker's duties including by transferring or re-deploying the worker
  - investigating alleged misconduct
  - denying a worker a benefit in relation to their employment, or
  - refusing an employee permission to return to work due to a medical condition.

## 4.3 HCS ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### 4. Basic Principles to be followed

- 4.1. Positive behaviour and mutual respect are promoted through the school's values, school curriculum and codes of conduct, and as such provide a proactive anti-bullying strategy in the school community.
- 4.2. Reports of student bullying can be made to any staff member at a school. Staff should take all reports, allegations or observations of suspected bullying behaviour seriously, and;
  - Stop any altercations, violent or intimidating acts immediately.
  - Ensure safety of all students involved, and care for anyone injured or upset.
  - Inform the relevant staff member (the Head of Primary or Head of Secondary and/or their delegate), of all allegations or incidences of bullying as soon as practicable.
- 4.3. A teacher or school executive staff at the school will address the reported bullying in a timely manner in accordance with the most appropriate policy and associated procedure, such as;
  - Discipline Policy, Guidelines and Procedures
  - Staff Code of Conduct
  - Parent Code of Conduct
  - Grievance Policy and Procedures
- 4.4. Investigations into bullying allegations should be carried out in such a way as to minimise the risk of escalation.
  - Establish facts from relevant parties such as the victim, bully and bystanders.
  - Conduct interviews in a manner intended to reduce the risk of making matters worse for the alleged victim; nor allow the perpetrators to take some action in revenge.
  - Establish whether an alleged incident is isolated, or an ongoing pattern of behaviour (bullying)
- 4.5. Serious incidents involving violence, or threats of violence by any means, may be reported to the Commission for Children and Young People, as required by law; and to the Police, if deemed necessary by a member of Executive Staff (Principal, Associate Principal, Head of Primary, Head of Secondary) or their delegate.
- 4.6. The School may offer or recommend further support to those involved in bullying incidents; with a view to changing inappropriate attitudes and building resilience. Such support could include referral or access to;
  - School Chaplain, Counsellors or other staff involved in welfare and pastoral care
  - Employee Assistance Program
  - External support agencies and professionals
  - Support materials such as: <http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au/>
- 4.7. As per the Grievance Policy, if a student, staff member, parent or carer believes a matter is not being dealt with effectively, they can refer the matter to the school's principal (or delegate) for resolution.