CHELTENHAM GIRLS’ HIGH SCHOOL

ANTI- BULLYING PLAN

2015
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Cheltenham Girls’ High School aims to provide the best possible learning environment for all students and staff. Inappropriate behaviours that interfere with teaching and learning or adversely affect student well-being will not be tolerated.

We are an inclusive school. We respect each other and we do not tolerate any form of bullying, put downs or harassment. We have a ‘hands off’ policy. Students who experience bullying should know that they will be supported when they seek help. Students who engage in bullying will also be given help to stop their negative behaviours.

Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility of all school staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

- Bullying is intentional, repeated behaviour by individuals or groups that causes distress, fear, hurt or embarrassment.
- Bullying behaviour can be:
  - Verbal (name calling, teasing, put downs, threats, insults)
  - Physical (hitting, punching , kicking, scratching, tripping or spitting)
  - Social (ignoring, excluding, encouraging others to ignore someone, making inappropriate gestures)
  - Psychological (spreading rumours, hiding or damaging possessions, dirty looks, hurtful SMS or email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones)
  - Cyber-bullying (use of email, Internet, Face book, My Space or any other social media forum, SMS, MSN, mobile phone and camera phone or other electronic forms of harassment or stalking)
- 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 the victim, those engaging in bullying and on students who witness the bullying.

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT STUDENT WELL-BEING AND PREVENT BULLYING

All school staff have a role in the welfare of students and in promoting positive well-being for students and other staff.

Teachers will plan and prepare programs that meet syllabus requirements and the learning needs of our students. This will include differentiating the curriculum to cater for the gifted and talented student as well as the students with learning difficulties or special needs. Teachers will use the Quality Teaching Principles when programming and planning lessons to ensure that students are engaged and to maximise ‘student time on task’. Teachers will implement student task negotiation as required and will provide meaningful and encouraging feedback to all students. Teachers will ensure that the learning environment is conducive to teaching and learning by providing a positive atmosphere and treating students respectfully.
As teachers of welfare, all teachers will be observant of student well-being and use the procedures in place to address student welfare needs.

Students have a responsibility to be present in and on time to class. They should be actively engaged in their own learning and ask questions to clarify work when necessary. Students should treat all staff and other students with respect. Students are able to access many forms of assistance if they encounter learning, social or other difficulties.

Programs which are run to support the whole-school approach to student well-being:

- **Peer Support** – leadership training is carried out in Year 9 and Year 10 to provide support to Year 7 and Year 8 students through the Peer Support programs. ‘The Right Choice’ anti-bullying program is run through these Peer Support sessions.
- **Student Representative Council** (SRC) – the school has an active SRC who meet regularly and represent the interests and needs of students at CGHS. The SRC run many whole-school events that contribute to student well-being
- **Social Justice Group** (SJG) – a group of students from all year groups that take leadership roles in, and raise awareness of, matters of social justice, both within the school and in the wider community. The SJG is inclusive and open to all students.
- **Prefect Leadership** – has a role in the modeling of positive student behaviours as well as undertaking a supportive role for all students, especially younger students. The prefects run many whole school events that promote connectedness across the school.
- **Cloud 9** – a group of students from all year groups who take leadership roles to raise awareness of mental health issues and promote positive well-being.

**Merit System** – CGHS has a comprehensive merit system, which is outlined in the 2015 Welfare and Discipline Policy. The purpose of the Merit System is to recognise the effort and achievement of all students and to encourage those students who may experience a range of difficulties in their learning and welfare needs.

**Specific anti-bullying programs** can also used in Years 7 - 10 to raise awareness of bullying, empower bystanders and also to give students strategies to deal with bullying. These can include:

- ‘Verbal Combat’ - Brainstorm Productions
- Year 7 Friendship Day
- Head Space - Student Empowerment program
- Police Liaison Officers talks to Years 7 - 10 on cyber-bullying and safety issues

**The Anti-Bullying Plan** should be regularly publicised to parents/caregivers, staff and students through:

- year and whole school assemblies
- PD/H/PE lessons (Years 7-10) and the Cross Roads program (Year 11)
- ‘Feeling Safe at School' brochure given to all students at the beginning of each year
- students receiving and signing the Information and Communication Technology Policy
- articles in the Yallambee newsletter and P & C meetings
- the school website
As part of this dissemination, students and parents should know they can approach any of these people for help with any bullying issues:

- Year Advisers
- Head Teacher Welfare
- School Counselors
- Peer Support Leaders
- Prefects
- Principal or Deputy Principals
- Any Teacher

A box and report forms are available on the notice board in the lower quad for students to report incidents of bullying. These reports will be collected by the Head Teacher Welfare.

Reporting forms are also available from Year Advisers.

A periodical survey will be conducted with Years 7-10 to monitor the types and extent of bullying in the school.

**MANAGEMENT of INCIDENTS of BULLYING**

The school has a duty of care to take reasonable steps to manage bullying situations. Where an incident of bullying is reported by a victim or a witness the following procedures are recommended:

**By the Classroom Teacher, Head Teacher or Year Adviser**

- Interview the victim and obtain a written statement about the details.
- Interview any students who have witnessed the bullying and obtain a written statement from these students.
- Interview the student(s) engaging in bullying behaviour and restate school expectations and consequence of further bullying.
- Document the incident and the subsequent action taken on RISC.
- If a head teacher, year adviser or classroom teacher, having implemented the actions available to them (as listed below), consider the incident to be more serious or wide spread, they should refer the incident to the Deputy Principal and HT Welfare.

**Actions to address the bullying can include:**

- mediation with students directly involved (by Year Adviser, HT Welfare, DPs)
- restitution, such as community service within the school
- disciplinary consequences to prevent and deter the student from repeating their behaviour could include: detention, loss of privileges, suspension of internet privileges
- parents being informed
- weekly (then fortnightly) monitoring plan set up to check on the student(s)
- the School Counselor being involved, when appropriate, with counseling the victim and the bully.
Where the bullying is more serious or that appears to involve criminal behaviour (violence, threats, theft, cyber bullying, intimidation, inciting violence, hacking), or if the bullying continues, the following procedures are recommended:

**By the Deputy**

- The Deputy Principal(s) or nominee should investigate the matter
- The victim, witnesses and those engaging in the bullying behaviours should be interviewed and full details recorded
- Bullying that appears to involve criminal behaviour and/or cyber bullying, using any form of social media, may be reported directly to the police.

**Actions to address the bullying can include:**

- an interview with the Deputy Principal or Principal
- interview with parent/caregivers
- implementation of suspension/expulsion procedures. The student should be given a copy of the ‘Feeling Safe at School' Brochure and the CGHS Code of Conduct Policy.
- suspension of Internet privileges.

All actions should be recorded on RISC. A plan should be developed, in consultation with the School Counselor, to support the victim and also address the bullying behaviours.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The School Community**
All members of the school community have a duty to contribute to the prevention of bullying.

The school community has 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.

**Students**

All students in NSW Government schools are expected to abide by the **Core Rules:**

- **Attend every school day, unless they are legally excused, and be in class on time and prepared to learn**
- **Maintain a neat appearance, including adhering to the requirements of the school’s uniform or dress code policy**
- **Behave safely, considerately and responsibly, including when travelling to and from school.**
- **Show respect at all times for teachers, other school staff and helpers, including following class rules, speaking courteously and cooperating with instructions and learning activities.**
- **Treat one another with dignity and respect.**
- **Care for property belonging to themselves, the school and others.**
Behaviour that infringes on the safety of others, such as harassment, bullying and illegal or anti-social behaviour of any kind, will not be tolerated.

Students are made aware that they have a role to play in the reduction of bullying incidents and have a responsibility to:

- respect the rights, person and property of others
- treat all staff and students with respect.
- 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 as per the school Anti-bullying Plan.

Students should:

- read the ‘Feeling Safe at School’ brochure which is provided to every student at the beginning of each year
- report any incident of bullying that they witness or in which they are involved
- recognise that most bullying takes place when bystanders are present and that intervention by peers is very effective at stopping the bullying
- keep any evidence of bullying, such as emails or text messages
- not retaliate if bullied. Make a report as soon as possible
- discuss any concerns with their Year Adviser and/or any people listed above
- inform their parent/caregiver if they are being bullied.

Students will be treated fairly and with respect. Any reported matters should be investigated as soon as practical and managed, as far as possible, without further duress to the student making the report.

Parents/Caregivers

Parents/caregivers are the primary carers and have a role to play in ensuring that students attend school and arrive on time each day. Parents/caregivers should regularly discuss school work and assignments with their daughter/s in a supportive and positive manner.

Parents/caregivers should know that they can seek help for their daughter/s for any learning and/or welfare issue by contacting the school.

Parents/caregivers can help to raise the school’s awareness of bullying that may take place at times when teachers are not in direct supervision e.g. on the way to or from school or when text messages or emails are used.

Parents/caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their daughter/s to become responsible citizens and develop responsible on-line behaviour
- be aware of the school Anti-bullying Plan and assist their daughter/s in understanding and dealing with bullying behaviour
- support their daughter/s 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.

Parents/caregivers should:

- question their daughter if they notice significant changes in her attitude to school, mood or if she appears very concerned or apprehensive about school
- report bullying incidents immediately to the school. The contact can be to the Year Adviser, Head Teacher Welfare or the Deputy Principals
- make use of the CGHS website notification system, which is a direct email to the school’s Head Teacher Welfare. Students do not read these emails
- keep any evidence of bullying, such as emails or text messages etc.

School Staff

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/s
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying, as per the school’s Anti-Bullying Plan.

In addition, all teachers have a responsibility to provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students in developing an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Classroom Teachers

Where bullying is reported to the classroom teacher the teacher should:

- take all incidents of bullying seriously. Where the teacher witnesses bullying in the classroom, hallways or while on playground duty, the teacher should intervene to prevent continuation or escalation of the incident. Students should be separated and asked to write out a statement of the incident
- where possible, manage the incident and employ the actions as listed above, where appropriate
- record the incident on RISC. Print and keep a copy of the RISC notification and notify and/or provide a copy to the Year Adviser
- if referring the incident, print the RISC notification, attach the written statements and provide copies to the Year Adviser and/or HT Welfare and/or Deputy Principal or phone to inform them of the incident and the RISC contact number.

Head Teachers

Where bullying is reported to the Head Teacher or seen by the Head Teacher (HT) they should:
• take all incidents of bullying seriously. Where the HT witnesses bullying in the classroom, hallways or while on playground duty, the HT should intervene to prevent continuation or escalation of the incident. Students should be separated and asked to write out a statement of the incident
• where possible, manage the incident and employ the actions as listed above, where appropriate
• record the incident on RISC. Print and keep a copy of the RISC notification and notify and/or provide a copy to the Year Adviser
• if referring the incident, print the RISC notification, attach the written statements and provide copies to the Year Adviser and/or HT Welfare and/or Deputy Principal or phone to inform them of the incident and the RISC contact number.

Year Advisers

Year Advisers have a responsibility to:

• plan, develop and implement proactive anti-bullying programs, as determined by the Welfare Team, based on students’ needs and in keeping with school targets
• distribute and discuss the ‘Feeling Safe at School’ Brochure to all students at the beginning of each year
• undertake initial investigations of bullying, where appropriate, through student interviews and written student statements
• manage bullying incidents (as listed previously) and refer, where appropriate
• refer students to the School Counselor, where appropriate
• record all incidents and their management on RISC
• inform staff, where appropriate
• communicate to parents, where appropriate
• implement specific programs, where appropriate.

Head Teacher Welfare

The Head Teacher Welfare has a responsibility to:

• coordinate and develop policies and procedures for the school Anti-Bullying Plan
• plan preventative programs, e.g. ‘Verbal Combat’, Peer Support etc and assist in implementation, as determined by Welfare Team
• communicate the Anti-Bullying Plan to staff and publish it on the staff drive
• publish the Anti-Bullying Plan on the school website
• organise bullying surveys with the Peer Support Coordinator/s
• promote and monitor the bullying referral boxes
• liaise with the PDHPE faculty to discuss how welfare strategies can complement the PDHPE syllabus and units of work
• follow up and support Year Advisers with investigations of bullying
• manage specific support programs for students, such as anger management programs
• manage Learning Support referrals, where appropriate, to provide student support
• liaise with the School Counselor/s in preparing documentation for behaviour support, where appropriate.
School Counselors
The School Counselors have a responsibility to:

- provide specific counseling to students, as required or requested
- manage Learning Support referrals, where appropriate, to provide support for students
- liaise with the HT Welfare in preparing documentation for behaviour support, where appropriate
- manage specific support programs for students, such as anger management programs.

Deputy Principals
The Deputy Principals have a responsibility to:

- contribute to the development of policies and procedures for the school Anti-Bullying Plan
- communicate the plan and its procedures staff, students and parents/caregivers
- investigate and interview students about bullying incidents, where appropriate
- liaise with the Principal to determine actions to manage bullying incidents
- organise written pre-suspension warning and parental interviews, where appropriate.
- document interviews and actions on RISC.

Principal
The Principal has a responsibility to:

- contribute to the development of policies and procedures for the school Anti-Bullying Plan
- liaise with the Deputy Principal/s and/or HT Welfare and/or Year Advisers and/or School Counselors to determine actions to manage bullying incidents
- document interviews and actions on RISC.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES
This plan and procedures document should be read in conjunction with:

- Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy (DET 2011)
- Student Welfare Policy (DET 1996)
- Core Rules in NSW Government Schools
- Student Welfare and Discipline Policy (CGHS 2015)
- Internet and Technology Policy (CGHS 2013)
- Peer Support Anti-Bullying Survey (CGHS 2014)

SUPPORT WEBSITES