



BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

<p>Policy:</p>	<p>Hills International College recognises its duty to students to provide a safe and positive learning environment where individual differences and diversity within the College is respected and accepted.</p> <p>Bullying is not tolerated at Hills International College. It is our policy that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) bullying be managed through a 'whole-of-College community' approach involving students, staff and parents/guardians (b) bullying prevention strategies be implemented within the College on a continuous basis with a focus on teaching age-appropriate skills and strategies to empower staff, students and parents/guardians to recognise bullying and respond appropriately (c) bullying response strategies be tailored to the circumstances of each incident (d) any cyberbullying incident that affects the wellbeing of a student will be addressed, including if initiated outside of school hours or school grounds (e) staff establish positive role models emphasizing our no-bullying culture <p>Bullying prevention and intervention strategies are reviewed, and their impact is evaluated on an annual basis against best practice.</p>	
<p>Scope:</p>	<p>Hills International College students, parents and carers and other College community persons who are not workers at Hills College.</p> <p>Hills College workers must comply with separate HIC policy about sexual harassment, bullying and discriminatory conduct (including victimisation) at the workplace.</p>	
<p>Policy Owner:</p>	<p>Principal</p>	
<p>Status:</p>	<p>Version 2</p>	<p>Supersedes: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Strategy_v1_Feb 2024</p>
<p>Authorised by:</p>	<p>Principal</p>	<p>Date of Authorisation: 04.08.2025</p>
<p>References:</p>	<p>HIC Behaviour Management Policy HIC Community Code of Conduct HIC Complaints Policy</p>	
<p>Review:</p>	<p>2 Years</p>	



Definitions

What is Bullying:

Bullying is the repeated and intentional behaviour of causing fear, distress or harm towards another person that involves an imbalance of power. It can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and harassment. In any bullying incident there are likely to be three parties involved: the bully, the person being bullied, and bystanders.

Bullying can take many forms including:

Physical bullying which involves physical actions such as hitting, pushing, obstructing or being used to hurt or intimidate someone. Damaging, stealing or hiding personal belongings is also a form of physical bullying.

Psychological bullying which is when words or actions are used to cause psychological harm. Examples of psychological bullying include name calling, teasing or making fun of someone because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background.

Indirect bullying which is when deliberate acts of exclusion or spreading of untrue stories are used to hurt or intimidate someone.

Cyberbullying which is the ongoing abuse of power to threaten or harm another person using technology. Cyberbullying can occur in chat rooms, on social networking sites, through emails or on mobile phones. Refer to our [Cyber Safety](#) policy.

What is not 'bullying':

There are many negative situations which, while being potentially distressing for students, are not bullying. These include:

Mutual Conflict Situations which arise where there is disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict situations need to be closely monitored as they may evolve into a bullying situation

One-Off Acts (of aggression or meanness) including single incidents of loss of temper, shouting or swearing do not normally constitute bullying.

Signs of Bullying

Major behavioural changes in a student may be indicative of bullying. Such behavioural changes may include:

- crying at night and having nightmares
- refusing to talk when asked "What's wrong?"
- having unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches
- an unwillingness or refusal to go to school
- feeling ill in the mornings without other cause



- a decline in quality of schoolwork
- becoming withdrawn and lacking confidence
- beginning to bully siblings
- acting unreasonably.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to recognise signs of bullying and notify the College through a trusted staff member immediately (such as a class teacher or College counsellor), if they suspect their child is a victim of bullying.

Bullying Prevention Strategies

Hills International College recognises that the implementation of whole-College prevention strategies is the most effective way of eliminating, or at least minimising incidents of bullying within our community.

The following initiatives form part of our overall bullying prevention strategy and our strategy to create a 'no-bullying' culture within the College:

- (a) A structured curriculum and peer group support system, that provides age-appropriate information and social and emotional competencies relating to bullying (including cyberbullying) and bullying prevention, to students over the course of the academic year.
- (b) Education, training and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies.
- (c) Appropriate sharing among staff of information about cyberbullying incidents.
- (d) Regular provision of information to parents/guardians, to raise awareness of bullying as a College community issue to equip them to recognise signs of bullying, as well as to provide them with clear paths for raising any concerns they may have relating to bullying directly with the College.
- (e) Promotion of a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students and parents/guardians.
- (f) Promotion of responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff and parents/guardians.

Reporting of incidents of alleged bullying by students, bystanders, parents/guardians and staff are encouraged, and made easy through the establishment of multiple reporting channels (as specified below).

- (a) Regular risk assessments of bullying within the College are undertaken by surveying students to identify bullying issues that may ordinarily go unnoticed by staff.
- (b) Records of reported bullying incidents are maintained and analysed to identify persistent bullies and/or victims and to implement targeted prevention strategies where appropriate.
- (c) Statements supporting bullying prevention are included in student communications.



- (d) Education of staff, students and parents/guardians on health conditions to promote understanding and to reduce stigma and fear.
- (e) Anti-bullying posters are displayed strategically within the College.
- (f) Promotion of student awareness and a 'no-bullying' environment.

Reporting Bullying

Students and their parents/guardians are sometimes reluctant to pursue bullying incidents, for fear that it will only make matters worse.

A key part of the College's bullying prevention and intervention strategy is to encourage reporting of bullying incidents as well as providing assurance to students who experience bullying (and parents/guardians) that:

- (a) bullying is not tolerated within the College their concerns will be taken seriously
- (b) the College has a clear strategy for dealing with bullying issues.

Bullying incidents can be advised to the College verbally (or in writing) through any of the following avenues:

- (a) informing a class / subject teacher informing the Student Services Coordinator
- (b) informing a student's Year Level Coordinator informing the Head of Wellbeing
- (c) informing the Principal

Bullying that occurs outside of school hours and affects the wellbeing of a student (such as cyberbullying) should also be reported. For more information, refer to our HIC Complaints Policy.

Responding to Bullying

Bullying behaviours vary enormously in their extent and intent and, as a consequence, each incident needs to be dealt with on its facts.

In all circumstances the College:

- (a) takes bullying incidents seriously
- (b) provides assurance to the victim that they are not at fault and their confidentiality will be respected
- (c) takes time to properly investigate the facts including discussing the incident with the victim, the bully and any bystanders
- (d) takes time to understand any concerns of individuals involved
- (e) maintains records of reported bullying incidents
- (f) will escalate its response when dealing with persistent bullies and/or severe incidents.

Actions that may be taken when responding to bullying include:

- (a) [The "Method of Shared Concern" Approach \(Pikas\)](#)
- (b) [The "No Blame" Approach \(Maines & Robinson\)](#)



These approaches may be used to intervene in group or relational bullying situations. They are only appropriate during the initial stages (they are not appropriate for persistent or severe bullying incidents).

Response actions for severe and persistent bullying are:

- (a) notification of/consultation with parents/guardians
- (b) offering counselling to persistent bullies/victims
- (c) implementing effective follow up strategies
- (d) disciplinary action, at the Principal's discretion, including suspension and expulsion of persistent bullies, or in cases of severe incidents.

The HIC Behaviour Management Policy (available on the College website) will be applied as required when making decisions regarding the College's response.

Responding to allegations about bullying that involve parents as alleged perpetrators will be managed in accordance with the Community Code of Conduct with possible outcomes that include (but not limited to):

- (a) Limited contact at the College
- (b) Banned from attending campus
- (c) Unenrollment of student

Bullying and Other Support Services

Hills International College offers support to all students who have been affected by bullying, regardless of whether the bullying was dealt with under this policy or not.

The following support services are available to students and staff:

Counselling Services

Hills International College offers counselling services to students and staff. For counselling services contact the Hills College Student Support Services staff, Mandy Comerford on (07) 5546 0667.

Cyber Safety Contact Person

The Head of Wellbeing is the first contact point for students, staff and parents if a cyber safety issue arises, using the Hills International College "Report a Safety Incident/Concern" on the Hills College website (go to "Contact Us" "Reporting Concerns").

Office of the e-Safety Commissioner

The Office of the e-Safety Commissioner provides advice and strategies on how to deal with cyber bullying issues to people under 18: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/esafety-information/esafety-issues/cyberbullying>

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Breach of this Policy

Breach of the responsibilities outlined in this Policy by workers at Hills College will be managed in accordance with the HIC policies that respond to performance and misconduct.