Liverpool Girls High School

Aniti-bullying Framework
A SAFE SCHOOL PROGRAM

This framework outlines the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying within the school and reflects the New South Wales Department of Education Anti-Bullying Strategy Revised Policy (2018).

PROGRAM AIM AND RATIONALE

To foster an inclusive school culture and ethos that supports all students, values school diversity, understanding of the staff and community population, embracing an understanding of culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, physical ability and economic status.

Students attend school to participate in quality education that will help them to become self-directed, lifelong learners promoting a positive future for themselves and the wider community. Bullying affects student wellbeing and as such it must be taken seriously and is not acceptable in any form. The whole school community needs to be involved in the philosophy and practice of reducing bullying.

The safe school program – anti-bullying program aims to support students to challenge bullying behaviours and increase pro-social upstander responses.

DEFINING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure.

Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships. Bullying can involve all forms of harassment (including sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender), humiliation, domination and intimidation of others.

Bullying behaviour can be

- **verbal** e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm (a remark intended to wound), insults, threats

- **physical** e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting

- **social** e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures

- **psychological (relational)** e.g. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious (deliberately harmful), SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

School communities need to work together to recognise, challenge and change inequalities that fuel bullying and harassment within the school and to build trust and respect between all groups.

The Liverpool Girls High School Anti Bullying Framework is designed to provide a school environment where students feel safe and free from bullying, harassment and intimidation. Our school is an inclusive environment, where diversity is affirmed and individual differences are accepted. The Anti-bullying Framework encompasses a set of procedures to ensure all members of the school community are aware of the nature of bullying, its consequences and strategies to address bullying behaviour.

PROGRAM INTENT AND AIMS

The Liverpool Girls High School Anti Bullying Framework seeks to:

- promote a school culture of being positive, caring, respectful and supportive;

- promote a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and student wellbeing;

- empower students to be confident, resilient, balanced, and able to form positive relationships, have a strong sense of self, cultural awareness to enable them to become exemplary empowered citizens, and have respect for living in a diverse society;

- modify the behaviour of the bully and educate the victim through relevant support programs;

- reduce the incidence of bullying through a unified approach ensure school community members understand and have confidence in the procedures and strategies;

- establish, maintain and monitor effective communication networks between students, staff and parents;

- recognise the need for a whole school and parent support involvement;

- reinforce that all members of the Liverpool Girls High School community need to be aware of their responsibility to act as positive anti-bullying role models, thereby ensuring their actions do not support other people bullying; and

- ensure effective methods of behaviour management are consistently used, are non-hostile and non-punitive.

PROTECTION, PREVENTION, EARLY INTERVENTION AND RESPONSE

There are four steps in guiding the Liverpool Girls High School Anti-Bullying Framework. These steps include: protection, prevention, early intervention and response strategies.

Protection refers to those factors that increase the likelihood of positive wellbeing outcomes and buffer against the effects of negative experiences. This will be achieved through:

- the school and wider community having a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying;

- students, parents, caregivers and teachers understanding their individual and shared responsibility for preventing and responding to bullying behaviour; and

- maintaining a positive school culture of respectful relationships where bullying is less likely to occur.

Prevention builds on the protective factors and refers to strategies specifically designed to prevent bullying behaviour. This will include:

- developing and implementing programs for bullying prevention; and

- embedding anti-bullying messages into each curriculum area and in every year

Early Intervention refers to providing support before an issue emerges or escalates such as developing and implementing early intervention support for 'at risk' students. This will be monitored through the Learning Support Team and Wellbeing Team.

Response refers both to the actions of the school when an incident occurs and to the informed development of future protection, prevention, early intervention and response strategies.

PROTECTION

Bullying is a pattern of repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or a group towards one or more persons. Bullying may be carried out overtly eg face to face or covertly eg through repeated social exclusion or via technology.

Online bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies. This may be through SMS, pictures, sounds, videos, emails, instant messaging, chat and other forms of social media such as Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter and Instagram.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on gender, race, disability, sexuality and transgender (LGBTQIA2I+). Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Bystanders are anyone who is aware of bullying but does not act to try and stop it. This may include omitting information about a bullying incident, watching or hearing about a bullying event but doing nothing, assisting/joining in, videoing, sharing videos or photos, or encouraging by cheering or laughing.

Bullying is a sub-category of aggression and is different to, but also related to, harassment and violence. It is not the same as conflict or social dislike even though, in some cases, the outcome of both can be bullying. Conflicts or fights between equals, or single incidents, are not defined as bullying.

Shared Responsibilities:

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to create and maintain a safe and positive environment, free from all forms of bullying.

All members of the school community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships in person and online (social media and otherwise).

Staff Responsibilities include:

- respecting and supporting students in all aspects of their learning model appropriate behaviour and are being positive role models in respectful and inclusive behaviours;
- responding in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school anti-bullying plan;
- ensuring open lines of communication between home and school to respond to bullying situations if they arise;
- reinforcing that classrooms must always be a safe place, free from ridicule and harassment and where learning takes place in a supportive environment;
- school staff making it clear that bullying is unacceptable, creating rules and enforce consequences as a deterrent; and
- actively promoting student wellbeing and student welfare and the environment of the school is positive, welcoming, cooperative and fair.

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

Student Responsibilities include:

- understanding the definition of bullying as intentional, repeated behaviour that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure. It is not an isolated incident;
- understanding that passing on inappropriate photos, images or responding to posts on social media which are harmful to another individual is considered bullying and may include police involvement;
- treating staff and fellow students with respect and consideration taking an active part in maintaining their own positive environment behaving appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity;
- following the school anti-bullying framework;
- reporting acts of any bullying behaviours immediately, including social media posts, or illicit images;
- understanding the consequences of their action if they choose to bully, or are involved in a bullying incident;
- responding to incidents of bullying according to the school anti- bullying plan; and
- keeping any documentation of the bullying occurring such as emails, photographs or posts on the internet.

Parent/caregiver Responsibilities include:

- supporting their child in becoming a responsible citizen and in developing responsible online behaviour;
- being aware of the school Anti-Bullying Framework and assisting their child in understanding bullying behaviour;
- reporting incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school;
- working collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur; and
- supporting their child in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-Bullying Framework.

LGHS encourages parents to:

- watch for signs of distress, unwillingness to attend school or other signs suggesting stress or anxiety such as headaches or stomach aches
- advise your child to tell a staff member
- tell their child to keep any evidence of the bullying situation such as emails, letters, photos, posts etc and keep written documentation/records of the incidents
- watch for signs of aggression, risk taking behaviour, obsession with becoming popular, insecurities etc as this may indicate a potential bully

Strategies to support a climate of respectful relationships:

- positive role modelling by the staff, parents and school community as well as students being in positive leadership roles which advocate for respectful relationships;
- Harmony Day, National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence, Charity Fundraisers, Wear It Purple and R U OK? Day where students have the opportunity to share their talents, build

relationships, form connections with other year groups and work towards achieving a common goal of appreciating diversity;

- promoting the school's core values in all aspects of school life eg assemblies, homeroom, year meetings, newsletters;

- explicit and ongoing teaching of classroom expectations which underpin the schools core values;

- professional development for staff relating to bullying and harassment counter measures including active playground supervision; and

- addressing boredom and disengagement both in class and the playground.

PREVENTION

Prevention builds on the protective factors and refers to strategies specifically designed to prevent bullying behaviour. Programs which have been implemented for bullying prevention include:

- using surveys such as *Tell Them From Me* and *IEP Days* to improve student wellbeing outcomes;

- Peer Support program between Year 7 and Year 11 students together with the SLC are groups which empower students to play a pivotal role in the welfare network within the school;

- Rock and Water, Links to Learning, RAGE and MY Strengths Workshops. Sessions may focus on managing friendships, resilience, self-regulation and developing self-confidence, links with outside organisations to assist in achieving professional whole school anti-bullying goals eg Brainstorm Productions and Headspace;

- programs such as digital footprint which focuses on safe internet usage and use of social media accounts;

- Year 7 Orientation Week at the beginning of the school year includes a session with the school counsellor. This provides students with an opportunity to get to know who the counsellor is and what their role is in the school. Other sessions during orientation week include an anti-bullying component;

- wellbeing sessions run regularly throughout the year for all Year 7 classes;

- Student Handbook provided to parents and students at enrolment outlines the processes to respond to bullying, harassment, discrimination and vilification;

- Assembly Stage Meetings which focus on wellbeing issues such as the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence and STYMIE an online anonymous bullying reporting system. Students are involved in activities which support a safe school environment and pledge their commitment through 'NDA Pledge Cards and Wall' being displayed around the school advocating against bullying and making a stand against bullying and violence;

- Wellbeing resources distributed throughout the year to staff, students and parent, focuses on positive mental health, anti-bullying related welfare programs and creating awareness of mental health support services; Many resources are available on the Wellbeing Wall in Block J.

- Positive Behaviour for Learning and our school REACH guiding principles reinforce core values and school processes;

- curriculum content in the areas of English, Drama and PDHPE support students in identifying, understanding and responding to bullying;

- parent forums on managing young people's anxiety and stress, and building resilience;

- anti-bullying focus in curriculum areas covering concepts such as tolerance, acceptance and individuality;

- ongoing professional learning opportunities for teachers and Year Advisors focusing on bullying issues and particularly dealing with cyber bullying and digital citizenship;

- specific resources to be added to the school diary including a flow chart outlining how students can respond to acts of bullying and a summary of the schools Anti-Bullying Framework;

- executive presence in reinforcing consistent rules/consequences across the whole school in relation to bullying behaviours. There should be a transparency in students having a clear understanding of consequences in relation to specific behaviours.

Liverpool Girls High School embeds anti-bullying messages into the curriculum in every year level. This includes seating plans to support a positive and safe environment for all students in the classroom. Class rules and expectations are set in consultation with the students. Teachers reinforce messages in the classroom of respecting others and their opinions, avoiding judgment. The school deals with all curriculum content in an inclusive and culturally sensitive way.

EARLY INTERVENTION

- surveys used to collect information and data which reflect the current context and student body needs, eg *Tell Them from Me* behaviour and/or specific welfare support provided for Year 7 students identified by their primary school as at risk;

- Wellbeing *Team Weekly Report* distributed to all key stakeholders;

- students will have access to counselling and advice from Year Advisors, Head Teacher Wellbeing and/or school counsellor in responding to bullying situations;

- work with relevant parents to support students encountering difficulties in social relationships;

- arrange for Learning Support/Wellbeing Team to work with parents/caregivers to develop a negotiated personalised plan for students with disabilities who may encounter difficulties with social relationships;

- for students at risk, the school will use the expertise of the school counsellor to develop intervention strategies and provide opportunities for counselling sessions. Targeted students are supported to respond effectively to the bully, thereby empowering the student;

- ensure students and parents are aware of and understand the schools anti-bullying plan so that appropriate action can be taken by the school to support all parties; and

- all forms of bullying are taken seriously and will be responded to using the Wellbeing/Discipline Framework.

RESPONSE

- staff are well placed to observe student behaviour and to act to reduce the risk of long term harm from bullying experiences immediate intervention by teachers is crucial;

- clear procedures will be followed when a case of bullying is discovered;

- an approach that engages students who are bullying and attempts to enhance their feelings of empathy and understanding for the student they are harming is more likely to bring about a change in behaviour

If students need to report an incident they can:

- report it directly to a teacher, their Year Advisor or Head Teacher Wellbeing;

- write a report which can be given to the Year Advisor, Head Teacher Wellbeing or the front office (placed in sealed envelope);

- make an online anonymous bullying notification via our STYMIE system; and

- parents may contact the school (phone, email or interview) and report the incident on behalf of their child.

Role of Teacher:

- when an incident of bullying occurs, school staff should intervene and prevent further bullying. Staff can support the student being targeted and others involved, including bystanders, and ensure that there is ongoing monitoring and intervention to reduce the likelihood of further bullying incidents;

- all reports of bullying are to be taken seriously. Listen to the student, and record information in written form and pass information to relevant people for follow-up (Record on SENTRAL);

- if the bullying occurs continually in class, the class teacher should speak directly to all students involved with the aim to resolve matter;

- the class teacher may consult their faculty Head Teacher/Supervisor for further guidance if required;

- for minor/moderate incidents, collect written reports if necessary, from all involved parties (student/s being bullied, student/s doing the bullying, witnesses) and pass onto Year Advisor;

- inform student to provide any evidence of the bullying situation such as copies of emails, online posts or images;

- the class teacher will record the incident on SENTRAL, (SENTRAL – Wellbeing - Negative Incident - Behaviour) as well as notifying the relevant Year Advisor;

- if the bullying continues in a specific subject, it will be referred to the faculty Head Teacher;

- if the bullying occurs in more than one subject, it will be referred to and dealt with by the Year Advisor; and

- physical assault is to be reported directly to the Deputy Principal.

Role of Head Teacher Wellbeing/Year Advisor:

- all incidents of bullying will be reported on Sentral, and the Year Advisor and Head Teacher Wellbeing notified;

- Head Teacher Wellbeing and Year Advisor will work together to resolve the situation. This will involve interviews with all students involved including witnesses. Students will be interviewed separately and all interviews will be recorded and filed in the Wellbeing office;

- the Wellbeing and Discipline Policy will be referred to where needed;

- mediation or restorative practice may be a strategy to resolve the situation; and

- parents will be notified of their child's involvement and the consequences of their child's actions (within the bounds of privacy legislation).

Role of Deputy Principal:

- manage critical bullying incidents referred by a member of the LGHS community;

- a range of criminal legislation is relevant to bullying and cyberbullying. These include: stalking, making threats to kill or harm and malicious damage. The Deputy Principal may take action to manage and respond to cyberbullying that involves students (or staff) from the school if it could result in a substantial disruption of the school environment or adversely affect learning or wellbeing of students (or staff at the school); and

- offer support and guidance to all staff when dealing with critical bullying incidents.

Dealing with Bullying behaviour:

- all parties involved (bully, victims, witnesses) will be interviewed separately, and a record kept of each interview including any evidence.
- the bully and the victim will receive counselling if required
- if student bullying persists, parents will be contacted and consequences implemented, consistent with the school's Welfare and Discipline Policy.
- consequences that could be given (dependent on the individual case) include:
  - detention with a focus on working on social skills
  - mediation and/or restorative practices
  - formal warnings
  - school suspension (in school or out of school)
  - strategies to support students who have been affected by, engaged in or have witnessed bullying behaviour include referring to the school counsellor, referring to Rock and Water program or linking to outside organisations such as Headspace.

All teaching staff are mandatory reporters of Child Protection issues and complete mandatory annual Child Protection training and are regularly reminded of their responsibilities and our procedures in relation *to Keeping Them Safe* and mandatory reporting requirements. Staff MUST report any concerns to the Deputy Principal or Principal. The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that staff use the Mandatory Reporting Guide (MRG) and follow its recommendations in relation to school procedures, the Child Wellbeing Unit or the Department of Community Services.

Departmental appeal procedures and information can be found through the Complaints Handling Policy located on the Department of Education Website.

Bullying incidents will be recorded on SENTRAL. If bullying incidents have increased, current programs will be evaluated and new programs introduced to address the bullying issues. This may include mentoring in the junior years, leadership programs, the introduction of lunchtime sport and lunch time sessions focusing on communication skills and positive relationships.

The Anti-Bullying Framework will be reviewed and evaluated every three years. This will involve all members of the school community evaluating the plan. Evidence from the school SENTRAL program, student files and Year Advisors reports may show that bullying incidents have increased or decreased and the plan can be altered accordingly.

This information will be presented and discussed with the P&C and various student groups. Parents and students can provide input or additional information to improve the plan moving forward.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF AN ACROSS SCHOOL
ANTI-BULLYING APPROACH ~ A Guide

Bullying must be dealt with quickly and effectively.

Expectations of staff

1. Step in immediately and take a proactive approach to stop bullying behaviour
2. Make efforts to remove incidents of bullying by active patrolling during supervision duties
3. Increased awareness of the nature of bullying
4. Arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons
5. Provide a happy and safe learning environment
6. Take steps to help victims and remove sources of distress for the victim
7. Counsel the student/s with bullying behaviour and remind them about the guiding principles
8. Challenge attitudes which are unhelpful in order to reduce bullying behaviour
9. Record incidents of bullying on Sentral and refer to the Head Teacher or the Deputy Principal

Expectations of students

When a student is bullied: The student may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry etc. Her work, sleep, ability to maintain relationships with friends and family may deteriorate.

What students can do

If you are being bullied, your options are:

1. Avoid an argument and just walk away
2. Find a safe place like the library at recess and lunch
3. Keep in the sight of a teacher in the playground
4. Calmly and assertively stand up for yourself, e.g. you could say, "you might think that, but I don't." or "Tell me what you think I did wrong, maybe we can work it out"
5. Tell the nearest teacher (Reporting an incident of bullying is not a weakness, it is the best way to stand up for yourself)
6. Ask the School Counsellor for some ideas, talk to your Year Adviser

If you are present when bullying occurs:

1. Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation
2. Report the incident or suspected incident and help break the code of secrecy
3. Support the victim and talk about the guiding principles of REACH.

Whole School Strategies

1. Upon enrolment each family receives "Acceptable Users Guidelines for mobile phone and student internet access".
2. Professional learning for the staff annually about the signs of bullying and effective ways to deal with behaviour issues.
3. Staff familiar with the safe school framework.
4. Anti-bullying addressed through the wellbeing program approach with focus areas for each year group.

5. Tolerance and understanding of cultures and difference is promoted through celebrating Harmony days.

6. Years 7 and 8 focus theme days through drama performances and workshops.

7. PDHPE curriculum – anti-bullying lessons for Year 8.

8. Student diaries include anti-bullying strategies.

9. Bullying awareness posters around school corridors and classrooms.

10. Students informed of where to access help on the internet especially STYME app.

11. Peer Support program for transition of Year 7 students into the high school.

12. New student engagement program - the Year Adviser meets with the new student, introduces her to a friend, shows the new student his or her own staffroom and introduces her to the Assistant Year Adviser and the head teachers if possible.

13. Year Advisers' report is included as a regular item on the staff meeting agenda to ensure effective communication among staff.

14. Welfare reports discussed and tabled each week at Leadership Meetings and communicated to staff on weekly basis by Head Teacher responsible for staff group.

15. Police Liaison Officers to address *Cyber-bullying* through school presentations Years 7-12 or Year Assemblies as part of the Year Group program developed each year.

16. STYME website.

MANAGING BULLYING

1. Students learn assertive strategies to *Speak Out* and say something and seek assistance

2. Classroom teachers have a responsibility to challenge and not tolerate any form of bullying e.g. name calling.

3. Low level cases are referred for peer mediation.

4. Provide parents, caregivers and students with clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behaviour and the consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

5. Parental interviews and disciplinary action according to school policy and departmental procedures if latter is not successful.

6. School's guiding principles are communicated to students at the Year meetings.

7. Anti-bullying strategies are included in student diaries and discussed at the Year meetings at the beginning of the year.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

1. IEP interviews for all year groups.

2. Surveys to include input from students, staff and parents. Information from STYME reports and feedback

3. Data to be analysed relating to occurrence, extent, location, nature and type of bullying annually.

4. Longitudinal evaluations will determine how programs are working e.g., student data may reveal that students find teachers can be helpful with bullying situations

5. Assess effectiveness of programs and modify strategies accordingly.

6. Update staff on survey results and provide up-skilling on new anti-bullying strategies.

7. Web addresses placed on School Web Site

   - The Student Wellbeing approaches and contact agencies

- Health and Safety information
- Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People – Cyberbullying links

8. Resources provided to support teachers promote anti-bullying behaviour can be accessed electronically on school network or through Head Teacher Welfare.

9. Information provided on the School Parent and Student Portal.