Hammondville Public School

Student Welfare and Discipline Policy
Students, Parents and the Public School system

Hammondville Public School, along with all public schools in New South Wales, exists to provide a first-class education for all young people.

We have three overriding priorities:

- raising educational standards and levels of educational achievement;
- providing a quality education for all; and
- providing for the care and safety of all students in our care.

In achieving these priorities, we seek to provide young people with their primary foundation for life.

This policy was drafted in 2004 and was ratified by the School Council.

The quality of this foundation is of the utmost importance to each individual. If a child does not do well at school, the prospects for a fulfilling life as an adult are significantly reduced.

Welfare and Discipline - A Partnership

When parents enrol their children at our school they enter into a partnership with the school staff.

This partnership is based on shared responsibility and mutual respect. The partnership should aim at achieving effective learning and good discipline so that the school environment is both productive and harmonious.

This partnership should lead to the understanding that the student needs to develop a responsibility for his or her own behaviour.

Parents and Schools - A Policy Statement

Parents naturally want the very best for their children.

What exactly is "the best" of course differs greatly from one parent to the next but basically we all want our children to be successful and happy and to feel secure in all aspects of their lives.

During their school years, the home and school occupy the greatest part of their time - and carry the greatest influence on their development into adulthood. Obviously, the more harmony there is between home and school, the greater will be the chances of achievement and fulfilment.

The contribution which parents have traditionally made in our school is highly valued. However, children (first and foremost), parents, teachers and the school community generally stand to reap major benefits from even stronger ties.
The "best" possible outcome for all of our children’s education is very much enhanced by a strong partnership between parents, teachers and students.

Expectations of Parents, Teachers and Students

The precise character of the partnership between parents, teachers and students will be unique to each student. There are, however, certain expectations in common to all such partnerships.

Parents

- parents are responsible for ensuring their children attend school
- parents share in the responsibility of shaping their children’s understandings and attitudes about acceptable behaviour by supporting the school code of conduct, its rewards and sanctions
- parents assume greater responsibility for their children’s behaviour as their children travel to and from school.

Teachers

- teachers are responsible for the education and care of their students when at school
- teachers have the task of providing the best possible program to meet the needs, capabilities and aspirations of each student
- teachers are also responsible for appropriately communicating with parents about the educational progress and behaviour of each student
- teachers, the Principal, and all other school staff, are required by law to notify the appropriate authorities in cases where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a student under 18 years of age is, or has been, subject to:

  - Child Sexual Assault
    *Child Sexual Assault is any sexual act or sexual threat imposed on a child*
  - Physical Abuse
    *Physical Abuse refers to non-accidental injury to a child by a parent, caregiver or another person responsible for the child*
  - Emotional Abuse
    *Emotional Abuse is behaviour by a parent or caregiver which can destroy the confidence of a child resulting in significant emotional deprivation or trauma*
  - Neglect
    *Child Neglect occurs where the child is harmed by failure to provide the basic necessities of life such as adequate and proper food, nursing, clothing, medical aid or lodging.*

(*Procedures for Recognising and Notifying Child Abuse and Neglect. Memorandum 97/019 (S.018))

The principle underpinning this mandatory requirement is that the welfare of the child is paramount. This school will ensure that this focus is maintained as our primary responsibility.
At our school, the classroom teacher is usually the first point of reference on matters related to the welfare and discipline of the children in their care. It is understood that the classroom teacher is in the best position to have the greatest awareness of the needs of the children in their care.

Students

As children grow, they become more active participants in the partnership between home and school.

When the partnership is based on mutual respect, each partner will support the decisions and responsibilities exercised by the others.

The Fair Discipline Code sets out children's Rights and Responsibilities while at school then outlines the steps that will be taken to safeguard those Rights and maintain responsible behaviour.

To the child:

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE AN INDIVIDUAL AT SCHOOL
This means you should not be treated unfairly because you are tall or short, boy or girl, or because it takes you a little longer to get the right answer.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE RESPECTED AND TREATED WITH KINDNESS AT SCHOOL
This means that others should not laugh at you, make fun of you, or hurt your feelings.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXPRESS YOURSELF
This means that you may talk freely about your ideas and feelings, when appropriate.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO A SAFE SCHOOL
This means that Hammondville should provide safe classrooms, equipment and rules to ensure your safety at school.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO TELL YOUR SIDE OF THE STORY
This means that your side of the story will be heard, if you are accused of breaking a rule.

Here are some of the things you should do without being told. Some of these things you do for others, and some of them you do for yourself.

Here are your important responsibilities:

YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO ALLOW OTHERS TO WORK WITHOUT BEING BOtherED
This means that you quietly make good use of your time, and do not disturb others.
YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO COMPLETE YOUR WORK AND TO DO YOUR BEST.
This means that you do your best with your class tasks and homework, being sure to complete them on time.

YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP MAKE SCHOOL A GOOD PLACE TO BE
This means being thoughtful, respectful and courteous to others.

YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE CARE OF PROPERTY
This means that you take good care of school property, and respect the property of others.

Providing a good learning environment

Our school goals are derived from the goals for all public education in NSW as specified in legislation, and in yearly statements of Agenda for the NSW Department of School Education.

• A critical factor in achieving our goals as a public school is the aspiration of students to do well.
• Real levels of achievement are greatly increased when teachers and parents expect high standards.
• Good classroom discipline improves the level of aspirations of students.
• An effective classroom should be a place of excitement, exploration, scholarship and learning.
• It is our aim to create such an environment.
• If the classroom is disrupted by the noisy and inattentive few, the learning of other students suffers.

Each student’s right to learn depends on the capacity of teachers to carry out their professional responsibilities in the classroom free from disruption.

Each student has a right to be safe. Schools exist in a society in which violence is often prevalent. This social problem does not always stop at the school gate. Nevertheless, every student has the right to expect that he or she will spend the school day - both in and out of the classroom - free from bullying and intimidation. Students have a right to be safe and happy at school. They have a right to be treated fairly and with dignity.

Teachers have rights too. Teachers also have a right to expect their work place to be safe, secure and happy.

Teachers too, have a right to be treated fairly and with dignity, by both students and their parents

The Crimes Amendment (School Protection) Act, Dec 2002, reinforces the message to the community that schools are valued as special places and will be treated as such by law.
The Expectations of Good Discipline in our School

Discipline and Self-Discipline

Discipline is best when all parties have clear expectations about the behaviours which are acceptable and a sense of comfort in their surroundings.

It is essential that all persons develop an awareness that they own, and are responsible for their behaviour. It is one of our aims to develop in all students a clear understanding of the ways in which their behaviour affects their ability to meet their various needs.

It is then equally essential that the owner of the behaviour understands the consequences which follow from their behaviour within the institutional and organisational context of the school, as this may be very different from the context in which they operate elsewhere.

Consistent inappropriate behaviour will result in referral of the problem and, if necessary, removal from the situation, until an appropriate means of returning the child, with support structures in place, has been negotiated.

Referrals by teachers will be informal in the first instance to the supervisor and support sought for management strategies. Further action will be discussed with the relevant Assistant Principal and will be notified to parents.

* Discipline is dependent on the effective treatment of the actual problem, not the symptoms of the problem, or the child’s reaction to it.

Our state public school system has the following requirements of all students:
* sustained application to learning
* respect for other individuals and their property
* courtesy to other students, to teachers and to community members
* due respect for teachers
* no violence, discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation
* no weapons
* no illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco
* peaceful resolution of conflict
* adherence to the standards of dress determined by the school community
* compliance with all school rules and the Fair Discipline Code.

Practices Designed to Recognise and Reinforce Student Achievement

At Hammondville Public School we encourage good discipline and effective learning by:

* providing appropriate curriculum, based on Board of Studies requirements, to meet the needs of each student
* encouraging the presentation of this curriculum in a way which motivates and encourages the active participation of children in the learning process
* supporting children in achieving success in learning
* providing recognition and reward for positive achievements and behaviour through a system of class and playground Merit awards
* maintaining a small number of easily understood rules which are fair, clear and consistently applied.

At Hammondville we encourage and reward student achievement through:
- use of passport books
- student achiever awards
- school assemblies
- special days including presentation day
- extra curricular activities including dance, sport and choir
- publicising student achievement through local media and the school ‘Herald’
- providing gifted and talented opportunities in sport, debating and public speaking
- participation in the ‘Tournament of the Minds’ competition
- class based merit certificates
- school certificates of achievement.

Certificate of Achievement Levels
Passport books: 10 stickers on one page equals 1 small certificate
5 small certificates equals 1 large green award – presented at the school assembly
3 large green awards equals 1 large white award – presented at the school assembly

Strategies for Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour
Early parental involvement when unacceptable behaviour is apparent is a priority at Hammondville Public School.
Breaches of school rules are recorded on a Welfare Report. This report:
- records information on the time, place and behaviour demonstrated by the student
- tracks individual behaviour
- identifies individual patterns of unacceptable behaviour.

Students, sign welfare report to acknowledge information recorded is accurate.

Parents are informed when a pattern of misbehaviour occurs or when a serious offence occurs.

A set of school-based interventions has been developed to provide consistency in the application of sanctions for unacceptable behaviour.
(Appendix 1)

Hammondville Public School is a happy and safe place to be when children:

1. Abide by our school’s Fair Discipline Code.
2. Attend school regularly, be punctual and present notes to explain absences.
3. Follow the instructions of teachers and others in authority.
4. Complete all required work carefully and to the best of their ability.
5. Behave in a responsible, polite and courteous manner.
6. Behave in a manner that shows respect for themselves, and for the rights and feelings of others.
7. Behave in a manner that keeps themselves and others, safe at all times.
8. Respect and care for school buildings, school property and the property of others.
9. Wear appropriate School Uniform at all times.
10. Accept their responsibilities as members of the School Community.
11. Observe classroom rules.

While meeting these expectations, students also have the right to expect courtesy, fairness, respect and excellence in teaching.

**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**A ‘zero-tolerance’ approach**

Bullying is repeated oppression, psychological or physical of a less powerful person by an individual or group. It involves the abuse of power in relationships and can involve all forms of harassment including sex, race, disability or religion.

Bullying behaviour can be:
- verbal – name calling, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults and threats
- physical – hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping and spitting
- social – ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienation, inappropriate gestures
- psychological – spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

Bullying
- devalues, isolates and frightens
- affects a students ability to achieve
- can have long term effects on those engaging in bullying behaviour, those who are the subject of bullying and onlookers and bystanders.

At Hammondville Public School a zero tolerance approach to bullying is in operation. Any form of bullying, no matter how slight or minor, when brought to a teacher’s attention, is immediately dealt with.

It is expected that all members of the school community will be responsible for managing and resolving bullying behaviour.

Students are encouraged to actively participate in this approach and to follow the school action plan set out below.
Action Plan
If you are being bullied or hassled in the playground or classroom …

- take a deep breath,
- look directly into the eyes of the person attempting to bully you,
- speak in a firm, clear voice and say loudly, “STOP THAT, I DON’T LIKE IT!”
- Go directly to a teacher if the attempts to bully you don’t stop and report what happened.

Any further incidents of bullying or threatening behaviour by the same person may result in him/her …

- sitting in the time out area in the playground or classroom
- being placed on detention to reflect and consider more appropriate behaviour
- being referred to the School Learning Support Team
- having parents contacted by the school and informed of the bullying behaviour with an appropriate action plan developed.

When students, parents and school staff work together we create a safe and caring environment.

Students can control what happens by …
- following the action plan,
- not retaliating physically or verbally
- telling an older person.

Parents can control what happens by …
- watching for signs of distress in their child
- listening to their child
- giving assurance and support
- discussing the action plan with their child
- advising their child to tell a staff member
- informing their child’s teacher of suspected bullying
- attending interviews at school.

Staff will …
- be role models in words and actions
- ensure all students feel safe, valued and are listened to
- be observant of signs of distress or suspected bullying incidents
- encourage students to ask for help when needed
- communicate bullying incidents to appropriate teachers and executive
- develop teaching programs that will focus on learning experiences and strategies relating to ‘social skills, how to play, positive relationships, conflict resolution and mediation.’
- teach positive and consistent classroom and playground strategies about reporting incidents, accessing support and developing positive relationships.
Support

Teachers will be supported by …
- the school Learning Support Team
- appropriate school based and district T 7 D activities and inservices
- physical resources purchased through the student welfare committee

Student victims will be supported by …
- the whole school community when they report bullying incidents
- if appropriate, the school counsellor

Student bullies will …
- be counselled by the class teacher or stage supervisor
- if appropriate, be referred to the school Learning Support Team
- accept the consequences and punishment for their inappropriate behaviour
- participate in an individually developed social skills program.

Parents/caregivers will …
- be listened to and supported when they report bullying incidents to the school
- where appropriate, be involved in interviews and reconciliation meetings at school
- be expected to take an active role in reinforcing the school’s anti-bullying policy at home.

(Revised February 2006)
BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Bullying is repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by an individual or group. (Rigby, 1996:15)

For example, bullying occurs when a person ...

- is called names;
- is threatened;
- is put-down;
- is teased in an unkind way;
- is ridiculed;
- has property hidden, damaged, stolen or destroyed;
- is physically hurt;
- has graffiti written about him or her;
- is left out;
- is sent hurtful notes;
- is singled out for unfair treatment;
- is picked on;
- has rumours spread about him or her; and/or
- is stalked or given dirty looks.

If someone is bullied he/she

- may be confused and not know what to do about it;
- may feel sad, frightened, unsafe, sick, embarrassed, angry, unfairly treated;
- it can affect school work; and
- it can affect family and friends.

POSSIBLE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BEING BULLIED

There is no particular pattern. A victim may...

- have unexplained cuts and bruises;
- have equipment or personal items hidden, damaged, stolen or destroyed;
- complain of vague headaches, stomach aches or feeling sick;
- wet the bed, bite nails, have poor sleep patterns and bad dreams;
- exhibit unusual emotional outbursts or mood swings;
- withdraw from friends or family;
- appear anxious, insecure, sad, teary, depressed, secretive;
- have low self esteem;
- display an unwillingness to go to school;
- sit alone in class or be alone in the playground;
- change friendship groups frequently;
- come home hungry (because lunch money or food has been taken);
- want extra money without giving a reason; and/or
- show deterioration in school work avoid participating.

At Hammondville Public School we support students through

- an active Student Welfare Committee
- encouraging students to employ strategies taught: such as STOP, THINK, DO Conflict Resolution Skill
- creating positive classroom environments
- consistently rewarding positive behaviour and effort
- classroom-based Personal Development Programs
- the Child Protection Program
- the Drug Education Program
- the Life Education Program
- weekly class meetings
- developing positive Student Leadersh roles
- an active Learning Support Team
- programs for gifted and talented students
- an active P & C.
You can control what happens by following the action plan:

If you are being bullied or harassed in the playground ...

- take a deep breath,
- look directly into the eyes of the person attempting to bully you,
- speak in a firm, clear voice and say loudly, “Stop that, I don’t like it!”
- Go directly to your teacher (or the teacher on duty if you are in the playground) if the attempts to bully you don’t stop and report what happened.

Any further incidents of bullying or threatening behaviour by the same person may result in him/her ...

- sitting in the time-out area in the playground or classroom
- being on detention to consider more appropriate behaviour
- being referred to the Student Welfare Committee
- having parents contacted by the school and informed of the bullying behaviour

If you witness bullying behaviour always challenge/report it.

Remember ...it’s up to you!
Take control of the situation.

When students, parents and staff work together we create a safe and caring environment.

Students! You can control what happens by ...
- following the action plan,
- not retaliating with physical or verbal bullying
- telling an older person

Parents! You can control what happens by ...
- watching for signs of distress in your child
- listening to your child
- giving assurance and support
- discussing the action plan with your child
- advising your child to tell a staff member
- informing your child’s class teacher of suspected bullying
- attending interviews at school

Staff! You can:
- be role models in words and actions
- ensure students feel
  - safe and valued in the classroom
  - are listened to
- be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- encourage students to ask for help when needed
- report bullying to the Student Welfare team

Feeling safe and valued at Hammondville Public School

Our school community is committed to providing a safe and secure environment promoting personal growth and excellence by developing confidence and self-esteem.

You can control what happens.