Anti-bullying Policy

Lady Hawkins' School

Approved by:	Governors	**Date:** September 2023
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1. Policy Statement

All cases of bullying are serious, whether physical or emotional/psychological.

The aim of the policy is to prevent bullying of any sort and to ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the community, including Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should understand what bullying is and be familiar with the school policy on bullying: therefore, the aim of the policy is to help members of the school community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly, to prevent it.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Everyone in the community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously.

This policy is available on the school website, the school handbook area on teams on and on request from the Head teacher in hard copy. It should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour and Safety Policy
- SEN Policy

This anti-bullying document is also compliant with:
- Equality Act, 2010
- SEND Code of Practice 2014: 0 to 25 years
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies, October 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DFE, September 2016

2. Definition of bullying

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually but not exclusively repeated over a period of time, which intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally. It is often difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves, and it is often motivated by prejudice.

Examples of unacceptable bullying behaviour include:
- Physical (including sexual) assault
- Verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing or making offensive remarks
- Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group in a way that is intended to upset others. Examples include using social websites, mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, video and e-mail (please refer to the Cyberbullying Policy)
- Indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours

Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidatory but is often hidden and subtle. It includes actions or comments that are racist, religious, or cultural, homophobic, transphobic,

sexist, sexual or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair, colour or body shape) or any reference to Special Educational Needs and/or disability.

The seriousness of bullying cannot be emphasised enough. Bullying is among the highest concerns that parents have about their children's safety and well-being at and on the way to and from school. Bullying is also a primary concern of children and young people themselves. Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem and destroys their sense of security. Bullying impacts its victims' attendance and attainment at school marginalising those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives. It can be psychologically damaging, and, at worst, it has been a factor in pupil suicide.

It is acknowledged that bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and may well need help. It should also be recognised that the consequences of being allowed to 'get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victims. All pupils deserve the opportunity to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is. Pupils are educated through PSHE, assemblies, and the wider curriculum to raise awareness, with discussions of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment, assault and threatening behaviour. If staff feel that a criminal offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

3. Anti-bullying procedure

What to look for:
Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

Members of staff and all members of the community must be alert to the signs of bullying; legal responsibilities are known and community members should act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with the policy. Surveys have shown that in the vast majority of bullying incidents, most people knew that what was going on was wrong. Sometimes people, either through lethargy, peer group pressure, or tacit support for what is going on fail to take action.

What to do:
The way to stamp out bullying is for people to be aware of the issues involved, and to be clear in their own minds about what action to take should cases arise.

If you are the victim:
1. If you feel able to, confront the bully by verbally making him/her aware that you think that what he/she is doing is wrong.
2. Share your feelings with someone else.
3. If possible, talk to a member of Staff, your Tutor, Pastoral leader or Pastoral support officer about the incident. They may well be able to advise on an appropriate course of action or will be able to involve other people who can. There are also people outside the school who would be willing to help.

Childline: 0800 1111

Children's Commissioner: 020 7783 8330 Email: info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Procedure if a pupil should witness bullying behaviour:

1. Support the victim by offering your friendship and make it clear that in your opinion what is happening to them is wrong.
2. Encourage them to speak out on their own behalf by confronting the bully, or with their permission, confront the bully yourself.
3. Accompany the victim to a trusted adult, or suggest that you see their Tutor on their behalf.

Procedure for members of Staff should you witness an incident of bullying or if it is reported to you:

1. Reassure and support the pupils involved.
2. Advise them that you are required to pass details on to the relevant member of the pastoral team. (Form Tutor, Pastoral lead, Head).
3. Inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible.

4. What will happen?

The victim will be interviewed by their Form Tutor or pastoral lead, on their own, and asked to write an immediate account of events. A concern will then be logged in MyConcern. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. The victim is also given the opportunity to discuss his own reactions and behaviour towards the bully. The victim is given support and advice and counselling is suggested if deemed appropriate.

Once the Tutor and pastoral lead are clear that a bullying offence has been committed, the bully and any others involved will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them.

Details of the incident may be recorded in students' files. In the first instance, and depending on the severity of the case, usually the tutor, or pastoral lead will interview the pupil or pupils whose behaviour has caused distress and give them a warning, making it clear that any further incident (or discussion about the current incident) would be considered to be further bullying. It will be made clear why the behaviour was inappropriate and unacceptable. Support and counselling may be offered. A commensurate punishment will also be given.

If the Pastoral lead decides it is appropriate, or it is a student's second offence the Headteacher will become involved.

The following sanctions **may** be applied in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Safety Policy:

- Formal Warning: the Head teacher will speak to the pupils involved and will contact the parents or guardians giving details of the offence and inviting them into School to discuss the matter and to be present when their child is given a Formal School Warning.
- Fixed period exclusion at the Head teacher's discretion
- Permanent Exclusion at the Head teacher's discretion

These are minimum sanctions. In very serious cases, where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm, the incident is treated as a child protection (CP) concern, and it will be necessary to make a report to Social Services or the Police.

The school will raise awareness of the staff through training and take action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur. The key points in this policy will be discussed with pupils during Tutor time and assemblies and as necessary during PSHE sessions in all years and reinforced in other areas of the curriculum as the opportunities present themselves e.g. drama, and physical education. Opportunities will also be sought to allow parents to contribute to the school's actions to prevent bullying.

Bi-Annual pupil surveys will be used to facilitate an understanding of the level and type of bullying that pupils might have experienced.

Incidents of reported bullying will be followed up by Tutors, to monitor that the problem has been resolved. The record of bullying offences will be reviewed by the Headteacher and the Pastoral teams regularly at meetings to watch for patterns and check that the policy is effective.

5. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying may be defined as 'the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children and adults may be reluctant to admit to being the victims of cyberbullying'. It can take a number of different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), sexting (e.g sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, primarily between mobile phones) vilification/defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information/images and 'trolling' (abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online). It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

However, it differs from other forms of bullying in several significant ways:
- by facilitating a far more extreme invasion of personal space. Cyberbullying can take place at any time and intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe and personal.
- the potential for anonymity on the part of the bully. This can be extremely distressing for the victim
- the potential for the bully to play very rapidly to a larger audience so the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying.
- through the knowledge that the data is in the worldwide domain, disproportionately amplifying the negative effect on the victim, even though the bully may feel his / her actual actions had been no worse than conventional forms of bullying
- the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages as more people get drawn in as accessories. By passing on a humiliating picture or message a bystander becomes an accessory to the bullying.
- the profile of the bully and target can be different to other forms of bullying as cyberbullying can take place between peers and across generations. Teachers can be victims and age and size are not important.
- many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence, so it is important the victim saves the information.

Cyberbullying and the Law
Bullying is never acceptable, and the school fully recognizes its duty to protect all of its members and to provide a safe, healthy environment for everyone.

Education Law:
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyberbullying. Head teachers have the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off the school site.
- The Act also provides a defence for staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils.7 This is a whole school policy which also applies to Page 2 of 5 the Early Years Foundation Stage and Boarding Version 1.9 September 2021

Civil and Criminal Law
- There is not a specific law which makes cyberbullying illegal but it can be considered a criminal offence under several different acts including Protection from Harassment Act (1997), Malicious Communications Act (1988), Communications Act (2003) Obscene Publications Act (1959) and Computer Misuse Act (1990).

Preventing Cyberbullying
As with all forms of bullying the best way to deal with cyberbullying is to prevent it happening in the first place. There is no single solution to the problem of cyberbullying but the school will do the following as a minimum to impose a comprehensive and effective prevention strategy

6. Supporting Organisations

Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Beat Bullying: www.beatbullying.org

Childline: www.childline.org.uk

DfE: "Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies", and "Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools" March 2014: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventingand-tackling-bullying

DfE: "No health without mental health" https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-across-government-outcomes-strategy

Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

MindEd: www.minded.org.uk

NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk

PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk

Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk

The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk

Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk

Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk

Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

Childnet International: www.childnet.com

Digizen: www.digizen.org

Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk

Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

LGBTQ

EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk

Pace: www.pacehealth.org.uk

Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk

Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

SEND

Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk

Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk

DfE: SEND code of practice: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Racism and Hate

Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk

Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org

Report it: www.report-it.org.uk

Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org

Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED OR YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS BEING BULLIED, TELL YOUR PARENTS OR TEACHERS.