

HUNTER HALL SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING (Safeguarding) POLICY



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HUNTER HALL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy forms part of our Safeguarding procedures at Hunter Hall School.

It is written with consideration to Behaviour and Discipline in Schools 2016, Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017 and cyberbullying advice to Head teachers and staff 2014. It also has regard to KCSIE (Sept 2020) and WTTSC (sept 2018)

It is also written with regard to ISI regulatory requirements: Part 3-The Health and Welfare of pupils.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy and Child Protection policy.

Rationale

Our school aims to provide a safe environment where all children feel safe from bullying. **Any** form of bullying is contrary to the school's philosophy and will not be tolerated. Our position is to prevent bullying in so far as is reasonably practicable, by fostering a culture of tolerance and respect for others.

Our position: All pupils have the right to be free from bullying. A pupil has a right to seek assistance as soon as he/she feels threatened. Bullying is regarded as a serious and punishable offence and, therefore, suspension or expulsion from school may result. The school's position on bullying is presented to all members of the community: pupils, staff and parents. Our policy is available on our website, a hard copy of which is available in the school office.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be understood as the ***persistent or systematic*** use of superior strength or influence to intimidate another person (or persons) such that the repeated treatment received by that person (or persons) from the other (or others) causes, or is likely or intended to cause, hurt or harm (whether physical, sexual, psychological or social [for example besmirching a person's reputation either on or offline]). It is usually deliberate and repetitive, but even in the case of a single incident must be dealt with appropriately and recorded in pastoral record, as a single incident may become, in time, the first of a series of incidents.

Bullying can often be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, (known as protected characteristics), for example on the grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, SEND and disability, or because of the child's background (adoption for example). It may occur directly or through cyber-technology – see below:

It follows that bullying can take many forms, including the following:

- Verbal, involving extortion, humiliation, spreading rumours and exclusion from a group
- Gestural
- Interference with or damage to personal property

- 'Cyber' (the misuse of technology, e.g. texts, mobile phones, emails and the internet, including social networking sites) – **refer to Cyberbullying policy.**
- Physical - including pushing, hitting, punching, kicking or any other action causing hurt or injury

Whatever form bullying takes, physical or emotional, it can cause serious psychological damage. Even words, gestures or actions not intended to cause hurt sometimes can.

On this point, the school recognises, and tries to educate pupils about, the fine line that sometimes exists between what one party may regard as 'harmless teasing', a 'joke' or a 'prank' and what another may feel is genuinely hurtful and perceive as bullying.

There is no 'hierarchy' of bullying - all forms of bullying should be treated seriously and those related to 'protected characteristics' mentioned above can make children extremely vulnerable and must be dealt with very seriously and dealt with appropriately. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are laws that make it a criminal offence to assault, harass or threaten others.

OUR POLICY AIMS ARE:

- To prevent and/or deal with any behaviour that might constitute bullying.
- To promote an awareness of the need to ensure everyone is entitled to freedom from intimidation.
- To respond to any incident of bullying in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent manner.
- To safeguard and provide appropriate support to any pupil who has been the victim of bullying.
- To apply measures (including disciplinary sanctions, in accordance with the school's Discipline Policy), to any pupil who is found to be responsible for bullying, in addition to providing them with appropriate help and guidance to show them how they can take steps to repair the harm they have caused.
- To keep parents informed of actions taken in response to a complaint of bullying.

Our Anti- Bullying Strategy is:

- To promote a climate of openness in which it is widely perceived as 'right' to report any instance of anyone being treated improperly by anyone else and in which bullying specifically is understood to be unacceptable. Furthermore, the strategy works on the twin principles that bullying thrives on secrecy and prevention is better than cure.
- To ensure that a clear and effective reporting system exists and is known by all staff, pupils and parents for dealing with bullying included that of suspected bullying.
- To help to prevent bullying by providing opportunities for discussion by pupils and staff within the school's PSHE programme, as well as through other subject teaching and assemblies.
- To make sure that staff are well placed to administer the policy by incorporating anti-bullying as part of the induction of new staff.
- To ensure that pupils are aware of the standards and expectations regarding cyber activities and to include, as part of ICT training, educational training on cyber bullying and the effects it can have on the victim. (**see ICT/ Cyberbullying policy**)
- To provide opportunities for continuing professional development to staff, via INSET and other means, regarding their roles and responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying. In

particular, where necessary, this will involve investing in providing staff with the skills to work with situations where a factor is SEND, sexuality or transgender identity (LGBT).

- To ensure that all pupils have access at all times to an adult in school to whom they may talk in confidence and know that that adult will deal with the matter urgently and with discretion.
- To make sure pupils are aware of helplines, and ensure that such numbers are prominently displayed in school.
- To follow **up every** incident of bullying in order:
 - (a) to take any initial precautionary steps to ensure that a pupil who says (s)he has been bullied feels protected and reassured;
 - (b) to establish by investigation those facts which can be found out;
 - (c) to provide every possible support for the victim and perpetrators, where bullying has taken place;
 - (d) to ensure that false allegations are identified as such and dealt with appropriately and
 - (e) to help to prevent any reoccurrence of bullying where it has occurred.
- To make clear to pupils and parents that bullying is unacceptable and that the school will not tolerate such behaviour.
- To maintain an ethos of respect and tolerance for all individuals as presented in our overall aims for the school.
- To review and update (as necessary) this policy and its procedures annually and to make staff aware of any updates.
- To secure a copy of the up-to-date anti-bullying policy on the school website.

If there are child protection concerns whereby there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer SIGNIFICANT harm, this will be treated as a child protection concern and the DSL will be informed immediately. (Refer to Child Protection Policy)

PROCEDURE

- Class teachers **must inform** all new pupils that they can talk to any member of staff about bullying or anything else that is bothering them, whether this has taken place in or outside of school. The names of specific people to talk to are also displayed around the school as part of our safeguarding policy.
- Any incident of possible bullying **must be acted on by the member of staff** who has witnessed it or to whom it is reported. Incidents may be reported from a variety of sources: parents, pupils and teaching, administrative or ancillary staff.
- Teachers, administrative and other staff who receive a report of suspected bullying from a pupil or a parent **must inform the Deputy Head** immediately, or in her absence, the Head teacher.
- In every case involving an incident of possible bullying:
 - (a) consideration should be given to what immediate, precautionary steps might be taken to help the pupil to feel safe and secure
 - (b) the pupil's form teacher will be informed

- Following a report of possible bullying, the teacher and the Deputy Head **will investigate** the incident in order to check the facts and assess its seriousness. If the incident constitutes bullying, the teacher and Deputy Head will decide how best to proceed: different **solutions** may be needed for different pupils. Consideration will be given, amongst others, to the following issues:
 - contact with parents
 - if punishment is necessary, what sanction should be imposed
 - if the victim or perpetrator needs guidance, what advice will be appropriate:
 - For the victim: tips for reducing hypersensitivity, for controlling overreaction, for avoiding potentially fraught situations, for managing verbal exchanges, for avoiding escalation etc whilst making it clear that bullying is *never* acceptable.
 - For the perpetrator: tips for understanding others' feelings and viewpoints, for increasing self-awareness of motivation, for behaving within stipulated guidelines etc
 - what, if any, follow-up work is required, and by whom it will be undertaken.
- A note of any incident should be recorded in the pupil pastoral file (ISAMS) as well as a note on the level 3 sanction sheet if required (see appendix) – in head teacher's office. A note should be made if it is a case that a child has been bullied who has protected characteristics and has been bullied due to these, or indeed the perpetrator has protected characteristics and needs additional support.
- Written records of every investigation as well as any communication with parents will be kept in the pupil's electronic pastoral file (ISAMS)
- **Parents will be kept informed** of actions taken in response to a complaint of bullying.
- A log of level 3 bullying incidents is kept and a note made on our pastoral records (ISAMS) for internal review purposes and inspection, as required by the Head Teacher, Chair of Governors and safeguarding governor as appropriate. The level 3 sanction file is kept in the head teacher's office.
- The Head and governor in charge of safeguarding discuss any issues relating to bullying as part of their termly safeguarding meeting and the pastoral file (anonymised) relating to such incidents is available to the said governor to monitor at such meetings.
- In extreme cases, where it is felt there is perceived a danger to life or a threat of significant harm, or such bullying incidences have a severe effect on the overall demeanour of the child or family through bullying/cyber bullying, further advice may be sought from CSCB (Cumbria Safeguarding Children's Board) and police informed (where applicable) in line with all our safeguarding policies and procedures.

SANCTIONS

Sanctions for bullying will depend on the nature and severity of the bullying. Sanctions may include:

- (a) verbal warning and minuses (maximum of 3)
- (b) loss of privileges, withdrawal from activities

(c) parents informed

(d) in very severe cases the Head Teacher will be informed and suspension/exclusion may occur

As stated above where there is a risk of significant harm the DSL will be informed and the CSCB will be contacted and police informed where appropriate.

Ref: DCSF Guidance Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for school leaders and governors

APPENDIX 1

Register of Sanctions for serious misbehaviour (level 3 on Behaviour Management Plan) (ISI regulations part 3 – Welfare, Health and Safety of pupils)

(Note : refer to our pastoral record system for fuller explanations of more serious incidents)

NAME	YR	PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS	NATURE OF OFFENCE	DATE	SANCTION

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File kept in headteacher's study