

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 2022) and WTTSC (sept 2018 (2020)

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

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 deliberate intention to hurt another pupil or group, physically and/or emotionally, 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 the pastoral record, as a single incident may become, in time, the first of a series of incidents and lead to psychological damage for the victim/victims.

Bullying can often be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, (known as protected characteristics), for example on the grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, age, gender, sexual orientation SEND and disability. It may occur directly peer to peer, or through cyber-technology.

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 have a profound effect on an individual.

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. Children need to be educated as to what is not acceptable and why it is not acceptable, as do staff as recognised in our staff code of practice

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 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.

AT HH OUR POLICY AIMS ARE:

- To prevent and/or deal with any behaviour from children or adults that might constitute bullying.
- To promote an awareness of the need to ensure everyone is entitled to freedom from bullying and intimidation.
- To respond to **any** incident of bullying in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent manner.
- To safeguard and provide appropriate support to any pupil/adult who has been the victim of bullying.
- To apply measures (including disciplinary sanctions, in accordance with the school's discipline and sanctions policy/disciplinary code), to any pupil/adult 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, INSET, as well as through form tutor time, other subject teaching, school literature and assemblies, which provide opportunities for discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudiced language and what children and adults can do if they find themselves as innocent bystanders to bullying taking place.
- To make sure that staff are well placed to administer the policy by incorporating anti-bullying as part of the induction of all new staff and reminding established staff of their responsibilities at INSET and staff meetings.
- To ensure that adults and pupils are aware of the standards and expectations regarding cyber-activities and to include, as part of ICT teaching, 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, transgender identity (LGBT) or other protected characteristics.
- To ensure that all pupils always have access 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. This would also be applicable to any adult subject to bullying
- 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 person 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, staff 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 current 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 must 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 including cyber bullying, whether it is taking place inside or outside of school, 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, member of staff 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 victim to feel safe and secure
 - (b) the pupil's form teacher will be informed
- Following a report of possible bullying, the teacher who witnessed/reported the incident, and the Deputy Head **will investigate** the incident in order to check the facts and assess its seriousness. The deputy head will liaise with the headteacher as appropriate, depending on the specific nature and severity of the claim. If the incident constitutes bullying, the teacher and Deputy Head (and headteacher if deemed necessary) will decide how best to proceed: different **solutions** may be needed for different individuals. 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 and/or perpetrator needs guidance - what advice will be appropriate:
 - For the victim: tips for reducing hypersensitivity, for handling reactions, 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 school rules, policies and procedures 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), or staffing record as applicable, 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 the case that a child has been bullied and has protected characteristics, which may or may not have lead to the bullying, or indeed the perpetrator has protected characteristics and needs additional support. By doing this it is easy to see if patterns are emerging and where additional support may be needed.
- Written records of **every** investigation as well as any communication with parents will be recorded.
- Minus house point records are kept up to date and monitored by the Deputy Head

- **Parents will be kept informed** of actions taken in response to a complaint of bullying.
- A log of level 3 bullying incidents is kept in electronic and hard copy, and a note made on our pastoral records (ISAMS) for internal review purposes and inspection as required, by the Head Teacher. It is available and checked by the Chair of Governors and safeguarding governor as appropriate. The level 3 sanction file is kept in the head teacher's office in a locked filing cabinet.
- The Head teacher and governor in charge of safeguarding, discuss any issues relating to bullying and level 3 incidents 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 sort 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 minus house points
- (b) loss of privileges, withdrawal from activities, reflection sessions
- (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

This policy should be read in conjunction with :

- Pupil behaviour and sanctions policy
- Pupil behaviour and sanctions policy (staff guidance)
- Cyberbullying policy

For staff:

- Staff code of conduct
- Whistleblowing policy

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