

# HEMDEAN HOUSE SCHOOL

CAVERSHAM

## **10a Anti-Bullying Policy**

Last Updated: April 2020

Review Date: April 2021

### **Introduction**

At Hemdean House School we are committed to providing and encouraging a caring and secure environment where all pupils can learn and develop in order to prepare them for adult life, in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear. The ethos of our school fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour and we will challenge any behaviour that falls below this. In order to achieve this, it is vital that pupils, parents, staff and governors are aware of what is unacceptable behaviour within our school, what procedures and strategies are in place to deal with incidents of bullying and how methods intended to keep our pupils safe are monitored. We appreciate the seriousness of bullying and aim to work to prevent bullying. If it does happen, pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported through a consistent and constructive school response.

The member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) responsible for this policy is Helen Chalmers, who will decide if to report a bullying issue and or child protection concern.

All members of The Governing Body ensure they understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely to ensure that ensure that bullying at Hemdean House is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying policy.

### **Legislation**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. The Equality Act 2010 provides a Public Sector Equality Duty which requires public bodies, including schools, to have a regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relationships with people

## **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying is defined as:

- Behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another person either physically or emotionally. It can often involve the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more people. It can be planned or organised or may be unintentional.

This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying relating to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist or sexual bullying
- Cyber-bullying
- Peer on peer abuse

Bullying can be:

- Emotional
  - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical
  - pushing, kicking, hitting, spitting, punching or any use of violence or destruction of property
- Racist
  - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual
  - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic/ Transphobic
  - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal
  - name-calling, sarcasm, threats, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber
  - all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse
- Mobile Phone
  - threats by text messaging & calls
- Misuse of associated technology
  - i.e. camera & video facilities
- Social Media
  - misuse of sites such as Facebook, Twitter and You Tube

Bullying may be verbal, physical or psychological. In fact, any action which makes a child feel uncomfortable, insecure or threatened may be defined as bullying. At Hemdean House School we recognise that bullying can also occur by pupils on adults, adults on pupils as well as adults on adults.

It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted.

As a School community we understand that there are different roles within bullying. We discuss these roles with our children. We also understand that the same child can adopt different roles at different times or indeed at the same time:

- The ring leader, the person who through their social power can direct bullying activity.
- Assistants/associates who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring leader)
- Re-enforcers who give positive feedback to the bully, perhaps by smiling or laughing.
- Outsiders/bystanders who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour
- Defenders who try and intervene to stop the bullying or comfort children who experience bullying

Signs that might indicate bullying is occurring include:

- change of friendship groups
- lack of friends
- school rejection
- 'illness' at certain times or on certain days
- change in standard of work
- withdrawal/sudden lack of confidence
- severe cases of depression

Although the above list is most likely to apply to victims, changes in behaviour could indicate that someone has developed anti-social traits and may be bullying.

It is important to make the distinction between bullying and friends "falling out" with each other. Falling out is an inevitable part of a child's life that they need to learn to cope with. A single incident involving conflict, aggression, intimidation or nastiness is not bullying.

## **Vulnerable Children and Bullying**

We recognise that children regarded as vulnerable due to their home situation, disability, communication difficulty etc., are often more likely to be targets of bullying behaviour. As such, children identified as "vulnerable" are monitored more closely in vulnerable situations such as playtimes and lunchtimes.

## **Preventative Measures**

At Hemdean House we use a variety of methods for helping children to prevent bullying through the explicit and implicit curriculum. PSHE lessons, projects, drama, stories, literature, class and whole school assemblies. Circle times explicitly discuss differences between people and behaviour, including the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language. As well as the impact of bullying and help available to support children in how to deal with bullying behaviour including when and how to seek it.

More implicitly, by developing the children's self-esteem by promoting the highest possible standard of social and personal development and the consistent approach to behaviour (see Behaviour Policy), promote good behaviour choices and encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Our classroom rules are displayed in each classroom and around the school and all pupils are aware of what is deemed acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

Years 1 to 6 have 2 elected School Council members who can convey pupil ideas and suggestions for creating a caring and stimulating learning environment. The School Council meet with the Head Teacher termly to offer up pupil suggestions.

During the Autumn term PSHE materials on "Say No to Bullying" are covered by each class. During Anti-bullying week in November the whole school spends time considering the current theme. This is delivered through school assemblies or in class in order to respond to specific activities.

The Deputy Head Teacher holds weekly chat sessions so that the children are able to share their concerns in a confidential manner.

Staff regularly discuss behaviour with children and reassure children that staff are serious about dealing with bullying. Staff reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular discussion both inside and outside the classroom. At all times (and particularly during playtimes and lunchtimes) staff are vigilant regarding the interaction and behaviour of individuals and groups of children.

Staff reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings. One off incidents of aggressive behaviour or use of discriminatory language will be dealt with in accordance with the wider Behaviour Management Policy.

## **Procedures for Incidents of Bullying Behaviour**

- Pupils and parents will be encouraged to report bullying to their teachers within 24 hours of the incident occurring
- All children's and parents' concerns around bullying are taken seriously
- Opportunities will be taken to use the curriculum to promote good standards of behaviour by emphasising right actions and respect for every individual, e.g. PSHE, drama, history and English lessons all provide such opportunities
- Issues relating to positive and negative behaviour will be explored during assemblies
- Lessons on e-safety will be given in IT lessons

- Promotion of mutual respect in accordance with fundamental British values will complement Hemdean House School's anti-bullying stance, whilst this may happen more often in PSHE, it should underpin all lessons and other aspects of school life whether during lessons or in breaks or extracurricular activity
- Records are kept to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted or to enable patterns to be identified. A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern if there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm

Each case will be treated individually and depending on circumstances, one or more of the following strategies will be employed:

- Interviews/counselling of bully/victim by delegated member of staff (this may be done individually or together)
- In the case of serious incidents, informing the parents of both the bully and the victim of the incident by telephone and/or letter
- Requesting meetings with the parents of the bully and/or the victim
- When appropriate, involve outside agencies on behalf of the victim or bully
- Regular follow up to bullying incidents will be dealt with or instigated by the Head Teacher. This will be by letter or telephone to parents and by interview with bully or victim. Daily reporting to the teacher by the victim and/or bully may be used
- Clear written records to be kept of all repeated bullying behaviour. A Behaviour Management Record is to be completed
- Clear written records to be kept in the school cause for concern file and all incidents cross referenced to the files of pupils involved
- Restorative justice may also be implemented (if appropriate), where the bully will apologise to the victim and take responsibility for his/her actions

The consequences of bullying behaviour must reflect the seriousness of the incident so that the children can see that bullying is unacceptable and punishable. Sanctions imposed, in line with the schools Behaviour Management Policy, will depend on a variety of factors but must be applied consistently, reasonably and fairly and take into account the individual needs of vulnerable pupils. In all cases the sanctions will include an apology to the victim.

Sanctions that may be used include:

- Being kept in at playtime/lunchtime for a fixed period
- Being prevented from taking part in a treat
- Community involvement in school.
- Removal of privileges
- Report Card for behaviour
- Detentions
- Exclusion from peers/lesson
- Short term fixed exclusion
- Permanent exclusion from school

The victim of bullying will be assured that they should immediately report any future incidents and know they will be listened to. The bully will also be offered support. There are often underlying reasons why a child displays bullying behaviour and acts in this way, and that needs to be addressed. Extra supervision and monitoring of the children's behaviour following incidents will be put in place.

### **Bullying outside School and cyber bullying**

This policy relates to children's behaviour in school, when supervised by staff outside school e.g. when on school trips or at sports fixtures and when in extended school services including breakfast or after school clubs.

The DfE outlines the specific statutory power, held by Head Teachers, to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Head Teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control of a member of school staff. This can relate to any anti bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises and can be seen as of particular value when dealing with cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying may be carried out in many ways, including:

- Sending or posting harmful or upsetting text, images, emails or other messages, using the internet, mobile phones or other communication technology
- Posting malicious or abusive comments on a blog, personal website and social networking site
- Filming or passing on inappropriate material via mobile phone
- It can include threats and intimidation, harassment, defamation, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation and unauthorised publication of private information or images
- It can include messages intended as jokes, but which have a harmful or upsetting effect
- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Silent or abusive phone calls or using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chat-room

At Hemdean House School the issue of cyber bullying is explicitly tackled in a once yearly taught session looking at internet safety; however, we recognise that this is a fast-developing area and that we need to remain vigilant and be prepared to respond to a possible increase in incidents in the future potentially against both pupils and staff.

If members of the school community are involved in cyber bullying against pupils, then the Head Teacher does have the power "to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off school site" which could mean using any of the sanctions as given above or involving external agencies such as the police as appropriate.

## **Responsibilities of all Stakeholders**

- Our Staff will:
  - Foster in our pupils' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
  - Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils
  - Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is being bullied and to the bully and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens
  - Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying
  - Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them
  - Report suspected cases of bullying to Head Teacher
  - Report safeguarding issues to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
  - Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken
  - Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures. These can be found in the School's Behaviour Management Policy.
  - The Head Teacher will decide if the incident warrants outside intervention and whether to refer it to external agencies such as police, social care and the local authority if appropriate
  
- We expect our pupils to:
  - Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity
  - Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is safe to do so
  - Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances
  
- Everyone should:
  - Work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying
  
- Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:
  - Not suffer in silence, but have courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets

## **Continuous professional development of Staff**

Training will be made available to all staff, so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems. Where appropriate, sources of support will be sought to invest in specialised skills to understand the needs of the pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils.

## **Links with other School policies**

This policy only works if it ensures that the whole school community understands that bullying is not tolerated and understands the steps that will be taken to prevent and respond to bullying. This policy also needs to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- SEN Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct
- E-safety Policy

## **Monitoring and Review**

Hemdean House School's Anti-bullying Policy is monitored regularly by the Senior Leadership Team who report to the Governors about its implementation and effectiveness.

This policy will be reviewed at least once a year (alongside the Behaviour Management Policy) as well as if incidents occur that suggest the need for review.