



HERSCHEL GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

Date approved by LGB: June 2019

***Date for revision: June 2020**

Approved by: LGB

**Author: Alison Oxley
Assistant Headteacher**

***subject to any relevant changes in legislation or other appropriate guidelines**

Statement of Intent

"Respect for Others" means that we are always considerate in all of our dealings with other people. As a school we aim to promote a positive and supportive ethos. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school both within and outside the school grounds. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a pupil orientated school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to report it.

It is the school's intention to create a caring environment in which any individual who feels threatened can tell a trusted adult. Not telling protects the bully and gives a message that he/she can continue such unacceptable behaviour.

Scope

This policy applies only to incidents of bullying which take place on school premises. However, the school has an enduring interest in the wellbeing and conduct of its pupils and will respond positively to any information it receives about bullying outside school. If it emerges that if a pupil is responsible for bullying another pupil outside school then this will be dealt with by the school and (if appropriate) parents/carers informed. If pupils are being bullied by pupils of another school, then that school will be informed.

If information is received that a child is being bullied by a sibling or parent/carer outside school this will initially be discussed with the parents. If concerns persist then the matter will be referred to Children's Services in line with our safeguarding policy.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is a ***persistent***, deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate someone. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), blackmail
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence or any kind of inappropriate physical contact
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments, sending sexual imagery
- Homophobic / biphobic / transphobic because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber sending of inappropriate messages by phone, text, Instant Messenger, through websites and social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading images by mobile phone or via the internet.

Bullying is not a one off falling out between friends

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying and to resolve them by dealing directly with the source.

People are often afraid to confront bullies and we need to support pupils to gain confidence in dealing with any incidents.

The Impact on Emotional Wellbeing

Bullying has a significant effect on young people's mental health, emotional well-being and identity.

Bullying which is not responded to effectively, can cause children and young people to develop other coping strategies such as self-isolation or self-harm; and cause significant disruption to their ability to engage with school, learning and their wider relationships. Young people with mental health or emotional difficulties need support for their mental health needs in school in a way that is non-stigmatising and special care must be taken to avoid them being subject to bullying.

The school needs to ensure that young people feel able to talk about bullying and how it affects their emotional well-being.

There needs to be recognition and support for the emotional needs of young people, both those being bullied and those who bully others.

Objectives of this Policy

Bullying will not be tolerated.

As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.

All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises

- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Staff, especially the Form Tutor, play a key role in helping to identify changes in pupil behaviour.

In school signs

- Attendance may deteriorate
- Avoidance of particular lessons / activities
- Look unhappy / nervous
- finds it difficult to join a group during class work and discussion;
- reluctant to answer questions in class or approach for academic help;
- signs or spoken language which imply an unusual lack of self-esteem;
- disengagement during group activities;
- isolated or alone at lunch or break time;
- unusual lack of care or engagement in class work and homework.

Situations which are identified early are usually easier to resolve. Staff who become aware of bullying must report it to the Head of Learning.

Prevention

Herschel Grammar School is a friendly and positive environment. Our behaviour policy is underpinned by respect. This needs to be maintained by everyone within the school community. Issues such as bullying, racism and homophobia are frequently discussed in the PSHCE programme. Pupils learn bullying behaviour from each other, but also from adults - parents and teachers. Pupils should learn from the adult relationships in school which aim to be co-operative and supportive.

In lessons co-operation can be encouraged through setting group work, and through the thoughtful arrangements of such groups, pupils can be encouraged to extend their relationships.

Staff must be vigilant at times when pupils are not in lessons. Bullying can occur during break/lunch, or in movement time between lessons, or when lessons start late, as supervision is less during these periods. It is therefore important that duty staff adopt a high profile and that lessons and duties start punctually.

We will use a range of methods for helping to prevent bullying and to raise awareness. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Consideration of all opportunities for raising awareness of bullying through displays, assemblies, peer support and Student Voice.
- help and support information on the school website
- Peer Mentors on duty at break and lunchtime when possible
- signing a behaviour contract, parents also to sign
- eliminating the 'snitching is bad' culture
- Making outcomes obvious within the confines of confidentiality
- Sixth Form Peer Mentors for lower school
- PSHCE work involving strategies for speaking out confidently if issues arise
- Challenge practice which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Regularly update and evaluate our approaches to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Regular consultation with School Council
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.
- Teach pupils to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media responsibly
- Support parents in their understanding of their children's responsible use of mobile phones

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to a member of staff or a Peer Mentor. Bullying can be reported anonymously using the online whisper tool from the school website but names of pupils involved should be given.
2. Peer Mentors are trained to "actively listen". You may want to be supported by a Peer Mentor from a distance or initially only want someone to talk to.
3. The person bullied will be consulted before a course of action is decided.
4. When appropriate, the incidents will be recorded with written statements from both victim and bully
5. When appropriate parents should be informed and may be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
6. We will provide appropriate support to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour and the bully will be monitored.
7. Clear, accurate written records must be kept of all interviews with parents/pupils. The school maintains a central register of bullying incidents and follow up.
8. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

Outcomes

It is difficult to prescribe a course of action which could apply to all cases.

Peer Mentors will deal with cases where they feel they have the necessary skills to do so and where this option is the victim's choice. Peer Mentors receive basic training in a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied, including restorative approaches. Peer Mentors will alert the Head of Learning if the bullying continues.

The Head of Learning's judgement and experience of the pupils will determine what action to follow.

- Staff should not deal with incidents of bullying by acting alone. Normally staff should work with the Head of Learning.
- It is important to remember that both the bully(ies) and the victim have a problem and will need support.
- Staff must show concern for the victim and demonstrate fairness towards the bully.
- Wherever possible, the aim should be to facilitate constructive communication between the bully and the victim - this may take some time. When interviewing the bully the aim should be to get the bully to understand the victim's feelings. Parents may be involved.
- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place such as community service and / or separation of bully and victim in lessons.
- Generally, staff who teach the person who has been bullied will be made aware of the situation so they can support better but this will be discussed with the victim first
- Should bullying/intimidation continue, the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) will become involved and, if necessary, additional sanctions imposed. These may include internal suspension or even exclusion.
- In cases where the Head of Learning believes the dynamic of the relationships in a particular form/group are too negative a pupil(s) may be transferred to another form/group. This may only take place with the approval of the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral). In such situations the parents/guardians must be consulted.
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre

0845 345 4345

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4)

0845 1205 204

Parentline Plus

0808 800 2222

Youth Access

020 8772 9900

Bullying Online

www.bullying.co.uk

Visit the Kidscape website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.