

HUTTON CE GRAMMAR SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Statement of Intent

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We wish to create a culture of respect and tolerance. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at schools.

As a Church school all we do is underpinned by Scripture, striving to ensure that everyone within our community is supported and encouraged to always make the most of their God-given talents. Our school community is based on four rights — the right to learn, the right to teach, the right to feel secure and the right to dignity. Our policy is based around the recognition of what students do well and the understanding that when behaviour is not as it should be we seek to address it and move forwards together. This is exemplified in Colossians 3:13:

'Bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.'

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines a number of legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. These measures are part of the school's Behaviour Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents/carers and students work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero tolerance policy for bullying.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

This policy has been written in accordance with DfE advice, including, but not limited to:

- DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (2017)

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school's:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Online Safety Policy

2. Definition

For the purpose of this policy, bullying is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations

Vulnerable students are more likely to be the target of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable students may include, but are not limited to:

- students with special educational needs and disabilities.
- students who are adopted.
- students suffering from a health problem.
- students with caring responsibilities

3. Types of bullying

Many different kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or special educational needs are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (Cyber)

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours including sexual violence (including sexualised language), online sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes and includes inappropriate sexual behaviours including sexual violence (including sexualised language), online sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

4. Statutory implications

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

5. Prevention

The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement (Statement of intent) which is regularly promoted across the whole school.

All reported or witnessed instances of bullying in the school are investigated by a member of staff.

Staff encourage student co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work.

All types of bullying are discussed as part of the curriculum, and diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.

Seating arrangements in class will be changed and organised in a way that prevents instances of bullying.

Potential victims of bullying are drawn into working groups with children who do not abuse or take advantage of them.

Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.

All members of the school community are made aware of the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

A safe, supervised place is available for students to go to at lunch if they are involved in conflict with their peers, or wish to avoid a bully.

Students deemed vulnerable will meet with a member of the Pastoral Team (mentors/Form tutors/Learning Co-ordinators/Deputy Headteacher) to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly.

5.12. Members of the Pastoral Team will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

Before a vulnerable student joins the school, the student's Tutor, Learning Co-ordinator and the designated safeguarding lead will develop a strategy to help prevent bullying from happening **6.**

Signs of bullying

Some of the signs that a student may be a victim of bullying include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Asking to be driven to school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Truancy
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill in the morning □ Decreased involvement in school work
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Missing dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises

- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered

- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating.

Students who display a significant number of these signs are approached by a member of staff, in order to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.

7. Staff principles

Prevention is at the forefront of the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

Staff treat reports of bullying very seriously.

Staff do not ignore signs of suspected bullying.

Unpleasantness from one student towards another is always challenged and never ignored.

Staff take action immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.

Staff always respect a students' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to. If the member of staff believes the student is in serious danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the designated safeguarding lead immediately.

Should students wish to report bullying of any kind, including that linked to sexual harassment, online sexual abuse and sexual violence, they will be allowed to do so in a supportive and confidential environment.

Follow-up support is given to both the victim and bully following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

8. Key roles and responsibilities

The governing board evaluates and reviews this policy to ensure that it is non-discriminatory.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be alert to possible bullying of students and to deal with incidents as the highest priority.

The headteacher reviews and amends this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in the previous year to improve procedures.

The Pastoral Team keeps a record of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.

The Pastoral Team will analyse the data at appropriate intervals in order to identify any trends in the types of bullying occurring and implement the appropriate measures to tackle it.

The CPD Lead arranges appropriate training for staff members.

Each Learning Co-ordinator corresponds and meets with parents/carers where necessary. They also provide a point of contact when more serious bullying incidents occur.

All members of staff ensure that they are alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the school's pastoral team of such observations.

All staff will avoid gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.

All staff understand the composition of student groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.

All staff have a duty to report any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a student for support.

Members of staff who receive reports of bullying will offer emotional support to victims and alert the relevant member of the school's pastoral team

Parents/carers are advised to inform the school if they are concerned that their child may be being bullied or be involved in bullying.

Students are advised to inform a member of staff if they witness bullying, or are a victim of bullying.

Students are taught not to make counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.

Students are taught to walk away from any dangerous situations and avoid involving other students in incidents.

Students are advised to retain all evidence of cyber bullying.

9. Cyber bullying

The school has in place a Behaviour Policy, which outlines the school's zero tolerance approach to cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying is viewed in the same light as any other form of bullying

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from students' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, the Deputy Headteacher/Headteacher will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the relevant policies.

10. Procedures

Minor incidents are reported to the victim's Tutor/Learning Co-ordinator, who investigates the incident and sets appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:

- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the students being interviewed, including electronic communication
- If a student is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to the First Aid Room for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews

- A witness is used for serious incidents
- If appropriate, the alleged bully, the victim and witnesses, are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete
- All concerned students are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils

Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic and sexual bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

11. Sanctions

If the Pastoral Team is satisfied that bullying did take place, the student will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.

The Pastoral Team informs the pupil of the type of sanction to be used in this instance and future sanctions if the bullying continues.

If possible, the Pastoral Team will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the bully. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion is used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully.

The perpetrator is made to realise that some students do not appreciate the distress they are causing, and that they should change their behaviour.

Parents/carers are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

The Pastoral Team informally monitors the pupils involved over the next half-term.

12. Support

The Tutor informally checks whether the bullying has stopped on a regular basis after the initial complaint of bullying.

The Learning Co-ordinator formally checks whether the bullying has stopped the week after the bullying, and again during the same half term.

If necessary, group dynamics are broken up by members of staff by assigning places in classes.

The victim is encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

The victim is encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school club or activity.

13. Follow up support

The progress of both the bully and the victim are monitored. One-on-one sessions to discuss how they are progressing may be appropriate.

If appropriate, follow-up correspondence is arranged with parents/carers after the incident.

Students who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:

- Being listened to
- Having an opportunity to meet with a member of staff
- Being reassured
- Being offered continued support
- Being offered counselling, where appropriate

Students who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents/carers

Students who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the designated safeguarding lead will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

In cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that the student cannot successfully reintegrate back into the school, the headteacher and designated safeguarding lead will look to transfer the pupil to another mainstream school.

Where a child has developed such complex needs that alternative provision is required, then the student who has been the victim of bullying, their parents and the designated safeguarding lead will meet to discuss the use of alternative provision.

14. Bullying outside of school

Teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the student is under the lawful control of the member of staff.

The headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

The headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police or the anti-social behaviour coordinator of the action taken against a pupil.

If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed.

14. Information for Parents

- If your child is being bullied do not encourage him to “hit back”. It may be just what the bully wants. Emphasise to your son that there is nothing wrong with him and that he can be helped. Contact the school.
- Incidents of bullying should be immediately referred to the Form Tutor. Senior pastoral staff may then be called in to help. Although the nature of the response will depend upon the circumstances, action will be taken which does not necessarily involve punishment in the first instance. Staff are experienced and use tact and discretion in their follow-up. The most important matter is that the bullying stops.

15. Information for Students

What to do if you are being bullied

- Try to ignore the person(s) who is attempting to bully you.
- Do **NOT** retaliate in a physical or verbal way. Walk calmly away from the situation.
- Tell someone what has been happening, even if you have been warned not to. You may go to any teacher, particularly your form tutor, pastoral head or your parents. They will want to know and to help.
- There may be others being bullied so you will be helping them as well as yourself by talking about your experience.
- Do **NOT** blame yourself.
- Think whether you might have done anything to encourage the situation.

What to do if you see someone else being bullied

- Find a teacher (possibly form tutor or pastoral head) and explain what you know.
- Do **NOT** just ignore bullying. Think about how you would feel in the victim’s position. Remember that bullying doesn’t go away by itself.
- Informing a responsible adult is not “telling tales”; it is acting responsibly to help another person in distress.

Some advice on how to avoid being bullied

- Try not to be oversensitive to every comment (it may not be intended to be hurtful).
- Be friendly. Friends help you avoid these situations.
- Think positively about yourself. Be confident.
- Don’t make unpleasant remarks about anybody even if you intend them as a joke.

Next Review	Curriculum & General Purposes Committee	Autumn Term 2024
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