

# Anti-Bullying Policy

**Date Policy due to be reviewed:** July 2019

**Committee Responsible for Policy:** Full Governing Body Committee

## Section 1 - Policy Introduction

It is a Government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. It is our school's duty to promote good behaviour. The policy has regard to relevant legislation and governmental guidance, 'Safe to learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools'. It is compliant with 'Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships' and the DFE guidance – 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (2015).

### Definition

Bullying is when an unpleasant situation becomes out of control. Bullying can be 'direct', including physical violence, mental abuse, such as name-calling, threatening, ignoring or insulting another person's family, religion, race, sexuality, mental health or anything which intentionally makes a person feel unhappy or intimidated. This can also include 'friendly jokes' and 'banter'. It can also be 'indirect', for example being ignored, not spoken to or isolated from friendship groups. Bullying can be defined as actions that are meant to be hurtful and which happen persistently, on a regular basis or over a sustained period of time.

Bullying can occur through various types of anti-social behaviour. It can take many forms:

- **Physical:** a child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, pinched.
- **Verbal:** can take the form of name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- **Emotional:** excluded from discussions/activities, tormented, humiliated.
- **Racial, Religious or Cultural:** a student may experience racially abusive taunts, comments, graffiti or gestures.
- **Disability or SEN:** a student may experience insults, taunts or inappropriate comments about their physical and/or mental health.
- **Cyberbullying:** this is the deliberate use of ICT, particularly mobile phones or the internet, to upset or insult someone else.
- **Sexual or sexist:** a student may experience sexual taunts about their body shape, appearance or preferences in regard to sexual stereotyping.
- **Damage to property or theft:** a student may have their property regularly damaged, vandalised or stole. Physical threats may be used to bully in order that the student hands over property.
- **Homophobic:** bullying that is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people

## Section 2 - Entitlement

**It is a basic right of all young people to receive their education free from fear, humiliation and abuse. Every person who is a part of Hillcrest School has a responsibility to take action to care for each other in order to create and maintain a secure and safe environment at school.**

At Hillcrest School we aim to...

- Encourage students to report serious situations
- Create an environment in which students know they will be listened to
- React to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- Prevent the continuation of harmful behaviour. (Physical and Verbal)
- Safeguard any learner who has experienced any form of bullying based on their race, religion, culture, ethnicity, gender, disability and sexual orientation.
- Prevent our students from being drawn into any form of anti-social behaviour or extremist conduct as a result of pressure placed on them by other members of our community.
- Provide a variety of sources of support for learners who have experienced bullying.

- Apply disciplinary procedures to learners who adopt anti-social behaviour to ensure they learn from the experience.
- Offer help, support and counselling as is appropriate to bully(ies) to enable them to address their anti-social behaviour
- Ensure that teaching materials, assembly themes and workshops delivered by external visitors do not give a negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, sexuality, disability, etc
- Monitor situation and the impact of interventions over a period of time.
- Promote the key 'British Values' of mutual tolerance and respect for people from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

This policy aims to ensure a consistent school response to bullying incidents that may occur. We also aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibility with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

### **Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The Governing Body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately. The Governing Body monitors incidents of serious bullying that may occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The Governors require the Head to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the Governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the Chair of Governors to look into the matter. The Governing Body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the Governing Body notifies the Headteacher, asks her to conduct an investigation into the case and report to a representative of the Governing Body.

#### **The role of the Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all members of staff (teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the Governing Body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with all children why this behaviour is wrong.

The Headteacher will ensure that all pupils are aware that they should:

- Report incidents of bullying to an adult if they are the victim
- Report incidents of bullying if they are a witness
- Treat others as they would wish to be treated
- Accept the consequences of their behaviour

The Headteacher ensures that staff receives sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying. The Headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

## **The Role of the Teacher and Support Staff**

All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place. If teachers become aware of an issue which involves bullying, they will refer it to the College Leader and/or Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral). All bullying concerns are to be logged on CPOMS. This is regularly monitored by the Deputy Headteacher.

Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. All staff will monitor the situation and if a child continues to be bullied over a period of time, the Deputy Headteacher will be informed and the child's parents will be informed. When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the class teacher / form tutor will deal with the issue in the first instance. The teacher may also offer counselling and support for the victim. All members of staff are offered training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help students understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. PSD, Religious Education, visits, assemblies and circle time all provide opportunities to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and help create a positive atmosphere.

### **Hillcrest School Staff Development**

As part of our commitment to ensuring every child should be able to learn in a school environment free from bullying of any kind and in which they feel safe and supported we will ensure the following actions are taken in respect of staff development –

- This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated in light of changes in national legislation.
- We will respond to specific incidents that may occur and update our policy or guidance if necessary.
- Staff will be fully informed of any relevant changes to policy or guidance.
- Staff training is in place for all staff, including NQT's, to ensure all staff are fully informed of current practice and are equipped to implement our policy at all times.
- Our Deputy Headteacher will attend regular training sessions with regard to Behaviour and Attendance as organised by the LA and Oaks Network.
- These sessions will be fed back to all staff at regular intervals.
- Staff will undertake regular CPD training on a range of issues that may lead to bullying, ie – extremist radicalisation, gang culture, child sexual exploitation, honour violence, mental health, sexual orientation.

## **The Role of the Parent**

Parents should:

- Look for unusual behaviour in your child. For example, a child may suddenly not wish to come to school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to his/her normal standard
- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how his / her day has gone, how lunch time was spent etc. If you feel that your child may have been the victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. We cannot help unless we are informed. Your concern will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important to advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Tell your own child that there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that he /she are being bullied.
- Ensure that your child is fully aware of the policy concerning bullying and that he / she need not be afraid to ask for help.
- Remind your child that he/she must tell an adult at school if they feel they are being bullied and that they will know what to do about it.
- Parents also have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

## **Signs and Symptoms of a child experiencing bullying**

A child may display signs or behaviour that might indicate that he or she is being bullied. Parents should watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents and families are often the first to detect symptoms of bullying. Common symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability. It can be helpful to ask questions about progress and friends at school; how break times and lunchtimes are spent; and whether your child is facing problems or difficulties at school. Don't dismiss negative signs. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

Parents 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
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- 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 money continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home very hungry (snack has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- 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
- stops eating

## **The role of Students**

You have a responsibility to prevent bullying.

### **If you are bullied, or you see someone being bullied:**

- Remember that it is not your fault. Nobody deserves to be bullied.
- Try to stay in a friendly group.
- Try to be confident even if you do not feel it, but remember walking away is not cowardly.
- If you are worried you can go to the Zone or OLC at lunchtime to be with other students.
- Keep a diary recording what happened, when, where, and with whom.
- Speak to the victim and ask them if they require any help and support
- You should not encourage the bully.

### **Who you should tell:**

- Your Form Tutor
- Your College Learning Leader
- The school Safeguarding Team (Mr Connor-Hemming, Mrs Bunce and Mrs Penn)
- Any member of staff you feel happy to talk to, or feel you can trust
- Your parent, carer or anyone at home
- Your friend, if this helps

- In an emergency tell the nearest adult.

#### **When to tell:**

- If you are afraid – report the bullying as soon as you can.
- Otherwise – report the bullying when you are not in lessons – before school, at break, at lunchtime or after school. Staff will make time to listen to you.

#### **Important!**

- It does not help to keep the problem to yourself. You need support, and students who bully need help so that they can change their behaviour.
- The problems are unlikely to go away if you ignore them, and they could get worse.
- Take a friend with you if you are worried about telling someone – your friend may help you.
- Staff will listen to you in confidence as far as they can, but you must be aware that they may have to pass on certain information to get you the help you need. They will always tell you what they are going to do.

### **Section 4 - Action to be taken when bullying is suspected**

When there is serious or continued bullying, both the parents of the alleged perpetrator and the victim are informed by the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) and/or College Leader. If bullying is suspected we will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If an instance of bullying is identified the following action will be taken:

Help, support and counselling will be given as appropriate to both the victim/s and the bully/bullies

We support the victims in the following ways:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, or another member of staff if they choose
- Informing the victim's parents and by offering continued support
- By taking one or more disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying

We will support the bully by talking about what happened to discover why they became involved. Other actions include:

- Informing the bully's parents
- Continuing to work with the bully in order to change prejudiced attitudes as far as possible
- Suggesting counselling accessed through the child's GP.

Taking one or more of the disciplinary steps in line with the School's behaviour policy. Action must be appropriate to the age of the child but may include:

1. An official warning to stop offending
2. Informing the bully's parents
3. Meeting with parents/carers to agree a Behaviour Contract
4. Formal review of Behaviour Contract over an agreed period of time
5. Formal fixed term exclusion from school if bullying continues to persist
6. Informing the police of on-going bullying concerns as necessary.

### **Section 5 - What is Cyber-bullying?**

Cyber-bullying has been defined as –

“The use of information and communications technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the use of the internet, to deliberately upset someone else.”

- Cyber-bullying can be an extension of face-to-face bullying.

- Our concern is that cyber-bullying invades home and personal space.
- Cyber-bullying is a form of bullying and can affect learners and staff.
- Cyber-bullying is not a specific criminal offence but laws concerning harassment and threatening behaviour may be applied.

Cyber-bullying has many forms –

- Threats
- Intimidation
- Harassment
- Stalking (repeatedly sending unwanted texts / messages)
- Manipulation
- Happy Slapping (video recording of anti-social behaviour)
- Publication of private information or images.

It is essential to understand that some incidents of cyber-bullying may be unintentional and the consequences may also be unintentional.

It is important to stress those by-standers or observers of cyber-bullying may become perpetrators by allowing these actions to take place.

### **Hillcrest School's response to cyber-bullying...**

Cyber-bullying is a form of bullying. We will adopt our full range of anti-bullying strategies to combat this form of bullying. Additional strategies available to us in order to combat this form of bullying include –

- Monitoring the use of ICT during school hours.
- Working to ensure the use of mobile phones is at a minimum during school hours
- Confiscating mobile phones.
- Restricting access to ICT provision during school hours.
- Raising awareness of this particular form of bullying through PSD sessions and Assemblies.
- Encouraging parents to monitor use of ICT outside of school hours.
- Providing learners with access to a range of means of reporting incidents causing concern.
- Working closely with the Police to report concerns at the earliest opportunity.

If parents / carers are concerned please contact the school. We would ask all parents / carers to:

- Be vigilant of how their child uses such technologies.
- Use the relevant safety 'tools' that are available to help monitor and manage the internet
- Keep any evidence of offending emails, text messages or online conversations

The school reserves the right to contact the police and/or exclude a student from school for incidents of cyber-bullying or inappropriate behaviour on social media in and out of school. Such forms of behaviour bring the school community into disrepute.

## ***Supporting the learning environment: Digital Media***

- Recording any member of the school community without their permission is not allowed
- The display, supply or posting of any such materials will result in a C5 exclusion
- The school does not take responsibility for inappropriate use of digital media outside of school hours or outside of the school premises. Such issues which affect the running of the school will result in the involvement of any appropriate agency (e.g. the Police) and the school following the 'Getting it Right policy towards the individual'.

### **Section 6 - Homophobic Bullying**

What is Homophobic bullying?

Homophobic bullying is bullying which is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people.

Homophobic bullying can be experienced by a variety of people –

- Young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- Young people who are thought to be lesbian, gay or bisexual
- Young people who are different in some way.
- Young people who have gay friends or family.
- Teachers who may or may not be lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Homophobic bullying can be carried out by a variety of people –

- Anyone.
- People who think lesbian, gay and bisexual people should be bullied because they do something 'wrong'.
- People who may be gay themselves and feel angry about this.
- People who think gay people have fewer rights than heterosexual people.
- People who think gay parenting is wrong.

Homophobic bullying can look like other forms of bullying –

- Physical Bullying
- Verbal Bullying
- Cyberbullying

### **Hillcrest School's response to homophobic bullying...**

Homophobic language must be challenged to ensure that it is not acceptable.

In addition to following our Anti-Bullying Procedures we will also ensure that the following guidance is followed -

- Homophobic bullying is not acceptable.

- We will ensure that learners are aware that homophobic language will not be tolerated in school
- All incidents of homophobic language will be recorded and dealt with appropriately.
- If a learner uses homophobic language we will ensure that they are aware of the effects such language has on people.
- If a learner makes persistent remarks they will be subjected to our Behaviour Policy and our Anti-Bullying Policy. The parents of such a learner will be contacted immediately. In the event of the problem continuing, the parents will be invited into school to discuss further sanctions.
- We will also offer support to learners and parents in order for them to fully understand the consequences of such language or behaviour and will provide support if necessary.
- The school works hard to ensure that prevention is the first step in our strategy to remove homophobic bullying. The use of PSD lessons, Assemblies, Guest Speakers and our Support Staff play a crucial role in this aspect of our strategy.

The school reserves the right to exclude a student from school for incidents of homophobic bullying. This may be either an internal or external exclusion based on the nature and severity of the incident.

## **Section 7 - Bullying around Race, Religion and Culture (Racist Bullying)**

What is Racist Bullying?

The term refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith, community, national origin or national status.

Under the current political climate we endeavour to empower our students to be resilient against the pressure being placed on young people from different forms of extremist ideologies, ie – English Defence League (EDL) and Islamic State (ISIS / ISIL). As a result of the increasing use of social media, young people are being drawn into joining extremist groups and undertaking actions that are designed to deliberately offend or hurt other religious and racial groups. In addition, we recognise the growing impact of right-wing extremism in the UK and seek to ensure all members of our school community are valued and respected irrespective of their nationality, ethnicity or country of birth.

Racist bullying can be experienced by a variety of people:

- Young people from all ethnic groups.
- Young people who are thought to be from a particular ethnic group.
- Young people who have different religious or cultural beliefs.
- Young people whose friends or family are from different ethnic groups.
- Young people whose friends or family hold different religious or cultural beliefs.
- Teachers who are from different ethnic groups.
- Teachers who hold, or are believed to hold, different religious or cultural beliefs.

Racist bullying can be carried out by any member of the school community.

Racist bullying can take the form of other types of bullying –

- Physical Bullying
- Verbal Bullying
- Cyberbullying
- Distributing extremist literature in the community

## **Hillcrest School's response to racist bullying...**

In addition to following our Anti-Bullying Procedures we will also ensure that the following guidance is followed –

- As outlined in our commitment to British Values, any form of racist bullying is not acceptable.
- We will ensure that learners are aware that racist bullying will not be tolerated in school
- All incidents of racist bullying will be recorded and dealt with appropriately.
- If a learner uses language that may be considered racist we will ensure that they are aware of the effects such language has on people.
- If a learner makes persistent remarks they will be subjected to our Behaviour Policy and our Anti-Bullying Policy. The parents of such a learner will be contacted immediately.
- In the event of the problem continuing, the parents will be invited into school to discuss further sanctions.
- We will also offer support to learners and parents in order for them to fully understand the consequences of such language or behaviour and will provide support if necessary.
- The school works hard to ensure that prevention is the first step in our strategy to remove racist bullying. The use of PSD lessons, Assemblies, Guest Speakers and our Support Staff play a crucial role in this aspect of our strategy.
- The use of self-reflection is an integral part of our policy and every attempt to ensure that members of the school community who use racist language or behaviour are given the opportunity to reflect on the consequences of their actions will be used.
- All students undertake annual PSD sessions to focus on promoting and embedding the 'British Values' as part of the wider PREVENT and Community Cohesion agenda.

The school may deem it necessary to contact the Police or make a referral to MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) depending on the severity of the situation and level / nature of the incident.

Any form of racist behaviour towards another student(s) will result in an exclusion. This may be either an internal or external exclusion based on the nature and severity of the incident.

## **Section 8 - Bullying linked mental health issues**

Research suggests that a young person's mental health (actual and perceived), learning difficulties, disability or long-term health conditions may put them at risk of being bullied. Young people experiencing difficulties around mental health can be particularly at risk because of the stigma associated with having a mental health problem, specifically young people who display high levels of shyness or withdrawn behaviours, tend to be anxious or fearful, are insecure or have low self-esteem. Research shows those who self-harm are more likely to be bullied.

We recognise that bullying affects young people's mental health, emotional well-being and identity. Research shows that some young people develop mental health issues as a result of being bullied.

## **Hillcrest School's response to any form of bullying linked to a mental health issue ...**

- The school curriculum promotes inclusivity and creates a climate of understanding and acceptance in relation to mental health issues.
- The topic of mental health is covered sensitively in PSD lessons and whole school assemblies to highlight the impact bullying can have on a person's emotional well-being and mental health.
- Curriculum coverage de-stigmatises mental health issues and encourages students to use appropriate and non-derogatory language about mental health and emotional well-being.
- PSD sessions and assemblies focus on raising awareness that mental health is not restricted to older generations and shares positive examples of how young people have coped with a range of issues.

- Staff undertake training to raise awareness of the indicators of mental health issues in young people and the range of support they can provide in such cases. This allows staff to confidently challenge the language and behaviour of students when it stigmatises mental health or when verbal abuse is used against others.
- Our Learning Mentor is trained to support students experiencing a wide range of mental health issues and offers regular drop-in sessions with Forward Thinking advisors.

The school reserves the right to exclude a student from school for incidents bullying linked to physical or mental health issues. This may be either an internal or external exclusion based on the nature and severity of the incident

## **Section 9 – Resources**

Further guidance may be accessed at:

<http://www.bullying.co.uk/bullying-at-school/>  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/bullying>  
<http://www.cyberbullying.org/>  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/bullying>  
Kidscape [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
Bullying Online [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)  
Advisory Centre for Education [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)  
Children's Legal Centre [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)  
Bullying Helpline – 08451 205 204  
Parentline Plus [www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)

Advice can be obtained from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Unit (CEOP).

## **Section 10 - Monitoring and Review**

The effectiveness of this policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headmaster, who reports to Governors on request. This policy is reviewed every two years or earlier if deemed necessary.

Date: July 2017

Review Due: July 2019