

The Old School Henstead

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Policy Statement

The governing body and staff of the school are totally opposed to bullying. Bullying is wrong and damages children. The aim of this policy is to help provide pupils with a safe and secure working environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop his/her full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed; but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour.. Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable.

It is recognised that all schools are likely to have a problem with bullying at some time. This school regards bullying as particularly serious and firm action will always be taken against it.

This policy aims to produce a consistent response by the school to any bullying incidents that may take place.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including sexual), verbal (including cyber bullying i.e, chat room, SMS messages), and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours or mocking religious or cultural beliefs). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are cultural, religious, racial, sexist, homophobic, which focus on disabilities, SEN or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. We always treat bullying very seriously as we are fully aware the effects of bullying can cause serious psychological damage and even suicide.

Procedure

Recognising the Signs of Bullying

Bullying is deliberately harmful behaviour over a period of time. Staff will watch out for the signs and symptoms of the following forms of bullying:

- physical
- verbal
- indirect, eg spreading rumours or social exclusion

Staff will suspect bullying is occurring if a pupil:

- becomes withdrawn and anxious
- shows a deterioration in his or her work
- starts to attend school erratically
- has spurious illnesses
- persistently arrives late at school
- prefers to stay with adults.

Preventing Bullying

The school will take every opportunity to demonstrate to pupils, through the curriculum and by example, that it is totally opposed to bullying.

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Staff will not ignore bullying or suspected bullying. All school staff will, wherever possible, intervene to prevent bullying incidents from taking place.

The school will encourage pupils to report any incidents of bullying to a teacher or other adult at school. Pupils will be told that they may bring a friend with them if they wish.

The school will ensure that all staff, pupils and parents are aware of the school's anti-bullying policy.

Staff will praise and encourage pupils when they show kindness and consideration to others.

Dealing with Bullying Incidents

Any incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible. Staff will do all they can to support the victims of bullying and make it clear to the bully that this behaviour is not acceptable.

In dealing with bullying, school staff will:

- not ignore it
- not make premature assumptions
- listen to all accounts of the incidents
- adopt a problem-solving approach that encourages pupils to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves
- make regular follow-up checks to ensure that bullying has not resumed.

If a Pupil is Bullied

Staff who receive a report of a bullying incident from a pupil will:

- listen to the pupil's account of the incident
- reassure the pupil that reporting the bullying incident was the right thing to do
- make it clear to the pupil that he or she is not to blame for what has happened
- make a note of what the pupil says
- explain that the pupil should report any further incidents to a teacher or other member of staff immediately.

Advice to Pupils

The school will advise pupils who are caught up in bullying incidents to:

- immediately tell an adult what has happened.

Helping the Bullies to Change

Staff will spend time to help pupils who have bullied others to change their behaviour. If a pupil is bullying others, staff will:

- talk to the pupil and explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy
- discuss with the pupil how to join in with others without bullying
- talk to the pupil about how things are going at school, his or her progress and friends
- give the pupil lots of praise and encouragement when he or she is being kind and considerate to others.

Dealing with Serious Bullying

If the preventative measures and peer support strategies do not succeed, serious bullying will be dealt with in the following way:

The bully will have a meeting with the headmaster and their parents to discuss the issues. Sanctions will be put in to place. In line with our behaviour and discipline policy, these may include any of the following:

- be removed from the group
- lose any break or lunchtime privileges
- Headmaster's detention at breaktime
- be banned from a school trip or sports event where these are not an essential part of the curriculum

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- Lose a prefect's tie.

Should the behaviour continue the child will be excluded for a fixed period or permanently.

Recording Incidents

All incidents of bullying and discussions with the pupils involved will be recorded, along with the school's response.

Incidents will be recorded in a separate folder which is located in the staff room. The Deputy Head is responsible for checking these whenever an incident is recorded to check for any patterns. Staff are responsible for alerting the Deputy Head of any incident or allegation.

Raising Awareness

Staff

As part of our induction training new staff are asked to familiarise themselves with our Anti-Bullying Policy which is included in our staff handbook and are asked to remain vigilant at all times in places such as toilets, playground, changing areas, mini bus and other out of sight areas and the strategies routines which are in place to deal with incidents of bullying.

Pupils

Through our PSHE syllabus, the issue of bullying is discussed with the children in our school. As is appropriate to their age, they are made aware of the different types of bullying and taught that this is wrong. Children at the top of the school are prefects and part of their role is to be aware of issues on the playing field and other areas and they are given the opportunity to report these either informally or formally in the weekly Form Period.

Co-operating with Parents and Carers

The school will work with parents in dealing with bullying. Bullying in school is everyone's problem. All staff, pupils and parents should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the school a happier place for everyone. The school will ensure that parents are aware of the school's anti-bullying policy through the Parents' Handbook. Parents, carers and families are often the first to detect signs of bullying. Common physical symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability. The school will encourage parents who suspect that a child is bullying or being bullied to immediately contact the school and make an appointment to see the child's teacher or form tutor as soon as possible. Parents and carers will be informed of incidents and involved in discussions. The school will discuss with parents how they can work together to stop the bullying.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is written with regard to the DCSF Guidance document '*Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools*' and is regularly monitored by the Head and governing body to ensure that it is working as effectively as possible.

Reviewed September 2011

Next review due Sept 2012