

## Anti-bullying Policy

**(Drawn up after consultation with the St. Hugh's Parent Forum and input from the anti-bullying charity 'Kidscape' and the School Council. Updated April 2018 following DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying July 2017 and incorporating No Place for Bullying June 2012)**

**The following policy relates to all children at St. Hugh's School, including those who board and those in the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage).**

### Legal Context

The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 provide that the proprietor of an Academy or other independent school is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented. The school also uses the DfE advice on 'Preventing and Tackling' bullying (Nov 2014; Updated July 2017). This is non-statutory guidance, and makes specific reference to Cyber Bullying; it includes useful information for staff and parents about Cyber Bullying. Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014) is also a drawn upon.

The Department for Education (DfE) defines bullying as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, eg because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need 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 ;
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Part 6 of the Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way it provides education for pupils, provision of pupil access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment. In England and Wales Part 6 of the Act applies to maintained schools and Academies and to other independent schools.

In addition to the duties in relation to pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act, schools also have duties under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to ensure that pupils with special educational needs engage in the activities of the school together with children who do not have special educational needs.

## **Safeguarding children and young people**

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the school staff should discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead and report their concerns to their local authority children's social care and work with them to take appropriate action. Full details can be found in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

However, external support can be given to pupils whether or not it is deemed a child protection concern. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying. Full details can be found in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If school staff feels that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

### **School Context**

The most important element in tackling bullying is to establish an ethos where children respect others' feelings, therefore preventing bullying happening in the first place. We believe we are a caring and supportive school; therefore we must take positive steps to identify and counteract bullying. In line with our safeguarding and child protection policy we aim to create an atmosphere in which children know they will be helped if they become the victim of bullying. Furthermore should there be reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of bullying then the incident should be treated as a child protection concern. This is in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

In September 2015, as part of our PSHEE work, the children discussed the Pupil Code of conduct and they created our new Pupil Promise:

We will try our best to be:

- Respectful
- Honest
- Kind
- Helpful
- Responsible

These five areas will continue to be discussed in PSHEE, and as part of the new Jigsaw scheme of work for PSHEE in years F1 to Y6.

The following information is given to parents in our Parents' Handbook and this policy as a whole is available on the school website:

“Our school will not tolerate any unkind or cruel actions or remarks. Any repeated behaviour that makes other pupils feel uncomfortable or threatened can be described as bullying. This may take the form of physical or psychological violence by an individual or group against another.

If your child experiences bullying, encourage your child to talk to his/her Form Teacher or another adult at the school. Encourage your child to report incidents of bullying of other pupils and to view this as being responsible rather than being a sneak.

If your child is being bullied, encourage them to talk about it, reassure them that something can be done to help. Contact the school. The school will always respond to any complaint about bullying. The allegation will be recorded and a formal response will be made. After a suitable period of time (normally within two weeks) a further response will be made to ensure that the problem has been resolved.

In order to reduce the potential for bullying to occur staff must be vigilant at all times and pay particular regard when on patrol to such areas as toilets, adventure playground, unsupervised classrooms and any areas where pupils may go to avoid observation. All staff have a duty to ensure that pupils are safe when they are in school.”

#### **An individual staff member's responsibilities**

As an individual there is a lot that can be done to contribute to the development of a caring, respectful ethos at St. Hugh's.

- Supervise carefully.
- Help pupils to become more assertive.
- Be an effective role model.

#### **Supervise carefully**

Whenever you are with the pupils, you are on duty and are fully responsible for supervising them. This means being aware, noticing children's behaviour and walking around – bullying is far more likely to occur in secluded places where staff don't generally go.

As you supervise, ask yourself if there are:

- pupils who are alone
- pupils who seem to be at the centre of a group of others
- pupils who seem upset or distressed.

Also listen to how the pupils interact with each other.

- Are they respectful to one another?
- Are they teasing in a way that may be hurtful?
- Are there physical games that pupils may have been coerced into joining?

If you do see or hear anything that causes you concern, intervene immediately and ask questions to satisfy yourself that it is not bullying. If you are still concerned, tell them why and that you will be taking further advice and may need to report it as a bullying incident. Speak privately to the pupil or pupils who may be being bullied and ask them about the situation.

If they reassure you they are not being bullied, maintain a watchful eye on them. If they disclose that they are being bullied, report the situation immediately.

### **Help pupils to be more assertive**

Help pupils to acquire the confidence and assertiveness skills that will protect them from bullying behaviour. Confident pupils are less likely to tolerate bullying and more likely to have the courage and inner-strength to respond effectively. Pupils who are assertive know how to respond to a bully in effective, non-aggressive ways, they are less likely to be targeted by bullies in the first place, and they are also less likely to bully others to get their way.

### **Be an effective role model**

Pupils learn how to behave by watching and emulating the adults in their lives. Reflect on how you solve problems, discipline, control your own anger and disappointment, and stand up for yourself and others without fighting. If pupils observe you acting or talking aggressively, they are more likely to show aggression towards others.

Bullying is discussed regularly as part of our Whole School meetings, and in every meeting any incidents of bullying are raised as part of the discussion on behaviour. At this time staff are reminded of the process of reporting bullying as part of the whole school Positive Behaviour Policy. There is also a bullying questionnaire given to pupils at the end of every term. The results of this are compiled by the Head of Pastoral Care and are discussed at the Whole School meeting at the start of every term. At this time staff are reminded of their responsibility to deal with incidents of bullying, the possibility of bullying being a child protection issue and that in cases of severe and persistent bullying, strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary.

## **Possible Manifestations of Bullying**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways. It may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. We acknowledge that it can cause psychological damage. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online. Clearly bullying can take many forms, and may fall into one or more of the following categories (not intended to be an exhaustive list):

### **Physical**

- Pushing/shoving
- Hitting or other means of inflicting physical pain
- Barging
- Queue jumping
- Stealing
- Hiding possessions

### **Verbal**

- Name calling
- Unwanted nicknames
- Sarcasm
- Belittling
- Teasing/negative joking
- Rumours
- Whispering
- Homophobic comments
- Racist remarks

### **Emotional**

- Intimidation
- Exclusion
- Threats
- Interfering with learning
- Negative body language

- Being deliberately irritating
- Being a bystander to bullying
- Homophobic actions
- Racist actions

### **Is teasing/'banter' the same as bullying?**

Teasing is common amongst friendship groups and families. For the one doing the teasing it is a playful way of provoking a reaction, usually without an intention or desire to cause hurt.

It is important however that we support pupils to communicate when they feel a joke has gone too far. Even amongst family members and friendship groups, it is possible to cross a line and offend or hurt a person's feelings.

Banter can also be used as a way of reinforcing established group or social 'norms' and as such can run the risk of being discriminatory, even if it is not a bullying situation. For example, it is possible to hear young people reinforcing gender stereotypes through banter; for example, 'you run like a girl', or to express homophobic attitudes, such as, 'your haircut is so gay!'.

### **The five key components**

There are typically five key components to bullying:

- There is an intention to harm: bullying is deliberate behaviour that sets out to upset and cause distress.
- There is a harmful outcome: one or more people are hurt physically or emotionally.
- It is persistent and repeated: bullying involves repeated acts of aggression and hostility. An isolated aggressive attack between equals, is not usually bullying.
- It is direct or indirect: bullying can involve direct acts of aggression, such as hitting someone, as well as indirect acts, such as spreading rumours.
- There is unequal power: bullying involves the abuse of power by one or several people who are more powerful or perceived as being more powerful, often due to their age, physical strength, or psychological resilience.

### **Bullying as a group behaviour**

It is important to recognise that bullying is often a group behaviour that happens within a social context. Researchers have identified a number of roles that people play within a bullying dynamic. These could include:

- Victim
- Participant/bully (active, initiative taking, leader-like)
- Reinforcer (reinforcing the bullying behaviour of the participant; for example by laughing or providing an engaged audience)
- Defender (supporting those on the receiving end, trying to stop the behaviour)
- Outsider/Bystander (typically doing nothing, passive audience)

### **Cyber bullying:**

Cyber bullying is the use of any information technology such as email, instant messaging, chat rooms, pagers or cell phones to threaten or intimidate someone. The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Cyber bullying may include:

- inappropriate use of technologies
- threats
- insults
- racial or ethnic slurs
- homophobic comments
- sending images of victim to others via the internet
- misuse of social networking sites
- attempting to infect the victim's computer with a virus
- flooding an email inbox with nonsense messages

At school computer connection time is limited. Mobile devices are banned in academic time, and should be handed in if brought to school. Pupils may bring a 'phone or hand-held electronic device on trips or away matches or for use on a Sunday. Occasional special permission may be given for a pupil to have a mobile 'phone with them in exceptional circumstances. Pupils are taught not to respond to threatening or defamatory messages, and never to open email messages from sources they do not recognize.

### **Emphasising differences**

Actions which focus upon any of the following:- ability, appearance, culture, disability, families, race, religion or sexuality will not be tolerated. Equally, sexist and homophobic behaviour are unacceptable. Bullying associated with special needs also falls into this category.

### **Homophobic bullying**

This may take the form of verbal acts such as calling someone 'gay', or making comments such as 'those trainers are gay'.

### **Sexual bullying**

This is physical or non-physical behaviour which is based upon a person's sexuality or gender. This will include verbal acts such as calling someone 'a slut' or physical acts such as touching someone in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.

### **Gender based bullying**

Any action which sets up masculinity against femininity can be classed as gender bullying.

### **Racial and cultural bullying**

This can take the form of discrimination, i.e. being treated differently, or racism which is being subjected to abuse or harassment because of one's race or one's culture.

### **Religious bullying**

St. Hugh's will look to adopt a pluralist viewpoint that affirms the value of other religions and therefore challenge stereotypes and behaviour that harass or discriminate (directly and indirectly) based on religion.

### **Special Needs and Disability bullying**

Evidence indicates that children are more likely to be bullied if they are disabled. Research has shown that children with some form special needs are more susceptible to bullying and are more likely to be sociometrically rejected (Martlew & Hodson; Nabuzoka & Smith; O'Moore & Hillery; Whitney, Smith & Thompson, 1994). Hodges and Perry (1996) stated that peer rejection is a social risk factor that contributes to victimization. St. Hugh's endeavours to be an inclusive school and caters for pupils with special needs. Children are taught to appreciate differences and see their peers as individuals to be respected, with feelings and talents, just as they have.

Although we are fortunate that bullying is rare in our school we should never be complacent. There are several ways in which we strive to maintain awareness of the problem. All staff and pupils are encouraged to take the issue seriously and to be aware of possible danger signs.

Form staff should be on the lookout for danger signs, and discussions in class PSHEE and circle time should revisit the topic on a regular basis. The issue of racism is particularly important to bear in mind, as our pupils are largely from a white, western European background. Racism is discussed further in a separate St. Hugh's Anti-racism policy.

Early each new term the Head of Pastoral Care details specific pupils and staff to whom victims of bullying can turn, and urges them to tell **someone**. Pupils are also reminded that they have responsibilities towards one another and that if they witness bullying they should report it.

The School Captains and Deputy Captains are given a role as extra eyes and ears to spot potential bullying behaviour and are identified as pupils who are there to listen.

The Pastoral Care box is available for pupils to post concerns over bullying and request support, the Year 3 and 4 classes have their own Worry Boxes.

The school also has an Independent Listener, Mrs Wendy Trotter, whose details are displayed in the boarding houses and around the school, and who provides another avenue for pupils to express anxieties about bullying, or any other matter.

Since 2009 Year 7 pupils have been given training in "Peer Mentoring" to empower them to help fellow pupils report and resolve problems including bullying.

The issue of bullying is included regularly in school assemblies and class PSHEE sessions.

To help provide an opportunity to report bullying, pupils from Year 3 upwards complete a questionnaire each term stating whether they feel they have been bullied, what form that bullying has taken and whether they reported the incident or need help with the situation. This also includes a section where pupils can identify areas where bullying may be prevalent.



The Head of Pastoral Care reviews the results of the questionnaires and follows up any problems they may highlight. A summary is fed back to all staff at the next start of term Inset meeting.

### **How do we deal with Bullying?**

All instances of bullying are noted on iSAMS and causes for concern are raised in staff briefings.

When an incident of bullying is reported, staff must always:

Act immediately (if on duty, gain cover from other staff if necessary)

- Treat all instances seriously
- Isolate the victim and the alleged bully/bullies
- Reassure the victim
- Talk to witnesses, try to collect full facts and not jump to premature conclusions
- Get a report from both sides in an objective, helpful manner, without appearing to take sides
- Deal with the situation on the spot, if at all possible, discussing the implications with all parties (including any disciplinary action)
- Ensure that any property taken from the victim is restored to them
- Make a written record of all the details of the incident
- Report all instances to the Form Tutor and the Head of Pastoral Care (serious incidents such as physical violence or severe intimidation should be reported directly to the Headmaster).
- Record the incident on iSAMS.

As a school we must continually strive to eradicate bullying and to bring about a change of behaviour in the instigator. Reporting and recording of incidents is essential so that patterns of bullying may be highlighted, and to provide evidence of what has happened and the action we have taken.

### **Bullying which occurs outside school premises**

School staff members have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include 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 should be investigated and acted on. The headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

While school staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

More detailed advice on teachers' powers to discipline, including their power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour that occurs outside school, is included in 'Behaviour and discipline in schools – advice for headteachers and school staff'

### Helping the Pupil who has been a Target of Bullying

The relationship of trust built up between adults and pupils at school is important in providing opportunities for those being bullied to approach someone to tell, but it may be necessary to work with the victim to help them understand that they do not have to face the bullying on their own.

In most cases the Form Tutor will have a key role to play, and they should become involved at the earliest opportunity. They will also be responsible for keeping the parents informed of the situation and trying to ensure a common approach at home and at school.

The Head of Pastoral Care should be involved from the outset to help reassure the pupil being bullied and their parents that the school takes the issue seriously.

It is important to tackle any negative feelings which bullying may engender and victims may need help to feel more positive about themselves.

Pupils who have experienced bullying may also need guidance as to how they can change their behaviour to make them less of a target.

At times victims may need to learn how they should react when they feel they are being bullied to avoid getting themselves into trouble or encouraging further bullying.

Pupils who experience bullying may be asked to write a diary of instances and how they respond in each situation, to try to help build up evidence of what is going on.

The pupil being targeted may be given a safe haven where they can go during break times. If this is the case, all duty staff should be made aware.

Captains and Deputy Captains as well as the Teaching Assistants should also be asked to keep a special lookout for further problems.

The pupil targeted by bullying should be reassured that they have done the right thing in speaking up and that **action is being taken**, but it must be stressed that the bullying may not stop immediately and that if this is the case, they should continue to report what is happening.

The Form Tutor should make a point of following up initial action by checking that the problem has been sorted out, as the pupil at the receiving end may well be reticent to raise the subject again. Parents should be kept informed of the situation so they feel that the school is taking action.

Where there has been an allegation of bullying the parents of the victim should be invited to talk about the situation with the Form Tutor and the Head of Pastoral Care (and the Headmaster in more serious instances). There should be a follow-up meeting after a suitable period (generally not more than a month) to review progress and amend responses if necessary.

### Helping the Pupil Instigating the Bullying

It is worth noting that most people have behaved towards someone else in a manner which could be termed bullying, at some time. We do not believe that it is helpful to brand children as 'bullies'. It is the behaviour not the child that we are condemning. The pupil who is bullying needs to understand that there is a problem, and that their behaviour is hurtful and unacceptable.

In more minor instances it may be sufficient to identify the unacceptable behaviour and to make it clear that it will not be tolerated. Often all that is needed is a sincere apology to the victim at this stage and apart from reporting and recording, no further action is necessary.

Where the bullying is of a nature to warrant sanctions, these are available in line with the school's Behaviour Policy; this includes warnings, report cards, detentions, internal and external exclusions and potentially leaving the school. If sanctions are imposed, the pupil must understand the reasons and the possible consequences of further bullying.

It may be necessary to restrict their movements during free time to make it less likely for them to have the opportunity to bully.

The instigator should be made aware that all staff will be on the lookout for any further bullying behaviour.

There is a key role for the Form Teacher to play in talking to pupils in their form who are involved in bullying. Such pupils may need help with particular problems such as their own feelings of inadequacy, or coping with circumstances which they may find difficult. They often need help to empathise with the target of their bullying behaviour. Pupils who persist in bullying have to understand that they can and must change. Root causes may be various and complex and it is important to try to get to the bottom of these.

The Form Tutor should also inform parents of the situation initially, in all but the most minor 'one-off' situations (which are unlikely to be classed as bullying in any case). It may well be necessary, after discussion with the Head of Pastoral Care, to arrange a formal meeting with the parents in which strategies can be agreed to combat the problem.

Initial action must be followed up and parents kept informed.

Staff Responsible	Head of Pastoral Care
Last reviewed	Summer 2018
Date of next review	Summer 2019

Reviewed by Full Governing Body – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017