



Heathside School

Anti Bullying Policy

Introduction

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that schools must have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying. At Heathside School we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our students to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential. We recognise that bullying can happen to all children and young people and that it can affect their social, mental or emotional health. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 we are also aware of the need to eliminate discrimination in all its forms.

The Heathside ethos and values promote a climate of respect and understanding of the right way to behave. Our aim is to provide a safe and inclusive environment, help students to feel confident to seek support from school should they need to and ensure that any incidents which arise are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Definition of Bullying

‘Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.’

(Preventing and tackling bullying – Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies – DfE October 2014)

How does bullying differ from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.
- It is usually persistent.

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of sexual, sexist, racist or homophobic bullying and when children with disabilities are involved. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required.

What does bullying look like?

Bullying can include:

- name calling

- taunting
- mocking
- making offensive comments
- physical assault
- taking or damaging belongings
- cyber bullying - inappropriate text messaging and emailing, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet
- producing offensive graffiti
- gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- excluding people from groups

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'.

Some students are particularly vulnerable to bullying. They may have special educational needs or disabilities, may be adopted, have caring responsibilities or may be going through a personal or family crisis. Depending on the individual circumstances of the student, a range of support can be offered including support from teachers and student services staff, referral to the school counsellor, referral to the Family Support Worker, meetings with parents, Early Help or referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS).

Specific types of bullying include:

- bullying related to race, religion or culture
- bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)
- bullying related to appearance or health
- bullying of students who may be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT)
- bullying of young carers or looked after children
- bullying related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying
- cyber-bullying

There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Bullying can take place between:

- young people
- young people and staff
- between staff
- individuals or groups

Reporting and Responding to Bullying

Our school has clear and well publicised systems to report bullying for the whole school community (including staff, parents/carers, children and young people). This includes those who are the victims of bullying or have witnessed bullying behaviour (bystanders).

- **Students** are taught and encouraged to report all instances of bullying either as a victim of bullying; as a witness to bullying or as a friend to someone who is being bullied. They should report concerns to their Classroom teacher, Form Tutor, Student Support Co-ordinator or Head of Learning. Alternatively they can talk to a Student Mentor who will pass the information on to the relevant adult.

- **Parents** who are concerned that their child(ren) is/are involved in bullying issues either as a victim, witness, bystander or as a bully, are encouraged to report the matter via telephone or email to the child's Form Tutor or Student Support Co-ordinator who will use their professional judgement as to who is best placed to investigate the matter.
- **All Staff (teaching and support)** will follow normal school procedures to report any situations of bullying of which they become aware.

Procedures

Any report or disclosure of bullying will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. Sanctions will be applied fairly and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

A log will be kept, outlining the main points of the disclosure, any actions points and the outcomes achieved. Action will be taken as quickly as possible. This may include:

- **Interviewing all parties**

The student being bullied will be given the opportunity to talk to an appropriate adult.

Witnesses will be asked what they have seen or heard.

The student(s) reported as being involved in the bullying will be given the opportunity to give their view.

- **Informing the parents**

The parents of the student being bullied will be informed as soon as possible.

The parents of the student(s) involved in the bullying will be informed once it has been established; or a judgement has been made, that they have been involved.

- **Using a range of strategies / responses appropriate to the situation**

For the student being bullied this might include:

Identifying a named adult who he / she can report to regularly.

Identifying a 'safe' place to go at key times.

Assurances that he / she will be supported.

Suitable help and advice regarding 'coping' strategies.

Keeping a diary of all events for future reference.

Pastoral counselling.

The named adult making regular checks and where appropriate giving feedback on any developments.

Identifying a time when a resolution has been found and the case is closed.

For the student(s) involved in the bullying:

An opportunity to discuss the situation and give their point of view.

An encouragement to accept responsibility for their behaviour.

Where appropriate the offer of pastoral counselling.

The opportunity to apologise for the behaviour either in writing or in person (if the other party is willing or comfortable with this).

Assurances that the bullying will stop.

The return of any 'borrowed' or stolen items.

If appropriate compensation for damaged or lost items.

A named person to make regular checks on behaviour and to discuss and advise how the student can amend his / her behaviour.

If appropriate, making a referral to outside agencies.

- **Certain sanctions may be imposed such as:**

Being placed on a stage of the school's disciplinary procedures.

Being moved up a stage(s) if already on the disciplinary procedure.

Being excluded from lessons.

Being banned from certain areas of the school.

Being excluded from school for a fixed term.

A change of tutor group or learning group.

- **Follow up:**

Until the situation has come to a satisfactory conclusion the person taking the lead in dealing with the matter will have appropriate regular contact with the person who reported the matter and / or the parents.

Bullying outside the school premises

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff it should be investigated and acted upon in accordance with the school behaviour policy. If the incident is more serious it may be appropriate to inform the police.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact such as texting, bullying via electronic devices, email or use of social networking sites. Like any form of bullying it is usually repeated over time and is designed to threaten, hurt and/or humiliate another student. Heathside school recognises that cyberbullying can be a significant issue for some young people and that staff, parents and students need to work together to prevent it from happening and to tackle it when it occurs. Students are reminded regularly via assemblies and through the curriculum about the consequences and impacts of the misuse of electronic devices. Parents are also reminded regularly to monitor the use of their children's use of Facebook and other social networking sites. Parental Forums on Internet Safety are delivered regularly and useful weblinks for parents are also available on the school website.

If a cyberbullying incident occurs students are advised:

- Not to respond
- To stay calm
- To save the evidence and print it off if possible
- To report the incident to their parents or a member of staff

Students or their parents may also report abuse to their mobile phone company or Internet provider. If a cyber-bullying incident occurs, staff will investigate the incident in accordance with the Anti Bullying policy. The consequences will vary according to the severity of the incident but every incident will be taken seriously. Some incidents may warrant intervention by the police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of the offence. The school recognises that cyberbullying could be a criminal offence under a range of different laws including: the protection from Harassment Act 1997; the Malicious Communication Act 1988; section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986.

If appropriate one of the Designated Child Protection Officers will also be consulted about the incident.

Possible signs of cyberbullying

It is not always easy for parents and staff to spot the signs of cyberbullying. Possible changes in behaviour may include:

- Being upset after using the internet or mobile phone.
- Unwilling to talk or secretive about their online activities or mobile phone use.
- Spending much more or much less time texting, gaming or using social media.
- Many new phone numbers, texts or email addresses show up on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.
- After texting or being online, students may seem withdrawn, upset or outraged.
- Not wanting to go to school and/or avoiding meeting friends.
- Avoiding formerly enjoyable social situations.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Low self-esteem.

Strategies for Preventing Bullying

As part of our on-going commitment to the safety and welfare of our students we at Heathside school have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour:

- Support for Year 7 students by providing a mentoring system by Year 11 students
- Support for other years through individual Sixth Form mentors
- Peer mediators
- Support via pastoral counselling
- Access to the School Counsellor
- Referral to the Family Support Worker
- PSHE curriculum directly addressing bullying issues such as:
 - What is Bullying?
 - How an individual can deal with situations of being bullied
 - How students can deal with situations of bullying involving others
 - How to support someone who is being bullied
 - How to report bullying
 - The school's stance on bullying and the disciplinary consequences
 - Preparation for situations that might arise in the workplace
- The addressing of bullying in other areas of the curriculum such as English and Drama

- Anti- Bullying week
- Assemblies
- Involvement of the local Community Police Officer
- Student Voice
- Parents' Forums
- Parental information evenings
- The promotion of the Heathside values
- Celebrating success
- Advice in the newsletter
- Staff training
- Teaching students that any prejudice based or homophobic language is wrong

Recording Bullying and Evaluating the Policy

Bullying incidents will be recorded by the member of staff who deals with the incident and this will be logged within SIMs. The information stored will be used to ensure individuals incidents are followed up. It will also be used to identify trends and inform preventative work in school and development of the policy. This information will be presented to the Governors' Student Welfare Committee termly. The impact of anti-bullying strategies will be monitored regularly.

The policy will be reviewed and updated regularly with the aim of ensuring that Heathside is a caring, supportive and inclusive school community.

National Guidance and sources of information

- The Equality Act 2010
- Preventing and tackling bullying – advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies – October 2014
- Childnet International (the UK's safer internet centre)
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance
- Think U Know - resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)
- Stonewall - support and resources for lesbian, gay and bisexual students
- NSPCC
- Kidscape
- Childline
- Young Minds

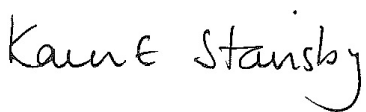
Staff Member with Responsibility: Ms A Shakespeare **Role:** Vice Principal

Reviewed by: Student Welfare Governors' Committee

Ratification by Full Governing Body: May 2011

Date of review: December 2014

Date of next review: December 2017

Signed:  Chair of Governors