HINCHINGBROOKE SCHOOL

Inspiring Excellence   Fulfilling potential

Policy Statement
on

ANTI-BULLYING & ANTI-CYBER BULLYING

Revised: 3 Yearly (D&W Committee)
Date approved by Governing Body: February 2019

HINCHINGBROOKE SCHOOL

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour & Attendance Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Physical Intervention Policy
- Home School Agreement

Definition and general principles

Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour of any kind, physical or emotional, by an individual or group, usually repeated over a period of time. The School recognises that bullying can take a variety of forms, including cyber-bullying (i.e. the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, reported, and hostile behaviour by an individual or groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. Bullying often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim which can manifest itself in several ways: it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derived from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online. Bullying is a safeguarding issue and this policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying can be a form of peer-on-peer abuse. It is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Abuse should never be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. The School recognises that bullying in all its forms may take place here and actively seems to eradicate it. Staff must be alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it.

The School takes account of the DfE Guidance, Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (January 2016), Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017) and also acknowledges its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and in respect of students with Special Education Needs or disabilities. It also has regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2018). The policy applies to all aspects of the School. Bullying and cyber-bullying are safeguarding issues and the School will respond will respond to these in line with its Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and procedures.

Our School aims to adopt anti-bullying strategies and intervention systems in order to:

- Prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour
- React to bullying or cyber-bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way
- Safeguard the student who has experienced bullying; trigger sources of support for the victim as well as the perpetrator where appropriate
- Apply disciplinary sanctions to the student causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi-agency support
- Safeguard the students in the real and virtual world

- Ensure that students, staff and parents/carers are educated to understand what bullying and cyber-bullying are and what their consequences can be
- Have procedures in place to prevent incidents of cyber-bullying in school or within the school community (see E-Safety Policy)
- Ensure that we monitor the effectiveness of our prevention measures
- Offer Restorative Meetings to help prevent reoffending and reoccurrence of the incident

The three main manifestations of bullying are:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, pushing, theft)
- Verbal (name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive remarks, making inappropriate comments about someone's disability or learning difficulty, racist, sexist or homophobic remarks)
- Indirect (spreading rumours, gossiping, excluding someone from social networking groups and websites, sending inappropriate text messages, photographs or emails; other cyber-bullying)

The School recognises that some children may be particularly vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by their peers, including students with SEN and/or disabilities. Such abuse is taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated an adult.

The School actively seeks to prevent bullying and promote tolerant attitudes to all, regardless of any differences of background, belief or character. We recognise the serious effect of all forms of bullying and the potential for psychological damage to victims. Though bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, the School nevertheless takes a very strong stance against all threatening behaviour and harassment, and there are criminal laws which apply to some such behaviour. All students are actively encouraged to pass on information about any incident of bullying against either themselves or others. There will be no disciplinary action taken for any 'whistle blowing' done in good faith.

We encourage students to speak to one of more of the following individuals in school:

1. Tutor
2. Pastoral Support – Head of Year, Student Support Officer, LS/MS Administrator
3. Restorative Approaches Manager
4. Teacher
5. Senior Leadership Team
6. School Nurse
7. School Counsellor
8. Inclusion Manager
9. Any other Member of Staff

Signs of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a student is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits, eg change to accent or vocabulary, giving up clubs/activities
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the School Nurse with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying, should be investigated by parents/carers and teachers.

Whole School Anti-Bullying Strategies

Prevention

- Creating an environment within which individuals feel safe, care about each other, value and respect each other, recognise and reward achievement and progress
- Assemblies addressing bullying and telling students who to talk to when they have concerns
- Staff training
- Addressing bullying, cyber-bullying and 'sexting' through the PSHE curriculum and looking for opportunities to address bullying through other curriculum areas
- The availability of the School Counsellor and the wider pastoral network of tutors, SSOs, Head of Year and SLT
- Improving the school environment, looking in particular at staff supervision patterns; the physical design of the building(s); target attention on key times and locations
- Continuous promotion of kindness to each other alongside the school's core values:
    - Be a listening community
    - Foster an appreciation of each other through openness and honesty
    - Be a mutually supportive organisation which values freedom of expression, tolerance and an appreciation of diversity
    - One School Rule of Respect – Yourself, Others and Your School

Making Reporting Easier

- Students may speak to their tutor, SSO, Head of Year, SLT, pastoral support or any member of staff, when they are concerned about a bullying or cyber-bullying issue
- The school publicises and promotes the message that asking for help is the right thing to do and shows strength and good judgement
- The school provides information on external reporting routes including Childline, CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) and the NSPCC. Please see the school website for further information.

How the School Deals with Allegations of Bullying

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying:
- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and sent to the relevant Head of Year/Student Support Officer
- An investigation will take place. All concerned with the incident will be interviewed and a record kept of interviews
- If images are involved, determine whether there may be safeguarding concerns and if so, contact a member of the 'Safeguarding and Emergency Team' immediately.
- Tutors will be kept informed and where necessary appropriate subject teachers notified
- Parents will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate.
- There will also be an attempt to support the perpetrator of the bullying by talking through what lay behind his actions and ensuring he/she understands why a sanction is imposed. This is most effectively done through a Restorative Meeting between the victim and the perpetrator, which is conducted by a trained Restorative Meeting Facilitator. Further details regarding Restorative Approaches is available on the school website and Appendix 1 and 2.
- Monitoring of the situation by staff who work with the student(s) regularly will take place. Further information on how the school deals with sexting and cyber-bullying is set out in the 'Responding to Cyber-bullying' section below.

Whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, any such abuse will be referred to the Local Authority as a Child Protection concern. In the event of disclosures about student-on-student, or peer-on-peer abuse, all students involved, whether perpetrator or victim, are treated as being at risk. The school will follow statutory guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2018) and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018), even where the alleged perpetrator is a child. The school will refer to the LADO or Social Services where advice will be sought regarding further action.

Where allegations of child abuse by one or more of the school's own students are made, a thorough risk-assessment of the situation will be carried out with a view to ensuring the safety of all students. Decisions arising might include, for example, whether the accused students should be removed from school for a period, or from certain classes, whether contact with certain individuals should be prevented or supervised, the availability of counselling, the adequacy of arrangements for listening to children, etc.

Staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse, as explained in the school's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy. If in doubt at any time, they are advised to consult with a member of the 'Safeguarding and Emergency Team'.

Support for victims of bullying

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff
- Reassurance
- Offering continuing support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence
- The opportunity of a Restorative Meeting with the perpetrator (see Appendix 2)

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why they became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude of the student
- An opportunity for a Restorative Meeting with the victim (see Appendix 2)

Support for the person being bullied – advice for staff

- Members of staff should contact the relevant Head of Year/Student Support Officer/Tutor in all cases
- Offer the student emotional support; reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling;
- Advise the student not to retaliate or reply. Instead, keep the evidence and take it to their parent/carer or a member of staff
- In cases of cyber-bullying, advise the person to consider what information they have in the public domain; unless the victim sees it as a punishment, they may be advised to change eg mobile phone number, twitter account etc and restrict social medial access. If hurtful or embarrassing content is being distributed, try to get it removed from the web. If the person who posted it is known, ask them to remove it. Alternatively, contact the host provider and make a report to get the content taken down;
- In some cases, the person being bullied may be able to block the person bullying from their sites and services.

Cyber-Bullying

The school recognises that technology plays an important and positive role in everyone's lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the school community to understand both the benefits and the risks, and to equip students with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly.

Cyber-bullying can involve Social Networking sites, like Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook and Instagram, emails and mobile phones used for SMS messages and as cameras. In addition:

- It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying; an extension of face-to-face bullying
- It can also go further in that it can invade home/personal space and can involve a greater number of people
- It can take place across age groups and school staff and other adults can be targeted
- It can draw bystanders into being accessories if they become aware but do not come forward about it
- It may include threats and intimidation; harassment or 'cyber-stalking'; vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images ('happy-slapping'); and manipulation
- It can be an illegal act
- It may take place out of school hours which makes it very difficult for the school to 'police'; thus taking actions to sanction or prevent incidents can prove more difficult

Preventing Cyber-Bullying: Policies and Procedures

- Ensure regular review and update of existing policies
- Provide opportunities for policies to be addressed and for children to be involved in the process of updating and improving them
- Keep good records of all cyber-bullying incidents
- Keep E-Safety Policy under review as technologies develop
- Publicise rules and sanctions effectively
- Use of filtering, firewall, anti-spyware software, anti-virus software and secure connections to safeguard the students

Promoting the Positive use of Technology

The school will:
- Make positive use of technology across the curriculum
- Use training opportunities to help staff develop their practice creatively and support students in safe and responsible use
- Ensure all staff and children understand the importance of password security and the need to log out of accounts

Responding to Cyber-Bullying

Most cases of cyber-bullying will be dealt with according to the general procedures for bullying as outlined above. However, some features of cyber-bullying differ from other forms of bullying and may prompt a particular response. The key differences are:

- impact: the scale and scope of cyber-bullying can be greater than other forms of bullying;
- targets and perpetrators: the people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets;
- location: the 24/7 and anywhere nature of cyber-bullying;
- anonymity: the person being bullied will not always know who is bullying them;
- motivation: some students may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying;

- evidence: unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence;
- it is possible that a member of staff may be a victim and these responses apply to them too.
- Any allegations against staff should be handled as other allegations following guidance in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education
- Confiscate mobile phone if appropriate[1] or restrict access to mobile phone during school hours

Working with the Bully and Applying Sanctions

The aim of the sanctions will be:
- to help the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop
- to hold the perpetrator to account, getting them to recognise the harm caused and deter them from repeating the behaviour
- to demonstrate to the school community that cyber-bullying is unacceptable and that the school has effective ways of dealing with it, so deterring others from behaving similarly
- Sanctions for any breaches of the E-Safety Policy or internet/mobile phone agreements will be applied
- In applying sanctions, consideration must be given to type and impact of bullying and the possibility that it was unintentional or was in retaliation
- The outcome must include helping the bully to recognise the consequence of their actions and providing support to enable the attitude and behaviour of the bully to change

A key part of the sanction may well involve ensuring that the student deletes files

Legal Duties and Powers

- The school has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment
- School staff may request a student to reveal a message or other phone content and may confiscate a phone
- If they consider that a mobile phone may contain evidence of bullying or a crime or the potential of a crime they may investigate the specific contents relating to that act
- Some cyber-bullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws including Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 ("Revenge Porn").

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1   Schools' general power to discipline, as set out in Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary penalty, where reasonable to do so. See DfE guidance on 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' (2018).

How the School Deals with Sexting

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude pic can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference.

The school will refer to guidance by the UK Council for Child Safety 'Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people' in dealing with all cases where it becomes aware of a sexting indecent. Staff who become aware of sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery should be aware of Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice (January 2018) and UKCCIS sexting advice (for schools and colleges). The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable.

If a member of staff becomes aware of a sexting incident they should act in line with the school's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy and inform a member of the 'Safeguarding and Emergency Team' immediately. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff. There should be subsequent interviews with the students involved (if appropriate). Parents/Carers should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents/carers would put the young person at risk of harm. At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. The school includes educating children about the dangers of sexting in its bullying prevention strategy outlined above.

RESTORATIVE APPROACHES OVERVIEW

Restorative meetings are facilitated to enable all affected parties of a bullying incident to express their view of a particular incident within the support structure offered by a trained facilitator. The process (outlined below) is designed to develop empathy and self-regulation of students within a supportive pastoral method.

Restorative Approaches are based around the guiding principles of the 4Rs:

RESPECT → RESPONSIBILTY

REINTEGRATION ← REPAIR
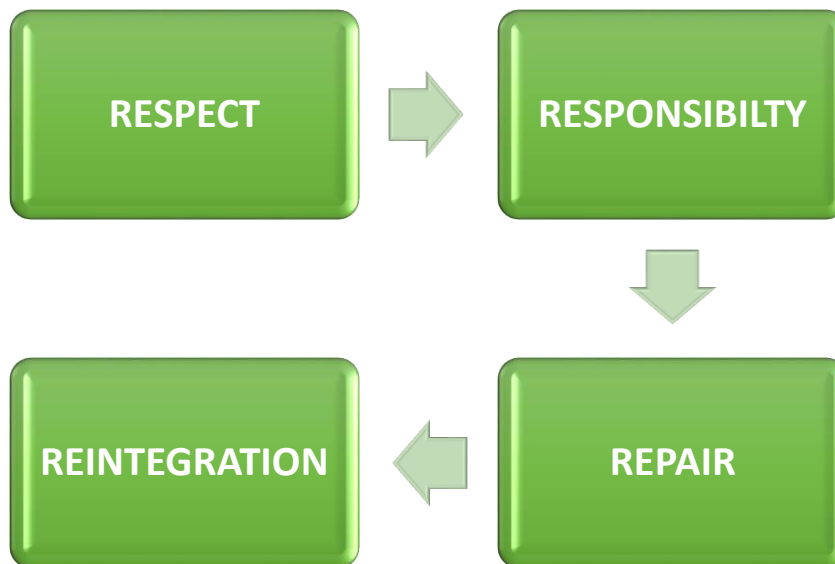
The principle of Restorative Approaches is to enable an open dialogue that is based around the below six questions. This dialogue is identified to be more developmental and open when compared with the traditional approach, which seeks to lay blame.

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. What have you thought about since?
4. Who was affected?
5. How were they affected?
6. What do you think you need to do to make things right?

For students where bullying is occurring, this approach has been seen to enable the bully to empathise with the victim and allow for a productive and positive outcome that is structured and guided. The facilitator for Restorative Approaches has the role of a guide within this process and has a key focus to maintaining a safe and open environment for these discussions to take place.

RESTORATIVE APPROACHES MEETING FORMAT

The Purpose of Restorative Meetings:

- A process for resolving conflict
- A common language to resolve conflict
- Focuses on the needs of the victim
- Allows the wrongdoer(s) to understand the impact of their actions
- Encourages wrongdoer(s) to take responsibility for their actions
- Therefore creates accountability
- Likely to change behaviour and build character

Preparation
- Facilitator spends time with each affected party and explains the process of the RA meeting clearly.
- Facilitator ensures that the student is happy for the meeting to go ahead.
- A specific set of questions, that are used in the meeting are asked of each student.

Meeting
- The meeting is convened and all affected parties are offered the opportunity to explain their side of events.
- Students are guided towards developing outcomes independently to resolve the matter and to prevent further incidents.

Follow Up
- Following an agreed period, the facilitator will arrange to check in with all affected parties to assess whether the agreed actions have been actioned and whether any new concerns are raised.

The process is logged centrally within each School Office in a Restorative Approaches File. Any staff member is able to make a referral to a facilitator which is overseen by JAC.