



Anti-Bullying Policy

2011-12

This policy applies to Early Years Foundation Stage, Junior School and Senior School.

General Statement

Hollygirt School values good relationships and every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously.

All staff, pupil and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on individuals and the school in general, and should work towards ensuring that pupils can work in an environment without fear.

Bullying is unacceptable in this school and will not be tolerated.

This policy makes reference to DCSF Guidance: Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools.

Aims

- a) To demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and will not be tolerated.
- b) To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and on off-site activities.
- c) To support everyone in the actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.
- d) To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying.
- e) To encourage pupils to tell someone that they are being bullied.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire on the part of an individual or group to hurt, threaten, frighten or manipulate someone through sustained and ongoing intimidation, either face to face or using cyber technology (*See Cyberbullying Policy*).

Characteristics of Bullying

- It can be physical and/or verbal in nature and the effect of both can be equally damaging.
- It can range from horseplay to serious assault leading to physical, emotional or psychological damage.
- It may consist of a single incident or, more usually, may continue over a longer period of time.
- It can be either direct or indirect: bullies may be either perpetrators or others who by their presence signal their support of the bully.
- Its seriousness is determined more by the distress suffered by the victim than by the intention of the bully. At its worse bullying can cause psychological damage and even suicide.

Bullying frequently focuses on individual differences or anything that is implied to be different from the majority. In this respect it undermines the school's work in promoting equal opportunities and teaching social and moral principles. Bullies may seize upon aspects of body shape, appearance, disabilities or intellectual differences or focus on parental, cultural or ethnically based lifestyles. It may dwell upon race, religion, or nationality. Sexual bullying may involve homophobia or focus on alleged sexual attractiveness or lack of it.

Relationships with other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- School Rules
- Cyberbullying Policy
- Drugs Policy
- Racism Policy
- Removal of a Girl from the School

All policies are available to view on the school's website and hard copies can be obtained from the school office.

Responsibilities

The Headmistress will draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils:

- Ensuring that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them.
- Ensure appropriate training is available.
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils.

The Deputy Head will:

- Be responsible for the day to day management of the policy and systems.
- Keep the Headmistress informed of incidents.
- Arrange relevant staff training.
- Keep staff aware of the need to reduce bullying risks, inform of strategies for prevention and for dealing with bullied children and bullies through relevant staff training.
- Determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems.
- Advise on methods for encouraging pupils to let it be known that they are being bullied.

The Deputy Head and the Head of Juniors will:

- Be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice.
- Know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.
- Put into practice methods for encouraging pupils to tell someone that they are being bullied.

Form Tutors will:

- Be responsible for liaising with the Deputy Head and the Head of Juniors over all incidents involving pupils in their form.
- Be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution.

All staff will:

- Know the policy and procedures.
- Deal with incidents according to the policy.
- Never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether onsite or during an off-site activity.

Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum

The school will raise awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through its 'Issues' programme, school assemblies, the School Forum, use of form time and in the national curriculum programmes of study as appropriate.

The Deputy Head and the Head of Juniors are responsible for initiating and developing an anti-bullying programme as

part of the Issues course.

Procedures

Signs of Bullying

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, a lack of concentration, or truancy.

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and to report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the Deputy Head or the Head of Juniors.

Pupils will be encouraged to report incidents of bullying through a positive programme of awareness and action.

Dealing with Incidents

- If bullying is suspected or reported the incident will be dealt with initially and immediately by the teacher approached.
- If a racial element to the bullying is suspected the Headmistress or Deputy Head must be informed immediately.
- The teacher will record the details of the incident and inform the Deputy Head or the Head of Juniors who will interview all the parties (individually or in small groups if more appropriate) and make a record.
- Staff teaching the bullied pupil and the Form Tutor will be informed.
- The Deputy Head or the Head of Juniors will determine in consultation with the Headmistress the appropriate strategy to combat the bullying.
- The Form Tutor will normally oversee the implementation of the strategy.
- Parents will be kept informed by the Deputy Head/Headmistress.
- Any sanctions against the bullies will be determined by the Deputy Head or Headmistress but persistent bullying is considered a serious breach of discipline (*see Behaviour Policy*).

Bullied Pupils

Staff who deal with pupils who have been bullied must always offer reassurance.

Pupils who have been bullied will be given support determined by the Deputy Head and the Head of Juniors in consultation with the Deputy Head.

Sanctions

Any of the school's formal punishments can be used against bullies as appropriate. For persistent offenders or incidents considered as gross acts of aggression a pupil could be permanently excluded. (See Behaviour Policy)

Meetings with parents will normally be held before any final communications of serious sanctions takes place.

Involvement of Parents

Parents, as well as all staff and pupils, should know that the school will not tolerate bullying, and takes a positive approach to educating pupils to combat it.

Parents of pupils who are being bullied and parents of the bullies will be involved in the solution to the problem as appropriate by the relevant Form Tutor in consultation with the Deputy Head or the Head of Juniors.

Parents will be informed of the policy and procedures and the possibility of permanent exclusion following acts of bullying.

Involvement of Pupils

Pupils will be involved in the development of positive strategies both through the School Forum and form/tutor groups. Pupils will have an input into the PSHE anti-bullying programme, and will be consulted on how it could be developed.

A major part of the programme will consist of educating pupils in how to cope with bullying.

Pupils will be encouraged to tell someone they are being bullied, with strategies of how to do this covertly if they are unable to do it overtly.

Strategies for Dealing with Bullying

Strategies are suggested in Part 4 “Bullying – Don’t Suffer in Silence” DfEE 0064/2000, these include:

From Age 5

- Co-operative group work
- Circle time
- Circle of friends

From Age 9

- Befriending
- School watch
- The support group approach
- Mediation by adults
- Mediation by peers

From Age 11

- Active listening/counselling-based approaches
- Quality circles
- Assertiveness training

Full details of these strategies are available in both the junior and senior staff rooms.

Criteria for Success

A reduction in the number and seriousness of reported incidents of bullying – the further development of a culture in which all reject bullying behaviour.

Counselling

The school is prepared in appropriate cases to arrange counselling for both bullies and the bullied.

Reporting and Recording

All incidents must be recorded and reported on the school’s pupil database to enable patterns to be identified. These must include any sanctions issued/support offered.

Staff Training

The Deputy Head is responsible for arranging a programme of staff development, which will include anti-bullying strategies. This will include training for education support staff.

Monitoring and Review

The Deputy Head will keep the Headmistress informed of the incidence of bullying in school. The SMT and Trustees will keep anti-bullying strategies under review when policies are reviewed annually.

Bullying of Staff

Hollygirt School is committed to ensuring that all staff are treated with respect and dignity, irrespective of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation or age.

The school wishes to provide an environment of positive working relationships which maximises staff's skills and abilities and sets a good example to pupils. It follows that we will not permit or condone any behaviours by staff which amount to bullying, by which we mean the persistent and normally deliberate misuse of power or position to intimidate, humiliate or undermine an employee.

Bullying may take many forms, ranging from overt verbal abuse and threatening gestures to more covert behaviours including setting unreasonable deadlines, removing responsibilities without good reason and marginalising individuals by ignoring them. A member of staff who experiences suspected bullying should first seek to resolve the problem by making an informal approach to the colleague involved, either in person, perhaps accompanied by a friend or by letter. The member of staff experiencing the suspected bullying should keep a dated record of incidents and action taken and copies of all correspondence.

If the problem is not resolved and the unacceptable behaviour continues, an approach should then be made to the Headmistress or, in her absence, the Deputy Head.

The Headmistress and Trustees will consider seriously and confidentially any allegations of bullying. Bullying is regarded as a disciplinary offence and any incidents complained of will be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedure. Whether or not any complaint is upheld, the school will not tolerate any discrimination against a member of staff who has lodged a complaint about bullying or who has assisted the investigation.

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