



Racism Policy

2011-12

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

Hollygirt School is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential. Therefore:

- it will use all the powers and resources at its disposal to eliminate racial incidents;
- it will ensure that any complaint of racial harassment is promptly investigated and that everyone is aware of his/her responsibility and the procedures to challenge and report it when it occurs;
- it will work with parents, communities and other agencies to ensure that it is clearly understood that racial harassment is unacceptable;
- aims to provide an atmosphere where everyone is valued and any discrimination is always challenged.

Racism and Racial Discrimination

Race refers to colour, nationality and ethnic national origins. The Equality Act 2010 defines racism as follows:

Direct racial discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another on racial grounds. The comparison must be with a person whose relevant circumstances are more or less the same. It is not necessary to prove that there was an intention to discriminate; what is relevant is that the outcome was discriminatory.

Indirect racial discrimination occurs when:

- a person is subject to a requirement or condition that is applied equally to everyone, but which in practice disproportionately fewer people from their racial group can comply with;
- the requirement or condition cannot be justified on non-racial grounds;
- it is a detriment to the person because they cannot comply with it.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another because they have complained of racial discrimination given evidence or otherwise assisted another person's complaint of racial discrimination, or because it is known that they intended to do so.

A Definition of Racial Harassment Incidents

The term "racial harassment incident" is used here to describe all those unwanted actions by a person or a group of people directed at people of different ethnic origin which cause humiliation, offence or distress or interfere with their performance or create an unpleasant working environment and are motivated by racial considerations. As such they may include:

- unpleasant remarks or actions associated with a person's race, nationality (including citizenship) or ethnic or national origin;
- inappropriately emphasise a person's race, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origin over his/her other role such as a pupil, member of staff or parent/carer.

A racial motivation is to be regarded as an aggravating factor which will result in many incidents of misbehaviour or misconduct being taken more seriously than where this motivation is absent.

For the purposes of these procedures it includes:

- any incident in which it appears to the person reporting or investigating;
- that the complaint involved an element of racial motivation;
- any incident that includes an allegation of racial motivation made by any person.

Racial incidents can involve:

- physical assault or the threat of physical assault where race appears to be the motivating force;
- name calling, insults and jokes;
- graffiti;
- provocative behaviour such as the wearing or displaying of racist badges or insignia on the person or on clothing;
- bringing racist materials such as leaflets, comics or magazines on to the premises;
- verbal abuse and threats;
- incitement of others to behave in a racist way;
- racist comments;
- attempts to recruit pupils or staff to racist organisations and groups;
- ridicules of cultural preferences e.g. food, music, dress, faith;
- discriminatory working practices: refusing to work with or co-operate with others because of their ethnic origins / ignoring or playing undue attention to others because of their ethnic origin.

The school staff is defined as anyone who is working at the school whether employed or on a voluntary basis.

Procedures for Dealing with Racial Incidents

Recording Incidents

Incidents will be recorded in the Bullying and Racial Incidents Log kept by the Deputy Head.

The person reporting or recording an incident will provide details including:

- date, time and place of incident;
- type of incident;
- person(s) involved;
- actions (including sanctions) taken.

Monitoring

The Deputy Head will:

- keep the Headmistress informed of incidents;
- arrange 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.

Supporting Victims

The school is aware of the barriers that exist to making a complaint of racial harassment and wishes to encourage all involved with the school to feel confident that they can raise matters of concern.

All staff must be aware of the priority attached to responding promptly to complaints of racial harassment and to supporting victims. No incidents should occur without the school's commitment to race equality being made clear to the victim.

Where no formal complaint is made but a member of staff is aware that harassment is taking place, the matter should be referred to the Headmistress or Deputy Head who will be responsible for making an appropriate response.

Where the member of staff witnesses an incident she/he must make absolutely clear the school's attitude to race equality and offer support to the victim.

Anyone who makes a complaint has the right:

- to support;
- to interpretation facilities where necessary or where requested;
- to information on the action that has been taken and other sources of assistance that are available.

Parents/carers will be informed and involved. The school will ensure that parents' wishes and needs are taken seriously. In all serious cases, the Headmistress will send a letter to the parents/carers of all victims and perpetrators explaining the action taken and the reasons for taking it.

Dealing with Perpetrators

These general procedures will be followed when dealing with perpetrators:

- The incident will not be ignored or go unchallenged. There will be a clear explanation that the conduct is unacceptable within the school's disciplinary code.
- If the incident is serious the perpetrator will be referred to the designated member of staff. A serious incident is one that involves violence, the threat of violence or incitement to racial hatred.
- Sanctions and/or counselling appropriate to the seriousness of the incident will be provided.
- Graffiti will be removed promptly. Racist materials, badges and insignia are illegal and will be removed and destroyed.
- The Headmistress will be informed if the incident is serious and the parents/carers of the perpetrator will be informed.
- Where a decision is taken to temporarily suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the *Serious Breaches of Discipline* section of the Behaviour Policy.

In cases involving volunteers, parents/carers or other adults:

- The incident should be reported to the Headmistress.
- The procedure for making a formal complaint will be made known to the complainant(s).
- The Headmistress will investigate the case and take appropriate action.

In cases involving a member of staff the matter will be handled in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures.

For offences that take place off site the following procedures should be followed.

Where pupils are on a supervised activity the protection of children is the first priority and staff should seek to secure that:

- incidents that involve physical assault should be reported to the police as soon as practical and their assistance sought;
- aggressive or provocative action should be avoided. On no account should children be encouraged to be assertive;
- perpetrators should be clearly warned that their behaviour is unacceptable and is likely to be reported to the police;
- a full report must be made to the Headmistress as soon as possible;
- the parents/carers of children involved in the incident will be informed about the incident and the action taken.

Following up an incident and dealing with its impact on the school Community Service

Extra vigilance should be applied following serious incidents. In particular there should be alertness to:

- patterns of absence;
- outbreaks of graffiti;
- the presence of racist literature, badges and insignia.

There should be increased alertness when pupils are arriving or leaving and when they are moving between buildings and lessons and at break times. Every opportunity should be taken to remind the pupils of the school's code of practice. Rumours should be promptly challenged.

While there may be spontaneous expressions of interest by pupils, staff must be aware of the need to avoid being drawn into situations that are likely to lead to unproductive confrontations. It is important that formal discussion opportunities are set up so that proper debate can take place on the issues.

Feedback will be sought from the victims and their parents/carers as well as from members of the community in order to assess the impact of the incident and to evaluate the appropriateness/effectiveness of the school's action.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

*Revised July 2008
Unchanged July 2010
Amended January 2011*