

THE HILLS ACADEMY
ANTI BULLYING POLICY
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Philosophy

At The Hills Academy we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. The anti-bullying policy dovetails with the behaviour policy and the equal opportunities policy.

What Is Bullying?

“Bullying may be distinguished from other unacceptable forms of aggression in that it involves dominance of one pupil by another, or a group of others, is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident .”DFES

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of deliberately hurting another person.

Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Victims find it difficult to defend themselves against bullying.

Bullying is often repeated over a period of time.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures because of ethnic origin, nationality, or colour
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexual orientation
- Verbal name-calling, offensive remarks, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing or because of some form of disability

Bullying can be subtle and difficult to spot

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Specific aims

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night, has nightmares or wets the bed
- feels ill in the morning/before playtime, makes themselves sick
- begins to perform poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

Key Points

- At the beginning of each year we remind pupils that we are a "telling" school.
- Pupils know who they can talk to – their class teacher, an LSA, a lunchtime supervisor - and when. Class letter boxes are in each classroom
- We never ignore suspected bullying
- We do not make premature assumptions
- We listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth
- We adopt a problem solving approach which moves pupils on from justifying themselves
- We follow up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed

Practice

1. All suspected incidents to be reported to staff.
2. In cases of bullying a written record will be kept of all incidents, investigations and outcomes. (Bullying Log – headteacher's office)
3. The headteacher will be informed of the situation and instigate follow-up procedures.
4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
5. Bullies and victims interviewed separately.
6. Parents of victims informed and asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
7. Parents of bully informed and asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
8. Pupils put on playground watch immediately and staff comments recorded.
9. Parents informed at all times and follow-up appointments made until the situation is resolved to the satisfaction of the parents.
10. Clear lines of communication established between home and school to ensure bullying does not start again.
11. Every attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
2. In serious cases, exclusion will be considered
3. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
4. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Strategies for reducing bullying

We will use methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- raising awareness about bullying and the anti-bullying policy during the 'Anti-bullying Week' which is held annually each November
- increasing understanding for victims, and helping to build an anti-bullying ethos
- Use Values education to give pupils a vocabulary for behaviour and promote empathy and understanding.

*Through the curriculum it is possible to explore such issues as:

- Why do people bully each other
- What are the effects of bullying on the bullied, on bullies and on bystanders?
- What can we do to stop bullying?

by

- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters

When **co-operative group work** is integrated into normal classroom practice pupils can:

- explore issues and controversies by considering different points of view
- be more tolerant of others and more willing to listen
- trust those of the opposite gender and those from ethnic groups
- become better integrated into the peer group

by

- working together and helping one another, managing conflicts within the group
- working on tasks that need group effort
- sharing information and dividing work towards common goals
- varying roles within groups: leading, problem solving, tidying up

Well managed **Circle Time** generates a positive atmosphere which usually spreads into other areas of class activity. Circle Time:

- creates a safe space to explore issues of concern
- explores relationships with adults and peers
- enhances effective communication
- affirms the strengths and enhances the self-esteem of each member

by

- focusing on their own feelings and those of others
- listening to one another and tolerating other's views
- learning to take turns
- discussing difficult issues using a problem-solving approach

Befriending involves assigning selected pupil volunteers to “be with” or “befriend” peers whom teachers have referred.

- need personal qualities - to listen, be assertive and reliable.
- give support with emotional and social problems – new to school, difficulty making friend, upset at separation or loss, being bullied or socially excluded
- may share a common difficulty – for example bereavement – perhaps setting up a support group

Each term the **School Council** elects class representatives to meet with the headteacher to discuss school issues. Representatives report back to their classes and bring the views of their class the school council to inform decisions. Pupils are given a voice in decision making.

Equal Opportunities

The Hills Academy is committed to working towards equality of opportunity for all children regardless of age, ability, gender, race and social circumstances. All pupils are of equal value and have the same right to take part in the varied activities and opportunities wherever possible.

INCLUSION

There is a commitment to inclusive practice. Inclusion is the responsibility of everyone in the school. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 provides a revised statutory framework for inclusion. It strengthens the right of children with SEN to attend a mainstream school, unless their parents choose otherwise or if this is incompatible with "efficient education for other children" and there are no "reasonable steps" which the school and LEA can take to prevent that incompatibility. Alongside the act, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and The Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced into The DDA in 2005, place new duties on schools not to treat disabled pupils less favourably than others and to make "reasonable adjustments" to ensure that they are not disadvantaged. This may involve disabled pupils receiving more favourable provision.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Headteacher monitors whether the policy is effective and reports to the Governing Body meetings through the Personnel and Pupil Welfare sub-committee of the Governing Body. This sub-committee is informed of any incidents of bullying in school and of the effectiveness of the strategies.

Inset

Inset will be provided as identified in the school development plan. Good practice elsewhere and relevant publications are discussed and shared. All new staff, both teaching and non-teaching staff are made aware of the policy.

Policy review

This policy is discussed, monitored and reviewed tri-annually by the Standards sub-committee of the Governing Body as part of the review of whole school policies and guidelines.