



Anti-Bullying Policy

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An academy within:



“Learning together; to be the best we can be”

1. Legal Framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

1.2. This policy has been written in accordance with DfE advice, including, but not limited to DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (2017).

1.3. Bullying is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

1.4. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

1.5. Hilltop School recognises there is a need to safeguard the welfare of all those within the school community and to encourage co-operation, tolerance and harmony.

1.6. Hilltop School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure



atmosphere. We have high expectations of all pupils and strive to create a climate in which all children can fulfil their potential.

- 1.7. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Hilltop School. If bullying does occur, all pupils should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Hilltop School is a telling school and anyone who knows that bullying is happening should be able to inform a member of staff in safety.
- 1.8. Many people are taking about child on child abuse and this is what we will call bullying.

2. Definition

- 2.1. Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over a period of time that intentionally hurts or harms. Research confirms the destructive effects of bullying on young people's lives. Although some can shrug it off, bullying can produce feelings of powerlessness, isolation from others, undermine self-esteem and sometimes convinces the victims that they are at fault.
- 2.2. Those who bully aim to hurt by means of force, intimidation or ridicule in order to control others or perhaps to inspire a reaction that escalates the situation

3. Focus Of Bullying

- 3.1. The focus of bullying can be more or less anything that distinguishes an individual and represents a deviation from a presumed norm, e.g. body shape, hair colour. It can focus on personal backgrounds, including parents' jobs, houses and lifestyles and can sometimes derive from deep seated local feuding with disagreements between adults passed to children who then act them out in school.
- 3.2. Bullying can focus on sexual attractiveness or the perceived lack of it and sexuality based on homophobia, misogyny or both. Bullying can also focus on race, nationality, culture, religion or a mixture of these. Hilltop School strives to celebrate diversity and difference and we welcome pupils and families from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- 3.3. Within Hilltop School the definition of bullying does not always include intention to harm. Many of our pupils have not yet fully developed the knowledge, skills and understanding to interact positively with individuals or



within their peer group. Some pupils exhibit behaviours which put peers at risk. Hilltop School has a whole school definition of bullying to include any behaviour which may have a detrimental effect on individuals (this policy needs to be read in conjunction with the Nexus Behaviour Policy)

4. How Bullying Happens

4.1. There are differences in how bullying is conducted. It can be a one-off or sustained and damaging either way. It can be painfully obvious, but it can also be surreptitious and subtle. It can also be one student against another or involve several students. Direct physical bullying and threats of bullying are usually more evident than verbal intimidation and manipulation, which is more difficult to observe and deal with.

5. The Effects

5.1. The most common effects of bullying are:

- Anxiety and depression, which can lead to intermittent and long-term absences from school, lessons or engagement in learning, resulting in under-achievement
- Poor self-esteem which prevents pupils from forming positive relationships and can lead to feelings of worthlessness and betrayal
- Withdrawal which may lead to reduced participation in school and other activities, isolation or self-harm
- Loss of identity and positive self-image
- Guilt that the victim 'allowed' it to happen
- Mental health difficulties

6. Signs And Symptoms Of Bullying

6.1. The pupil may:

- Be frightened of walking to or from school or being in parts of school
- Be unwilling to go to school
- Begin to perform poorly in school



- Become withdrawn
- Have books, clothing or possessions that are damaged
- Become distressed/stop eating
- Cry or get upset easily/have nightmares
- Become disruptive/aggressive
- Have possessions which go missing
- Begin stealing (to pay the bully)

7. Aims Of Our Anti-Bullying Work

7.1. At Hilltop School we endeavour:

- To ensure all staff, pupils and parents have an understanding of bullying and its consequences
- To emphasise through all aspects of our curriculum that bullying will not be tolerated
- To ensure that there are clear procedures and systems for reporting and recording bullying, which are understood and followed by all staff
- To ensure pupils and staff learn to keep themselves and others safe
- To ensure that students learn to recognise and respect the differences between groups of people within the school community
- To help students develop self-confidence, self-esteem and to fulfil their potential within school
- To support and re-educate those pupils who are both the victims and perpetrators of bullying, providing them with a range of strategies they can use if they are at risk of bullying others or are being bullied themselves
- To create a school which all members of the community can come to without fear of violence, aggression or intimidation of any kind

7.2. Pupils are taught that any kind of aggressive behaviour, either verbal or physical is unacceptable. Incidents of bullying are always treated seriously

7.3. All staff are vigilant in school and within the grounds to identify actual or potential cases of bullying. Victims are asked not to retaliate, but to inform a member of staff immediately.

8. Combatting Bullying

- 8.1. Hilltop School is aware that bullying must be tackled on two levels, by focusing on preventative work, but also by responding appropriately when incidents do occur. We are working hard to improve behaviour and encourage children and young people to positively manage their own behaviour. We teach our students that as well as having rights, the choices they make will also bring responsibilities.
- 8.2. We shall be using the following strategies to ensure that we have a clear, consistent and effective approach to bullying:
- An agreed definition of bullying with a base line measurement
 - A strong ethos in Hilltop School promoting tolerance, respect for difference and diversity
 - Positive leadership from senior staff on tackling bullying
 - A designated member of staff, who will be responsible for co-ordinating anti-bullying issues
 - A clear anti bullying policy. The policy will be reviewed regularly by staff, parents and pupils
 - A planned approach in PSHE curriculum and tutorial programmes to the issue of bullying in a context which promotes self-esteem and confidence in relationships
 - Planning and promoting teaching and school routines which encourage learning and positive behaviour
 - Regular training for all staff to raise and maintain awareness, to alert them to indicators which may suggest bullying and to equip them with ways of responding to it
 - Periodic consultation with pupils to inform the school's knowledge of bullying
 - Confidential and varied methods for alerting the school to current instances of bullying
 - Adequate supervision of the school site, especially toilets, lunch times and distant areas
 - Increased supervision levels and, as appropriate safe areas, for pupils who feel threatened at break times
 - Independent listeners, including older pupils and adults, other than school staff, to whom victims of bullying may turn

- Rewarding non-aggressive behaviour
- Encouraging co-operative behaviour
- The use of individual plans for those children experiencing interpersonal and peer relationship difficulties
- Close monitoring of all pupils' behaviours
- Sharing proven good practice with colleagues both in Hilltop School and in our family of schools
- Refer to the PHSE/Citizenship, Schemes of work and the Rotherham Healthy Schools Handbook

9. Education

- 9.1. Pupils will be given the opportunity to increase their awareness of both the effects and consequences of bullying through some or all the following:
- Curriculum areas – English, Drama, RE, PSHE, History, etc.
 - Assemblies/Schools Council
 - Class discussions on issues such as friendship, prejudice, assertiveness, coping strategies
 - Firm and appropriate disciplinary procedures
 - Students being encouraged to develop their own class rules
 - Greater interaction between classes/year groups

10. Dealing With Incidents And Allegations

- 10.1. Where a student reports/alleges a bullying incident or an adult witnesses an incident we should:
- Have a nominated member of staff, e.g. Head teacher, Deputy or Assistant Head Teacher is informed in writing (usually through an incident or cause for concern form)
 - Staff will ensure the immediate safety of all other staff, pupils and property. It maybe that in exceptional circumstances there is a risk of injury to an individual such that physical intervention is required. In which case the member of staff would follow the school's policy on Positive Handling
 - Any injured child/children or staff will receive appropriate medical attention as soon as is practicable
 - All incidents will be recorded, including the facts of the incident, action taken and a report of the follow up interviews.
 - Both the victim(s) and bully(ies) should be interviewed separately to establish the facts without apportioning blame

- A decision should be taken regarding whether to contact the parents of both the victim(s) and bully(ies)
- In the light of the incident it may be appropriate to review existing behaviour policy and/or procedures
- Appropriate sanctions and support will be discussed and agreed upon
- Follow up discussions will take place within 1 week
- The opportunity should be available after the incident for both the victim(s) and bully(ies) together to discuss their difficulties with a responsible and confident adult

10.2. Interviewing the victim

10.2.1. The pupil will be informed that notes will be taken of the conversation and both will agree at the end that what has been written is a true record.

10.2.2. Staff will be aware at all times of possible Child Protection issues. Confidentiality will not be promised.

- Staff will listen objectively and without favour to what is being said. The pupil(s) will be encouraged to share what they are feeling
- Staff will ascertain who has been involved, including bystanders
- Staff will discuss the victim(s) what they would like to see happen and arrangements for the future if they are able
- Staff may offer coping/preventative strategies if appropriate
- Discussions around reparation will take place if property is damaged/destroyed
- A realistic time scale for investigating and reporting back to the victim(s) will be given

10.3. Interviewing the bully/bystander

- Research suggests that by telling the bully(ies)/bystanders will not apportion blame, but rather approach the pupils in a non-confrontational manner with the emphasis on problem solving helps resolve the situation
- Staff will explain they would like to talk to the student(s) as they are aware the student has been unkind to/causing problems for (name of victim). Staff will ask the student(s) if they know how (name of victim) is feeling right now
- Staff will explain that the bully(ies)/bystanders are responsible for those feelings and this is not acceptable. Staff will be clear this is not acceptable
- The staff member will ask for suggestions to help the victim(s) feel better and to help solve the problem
- Staff will agree to meet with all the students involved again after an appropriate time to see how the situation has changed

- The nominated member of staff for bullying issues should be given a record of the interviews for the student files
- School may wish to send copies of the reports to the parents/carers of those students involved
- Appropriate contact will be maintained with both sets of parents/carers until the situation has been resolved

11. Persistent Bullying May Be Combined With Other Positive Interventions

- 11.1. Peer mentoring
- 11.2. Peer mediation
- 11.3. Buddying
- 11.4. A class change after discussions with all involved
- 11.5. Support from external agencies, e.g. Behaviour Support Service, education Psychology Service, NSPCC, childline, CAMHS etc.
- 11.6. School Council
- 11.7. Circle of Friends
- 11.8. Schools within the trust working together to support those involved
- 11.9. A whole school anti-bullying week as the beginning of an on-going campaign
- 11.10. The appropriate encouragement of peer support and positive action
- 11.11. Any sanctions invoked following the incident will be in line with the school's behaviour policy

We are aware of the need to deal with allegations or incidences of bullying sensitively. We also appreciate the importance of dealing with all the children and young people involved in a way which communicates it is not acceptable, but also treats them with dignity.

12. Working with Parents and Carers

- 12.1. We will work with parents/carers to minimise the likelihood of further bullying regardless of whether one is talking about the child who has bullied or the one who has been bullied.



- 12.2. We will endeavour to give parents every opportunity to discuss their concerns as soon as practicable. We will emphasise the importance of working together to solve problems and create realistic solutions that are acceptable to all concerned. A lack of parental support can make conflict resolution much more difficult and is regrettable, particularly if children then mirror the negativity and unhelpful attitude that they may have seen.
- 12.3. Hilltop School appreciates there will be occasions when the parents and carers of one or both sets of students involved will feel the school has not sanctioned appropriately. Parents or carers will be given the opportunity to share their concerns and if appropriate, staff will discuss the decisions to impose the particular sanction(s) with them.
- 12.4. Where a parent is dis-satisfied with the school's handling of a situation then the head teacher will seek to resolve the situation informally. In the event of a formal complaint then the agreed complaints procedure for the school will be used. Should the press be contacted regarding the bullying incident then school should work with Nexus and RMBC publicity office.
- 12.5. Hilltop School actively encourages and welcomes comments, questions and suggestions regarding our anti-bullying policy. Please contact us on 01709 813386 or Hilltopschool@nexusmat.org

13. References And Key Contacts

References

Ofsted (2003) Bullying: Effective Action in Secondary Schools
DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (2017)

Key Contacts

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.bullying.co.uk

www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/dealing-bullying-and-getting-support

www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying

www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying