Anti-Bullying Policy

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An academy within:

"Learning together, to be the best we can be"

1. Statement Of Intent

1.1. At **Hilltop School** we are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. At Hilltop School, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed, it would unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

1.2. Hilltop School recognises that bullying can have a significant impact on a child's emotional wellbeing, educational outcomes and mental health. The school adopts a preventative, educative and restorative approach to bullying whilst maintaining appropriate sanctions where necessary. Any reports of perceived bullying, including prejudice-based bullying and child-on-child abuse, will always be taken seriously.

2. Aims And Objectives Of This Policy

2.1. The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy. This will happen in the following ways:

- The school will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004, Equality Act 2010, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2015, and Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PHSE [Personal, Social & Health Education scheme] lessons, circle time etc) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

3. What Is Bullying?

3.1. The school has adopted the following collaborative definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying is:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group that intentionally hurts another person physically or emotionally. Bullying often involves an imbalance of power and may be repeated over time. In some circumstances, a single significant incident may be treated as bullying, particularly where it involves prejudice-based abuse, online abuse, threats, humiliation, sharing images, or behaviour causing significant harm.

3.2. Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of child-on-child abuse. It is recognised to be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's and young people's emotional development.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Homophobic because of/or focussing on the issue of sexuality

- Cyber bullying, including but not limited to - sharing or threatening to share images, use of social media platforms to spread inappropriate messages, group messaging services, Online gaming platforms, AI-generated images, videos or audio, Deepfakes, Impersonation accounts and/or exclusion from online groups
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs or any protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP). Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

Where does bullying happen?

It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground. Bullying may also happen on the way to and from school. In such cases, the Head teacher is empowered by law to deal with such incidents but must do so in accordance with the school's policy.

At Hilltop School, we are concerned with our children's conduct and welfare outside as well as inside school and we will do what we can to address any bullying issues that occur off the school premises. The following steps may be taken:

- Talk to the local Community Police Officer about problems on the streets
- Talk to the transport companies about bullying on school buses and in school or travel transport.
- Talk to the Head Teachers of other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the premises
- Map out safe routes to school for children, linking them to the School Travel Plan
- Discuss coping strategies with parents
- Talk to the children about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the school premises

4. Child-on-Child Abuse

4.1. Child-on-child abuse refers to any form of physical, sexual, emotional, or discriminatory abuse perpetrated by children or young people towards others of a similar age. some pupils may have additional needs, communication differences or social understanding difficulties which may affect how incidents are communicated, understood or investigated. These factors will always be taken into account when determining appropriate support and intervention.

4.2. **Hilltop School** maintains a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. Such behaviour will never be dismissed as banter, horseplay, part of growing up, or normal relationship behaviour.

4.3. Types of Child-on-Child Abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Physical abuse (e.g., hitting, kicking, biting)
- Sexual violence and harassment
- Upskirting or inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Initiation/hazing-type violence and rituals
- Emotional abuse (e.g., threats, intimidation, exclusion)
- Discriminatory abuse (e.g., racist, sexist, homophobic, or ableist behaviour)

4.3. All staff are trained to recognise signs of child-on-child abuse and respond appropriately. All reports will be recorded using CPOMS and investigated by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate, and external agencies may be involved.

4.4. Victims of child-on-child abuse will be supported through pastoral care, counselling, and safeguarding plans as appropriate and alleged perpetrators will be supported to understand and change their behaviour, with consideration of their individual needs. A restorative approach may be used where appropriate, alongside disciplinary measures.

5. Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

5.1. Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

5.2. Hilltop School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of

'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

5.3. Hilltop School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our Anti-Bullying, Behaviour and Safeguarding policies.

6. Signs and Symptoms

6.1. A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that they are being bullied.

6.2. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school/in the taxi
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine/route to school
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to under perform in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

6.3. These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

7. What Can You Do If You Are Being Bullied?

7.1. Wherever you are in school, you have the right to feel safe. Nobody has the right to make you feel unhappy. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people who can help you.

7.2. The children were all asked this question and we have included some of their strategies in the list below:

- Try not to let the bully know that he/she is making you feel upset.
- Try to ignore them.
- Be assertive – stand up to them, look at them directly in the eye, tell them to stop and mean it.
- Stay in a group, bullies usually pick on individuals.
- Get away as quickly as you can.
- Tell someone you can trust – it can be an adult in school, e.g. a teacher, a teaching assistant, the wellbeing team, a parent or carer, a friend, a brother, a sister or a relative.
- If you are scared, ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
- If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and post it in the school listen up box.
- When you tell an adult about the bullying give them as many facts as you can (What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?).
- Keep a diary of what's been happening and refer to it when you tell someone.
- Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you.
- Never be afraid to do something about it and quick.
- Don't suffer in silence.
- Don't blame yourself for what is happening.
- Call a helpline.

Procedures in school for reporting bullying: ***Pathways of help***



8. What Can You Do If You See Someone Else Being Bullied? (The Role of the Bystander)

8.1. Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the victim. Staying silent means the bully has won and gives them more power. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger. The children have also discussed this question in class and some of the strategies they suggested are listed below:

- Don't smile or laugh at the situation.
- Don't rush over and take the bully on yourself.
- Don't be made to join in.
- If safe to do so, encourage the bully to stop bullying.
- If you can, let the bully know you do not like his or her behaviour.
- Shout for help.
- Let the victim(s) know that you are going to get help.
- Tell a member of staff as soon as you can.
- Try and befriend the person being bullied.
- Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.
- Ask someone you trust about what to do.
- Call a helpline for some advice.

9. Bullying Of Children with Special Educational Needs

9.1. Hilltop School is an inclusive school. We provide a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are.

9.2. We have some children who have learning disabilities and/or communication difficulties. Everyone involved in the school is very aware that these children can be especially vulnerable to bullying and we are therefore particularly vigilant at all times.

9.3. Higher attainers, gifted or talented pupils can also be affected by bullying. Staff will treat this type of bullying seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.

10. Procedures For Reporting and Responding to Bullying Incidents

10.1. All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at Hilltop School. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

10.2. The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

- At Hilltop school we use a restorative approach where we bring both parties together and discuss how ones actions has made the other feel and how we can work to resolve the situation.
- Report all bullying allegations and incidents to staff.
- Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
- Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
- Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
- The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
- Staff will attempt to adopt a problem-solving approach which will move children on from them having to justify their behaviour.
- Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
- Staff will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- The bully (child/ren displaying bullying behaviour) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied (see next section).
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (child/ren displaying bullying behaviour) understand and change his/her/their behaviour.
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff on the on CPOMS, including the defined category of bullying as well as being reported as a child-on-child abuse incident. This will enable the identification and monitoring of incidents involving bullying, prejudice-based incidents, safeguarding concerns or child-on-child abuse.
- In serious cases parents will be informed and will be invited to come into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at staff meetings.

- The Headteacher or designated senior leader will provide termly reports to governance regarding bullying trends, actions taken and outcomes.If necessary and appropriate, the Safeguarding Lead in school, Social Care or police will be consulted.

10.3 Following any bullying incident, consideration will be given to both the victim and perpetrator support via: -

- pastoral support
- wellbeing support
- risk assessments where appropriate
- safe spaces and trusted adults
- monitoring of ongoing wellbeing
- adjustments for pupils with SEND

11. Sanctions

11.1. The following sanctions may be used:

- Restorative conversation between both parties.
- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing
- Spend playtimes and lunchtimes with an adult
- Parents will be invited in to school
- Be removed from class and work in the support room to work through the incident in a restorative way.
- Report to the Senior Leadership Team
- Fixed term or permanent exclusion

12. Strategies For The Prevention and Reduction of Bullying

12.1. Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

12.2. These can include:

- Planning and promoting teaching and school routines which encourage learning and positive behaviour.

- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- 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.
- Using a restorative approach to help students understand the impact their actions have on others.
- Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy
- Producing a 'child speak' version of the policy for the children
- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules where appropriate
- Engaging in national anti-bullying week each year
- PHSE (Personal, Health & Social Education) scheme of work from year 1 to year 14 used to support this policy
- Children writing stories and poems and drawing pictures about bullying
- Children being read stories about bullying
- Prominently displaying anti-bullying posters produced by the children around the school
- Independent listeners, including older pupils and adults, other than school staff, to whom victims of bullying may turn
- Introducing playground improvements and initiatives including 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
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour

13. Monitoring And Evaluation of the Policy

13.1. To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated. Questionnaires completed by the whole school community, together with surveys parent feedback and bullying incident forms will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the policy. Following an annual review any amendments will be made to the policy and everyone informed. An annual report will then be issued to governors and parents and the policy will be distributed to all parents.

14. Sources Of Further Information, Support And Help

14.1. There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and children have found useful.

Name of organisation	Telephone number	Website
Act Against Bullying	0845 230 2560	www.actagainstbullying.org
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0300 0115142	www.ace-ed.org.uk
Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)	0207 843 1901	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Anti-bullying Network	0131 651 6103	www.antibullying.net
Beat bullying	0845 338 5060	www.beatbullying.org.uk
Bullying Online	020 7378 1446	
BBC	not available	www.bbc.co.uk
Childline	0800 1111	www.childline.org.uk
Kidscape	020 7730 3300 (general enquiry number) 08451 205 204 (helpline for adults only)	www.kidscape.org.uk www.beyondbullying.com
NSPCC	0207 825 2500	www.nspcc.org.uk
The Children's Legal Centre	0800 783 2187	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
The Office of the Children's Commissioner	0844 800 9113	www.childrenscommissioner.org.uk
UK Government Website	Not Available	www.direct.gov.uk
Internet Watch Foundation:	01223 20 30 30	www.iwf.org.uk
Think U Know:	03704967622	www.thinkuknow.co.uk
Show Racism the Red Card	0191 257 8519	www.srtrc.org/educational
Changing Faces	0300 012 0275	www.changingfaces.org.uk