St. Helen's College

Anti-bullying Policy

This is a whole-school policy which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage

1 Introduction

1.1 Bullying is an action which intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally. Bullying in schools is a form of peer-on-peer abuse and should never be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up.' Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery. It undermines confidence, self esteem and victims' sense of security. It can cause serious psychological damage.

1.2 Bullying can be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. It may occur directly or through technology (social media, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email). 'Sexting' and 'Youth Produced Sexual Imagery' are commonly used terminology for any cyber bullying of a sexual and indecent nature.

1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Online Safety and Behaviour policies.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 Develop a whole-school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

2.2 Maintain a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.

2.3 Produce a consistent and effective school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

2.4 Make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying.

3 Strategies

3.1 Strategies adopted to prevent and deal with bullying include:

- effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos;
- raising awareness of staff through training, so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support are available;
- having regard to non-statutory DfE advice Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017) and
- use of curriculum time – e.g. Circle time and PSHCE – to raise awareness of bullying issues, with discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language;

- use of opportunities in the school day/year – e.g. assemblies and School Council;
- raising awareness of issues surrounding bullying;
- engaging pupils to participate in open and honest reporting;
- using displays to highlight the importance of anti-bullying attitudes, behaviours and remedies;
- ensuring adequate supervision of pupils at all times and especially on residential visits;
- creating opportunities for pupils to speak confidentially to members of staff about concerns;
- providing a concerns/ Time to Talk box in Upper school
- worry monsters available in each class at Lower School
- logging all incidents on the 'Student Profiling' and 'Wellbeing Manager' modules – reviewed daily by the Deputy Head and Head of Lower School - any mention of the words 'bully / bullying' or similar triggers an email alert to The Head, Deputy Head and Head of Lower School;
- following an appropriate course of action, including disciplinary measures and contact with parents, when an incident/episode of bullying is reported;
- keeping centralised records of incidents of bullying to allow patterns to be identified and
- making sure pupils are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

3.2 Cyberbullying

- The DSLs have overarching responsibility for online safety and work closely with the Deputy Head Academic and IT Manager to ensure that the school's responsibility for online safety is fulfilled within the wider safeguarding strategy. This policy links with: the Online Safety policy; the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; Behaviour Policy; the Pupil Code of Conduct; Privacy Notice for Staff; Privacy Notice for Parents and Pupils; Information Security & Acceptable Use Policy.
- In cases of cyberbullying, incidents must be reported to the DSL immediately and treated as a safeguarding concern.
- Technology in the classroom and beyond must be used in accordance with our Online Safety policy. This applies to all staff, pupils and visitors.
- Filtering systems and firewalls are in place across the school; however, this should not be viewed as a substitute for online safety education and the children must be equipped with the resilience and information to protect themselves and their peers online. This is done through curriculum teaching of online safety, assemblies, visiting speakers and workshops as part of an ongoing culture of promoting a safe online environment for all.
- Staff, parents and pupils are all given opportunities for education and training via the National Online Safety platform. This service educates users on current trends in online safety and includes a range of courses. This is available to all members of the school community, forms part of our curriculum and is regularly sign posted with updates in the school news / at annual 'meet the teacher' evenings. We also work with external bodies to provide training.

4 Action to be followed when bullying has been observed/reported

4.1 Reassure the person who makes the allegation that the matter will be fully investigated.

4.2 Make a record of the allegation and keep records of all follow-up actions taken.

4.3 Confer with the Head/Deputy Head and Head of Lower School.

4.4 Take immediate and appropriate corrective action (in consultation with the Head). This will vary according to the circumstances, but might involve a talk with the perpetrator and/or victim, a class talk about friendships/relationships, contact with parents, disciplinary sanctions against the perpetrator and/or more serious action by the Head, such as a

warning letter, suspension or exclusion.

4.5 Ask all staff who have contact with the alleged perpetrator and victim to be watchful and
a) report their observations back within 2/3 days and
b) continue to be vigilant and to report any further incidents between the pupils concerned.

4.6 Speak again to the person who made the allegation, informing them of your findings, and of the action taken.

4.7 Pass incident notes to the Deputy Head / Head of Lower School for filing in the centralised record.

4.8 Continue to monitor the situation.

4.9 A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer considerable harm.

5 The role of the Head

5.1 It is the responsibility of the Head to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying.

The Head is supported in this by the DSLs and pastoral leads for Lower School and Upper School, and the school's nominated anti-bullying governor.

5.2 The Head ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour. The Head draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Head might decide to use an assembly or class meeting as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being sanctioned. Anti-bullying is raised as an assembly topic at least once every year, normally during the national Anti-bullying Week. The Head ensures that all staff receive sufficient, regular training to be equipped to deal with incidents of bullying, and to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely.

5.3 The Head sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

5.4 Positive psychology/PSHCE lessons are taught throughout the school from Nursery to Year 6, and this gives a way of monitoring the emotional health of a class; in this open forum children will often speak honestly about their relationships with one another.

5.5 The Head is informed by the teachers (through weekly pastoral meetings with the Head of Lower School and Deputy Head) of any bullying behaviour and this information can be disseminated through departmental meetings to all teachers, TALAs and also to the SMSAs and welfare staff, who can then keep a particularly watchful eye on the children named while in the playground.

5.6 The Deputy Head and Head of Lower School keep a record of bullying incidents and monitor it regularly in conjunction with the Head to identify and, if identified, address any patterns of bullying behaviour which occur.

5.7 The Head will decide whether an incidence of bullying is serious enough to report to external agencies e.g. police or children's services.

5.8 An annual review of allegations and actions taken is conducted.

6 The role of the teacher

6.1 Teachers in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep records of all incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the school. These records are reviewed weekly by the Deputy Head and Head of Lower School.

6.2 If teachers witness an act of bullying, or if an incident is reported to them, they follow the procedures detailed in Section 4 above. They do all they can to support the child who is being bullied, and to give appropriate guidance and support to the bully. After consultation with the Head, the teacher consults the child's parents.

6.3 Teachers must be good listeners, and give time and opportunity for children to report concerns. They provide tutorial time, when others are having an assembly, where the pupils can speak to their class teacher about anything that is bothering them. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 there is a two-fold system of emotional support for the children. Regular ten minute pastoral sessions with the teacher or key person are in place, in addition to a simple system of recording feelings on a day to day basis. In Ducklings, there is an ongoing focus on the personal, social and emotional development of each child and children are encouraged to express feelings through pictorial representation, talk or role play. In Nursery, the children are able to add their name label to a corresponding emotion picture to indicate how they are feeling at any given time. Similarly in Reception and Year 1 the children have their own 'leaf' on The Feelings Tree, to which they can add an appropriate emotion face. From careful monitoring of these systems, the teacher can ascertain if a child is in need of a more urgent discussion.

6.4 Teachers, Teaching and Learning Assistants, Welfare staff and SMSAs receive training as necessary to equip them to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

6.5 Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, they aim to prevent incidents of bullying. Opportunities are taken to address issues such as bullying, assertiveness, tolerance and relationships.

7 The role of parents

7.1 Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child might be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher in the first instance. The class teacher will inform the Deputy Head or the Head of Lower School.

7.2 Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

7.3 Parents of pupils who have been bullied, and those of pupils who have been bullying others, should work closely with the school to resolve bullying problems and prevent recurrences.

8 The role of pupils

8.1 Pupils are expected to observe the Pupils' Code of Conduct and to support the aims of the school in respect of bullying. They are expected to report any incidents which they experience or witness.

8.2 Children are encouraged to act to prevent bullying, as appropriate, and to support victims.

8.3 Pupils are consulted through the School Council, PSHCE lessons and meetings of the Senior Pupil Team when the anti-bullying policy is under review. Their views are shared with the staff and they help to inform the school policy.

8.4 Playground Pals are responsible pupils, trained in peer support, who are appointed by the staff. They are available at playtimes to mediate, when requested by children, when there is a dispute or unkind behaviour. In cases of simple disagreement, Playground Pals may help

children to come to agreement - in all other cases they will refer the matter to a School Meals Supervisory Assistant (SMSA) or teacher. The Playground Pal team is led by a group of Playground Pal Prefects appointed by the Head.

8.5 There are also Playground Pals at Lower School; these children are not old enough to do the Peer Support Programme but they do have regular meetings with a specific class teacher, who offers guidance and listens to concerns enabling the Playground Pals to carry out their role.

8.6 At Upper and Lower School there is a Friendship Bench where children wait if they feel that they are lonely, and the Playground Pals or Year 6 prefects will make sure that they take them to a familiar group of children to play with.

9 Monitoring and review

9.1 The effectiveness of this policy is monitored on a weekly basis by the Head, Deputy Head and Head of Lower School and the policy is reviewed biennially by the SLT.

9.2 References

Preventing and tackling bullying - Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2017)

Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (November 2014)

Advice for Parents and Carers on Cyberbullying (November 2014)

Persons responsible	MG/JM
Date	September 2025
Review Frequency	1 year
Next review	September 2026