

# **Anti-Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy**

---

## **General Statement**

Hollygirt School values good relationships and every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously. It is recognised that prevention of bullying is a vital aspect of school life.

All staff, pupils and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on individuals and the school in general, and should work towards ensuring that pupils can work in an environment without fear.

Bullying is unacceptable in this school and will not be tolerated.

This policy refers to Department for Education (DfE) publications 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017) and 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools' (January 2016).

This policy applies to all pupils at Hollygirt School.

## **Aims**

- To demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated.
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and on off-site activities.
- To support everyone in the actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying.
- To encourage pupils to tell someone that they are being bullied.

## **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire on the part of an individual or group to hurt (physically or emotionally), threaten, frighten or manipulate someone through a single incident or through sustained and on-going intimidation, either face to face or using cyber technology. (See *Cyberbullying Policy*).

## **Characteristics of Bullying**

- It can be physical and/or verbal in nature and the effect of both can be equally damaging.
- It can range from horseplay to serious assault leading to physical, emotional or psychological damage.
- It may consist of a single incident or, more usually, may continue over a longer period of time.
- It can be either direct or indirect: bullies may be either perpetrators or others who by their presence signal their support of the bully.
- Its seriousness is determined more by the distress suffered by the victim than by the intention of the bully. At its worse bullying can cause psychological damage and even suicide.

Bullying frequently focuses on individual differences or anything that is implied to be different from the majority. In this respect it undermines the school's work in promoting equal opportunities and teaching

social and moral principles. Bullies may seize upon aspects of body shape, appearance, special educational needs, disability or intellectual differences or focus on parental, cultural or ethnically based lifestyles. It may dwell upon race, religion, or nationality. Sexual bullying may involve homophobia affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils or focus on alleged sexual attractiveness or lack of it.

## **Relationships with other Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Removal of a Pupil from the School
- Safeguarding Policy

All policies are available to view on the school's website and hard copies can be obtained from the school office.

## **Responsibilities**

The Headmistress will draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils to:

- Ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them.
- Ensure appropriate training is available. Whole staff training has been undertaken online through Educare.
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils.

The Deputy Head (Senior School) or Head of Juniors (Junior School) will:

- Be responsible for the day to day management of the policy and systems.
- Log reported incidents.
- Keep the Headmistress informed of incidents.
- Arrange relevant staff training to ensure policies are understood and legal responsibilities known and all are aware of the need to reduce bullying risks, inform of strategies for prevention and for dealing with bullied children and bullies.
- 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.

The Senior Teacher (Pastoral) and Deputy Head of Juniors will:

- Be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice.
- Know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.
- Put into practice methods for encouraging pupils to tell someone that they are being bullied.

Class Teachers / Form Tutors will:

- Be responsible for liaising with the Senior Teacher (Pastoral) and Deputy Head of Juniors over all incidents involving pupils in their form.
- Be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution.

All staff will:

- Know the policy and legal responsibilities
- Understand procedures for dealing with incidents.
- Deal with incidents according to the policy.
- Never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether onsite or during an off-site activity.
- Log on 3SYS any incidents reported to them and report to Senior Teacher (Pastoral) and Deputy Head of Juniors.
- The attention of new staff is drawn to this policy as part of their formal induction process. Further training and information will be shared regularly to staff at briefings, or more formally at INSET.

## **Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum**

The school will raise awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through its 'Issues/PSHE' programme, school assemblies, use of form time and in the programmes of study as appropriate.

The Deputy Head and the Deputy Head of Juniors are responsible for initiating and developing an anti-bullying programme as part of the Issues/PSHE course.

## **Procedures**

### **Signs of Bullying**

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, a lack of concentration or truancy.

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and to report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the Senior Teacher (Pastoral) or Deputy Head of Juniors.

Pupils will be encouraged to report incidents of bullying through a positive programme of awareness and action.

### **Dealing with Incidents**

- If bullying is suspected or reported the incident will be dealt with initially and immediately by the teacher approached.
- The teacher will record the details of the incident and inform the Senior Teacher (Pastoral) and Deputy Head of Juniors who will interview all the parties (individually or in small groups if more appropriate) and make a record.
- Staff teaching the bullied pupil and the Form Tutor will be informed and appropriate action recommended.
- The Senior Teacher (Pastoral) or Deputy Head of Juniors will determine in consultation with the Deputy Head and Head of Juniors the appropriate strategy to combat the bullying.
- The Class Teacher / Form Tutor will normally oversee the implementation of the strategy.
- Parents will be kept informed by the Deputy Head/Head of Juniors.
- Any sanctions against the bullies will be determined by the Deputy Head or Head of Juniors but

persistent bullying is considered a serious breach of discipline and will be dealt with by the Headmistress. (See *Behaviour Policy*)

## **Bullied Pupils**

Staff who deal with pupils who have been bullied must always offer reassurance.

Pupils who have been bullied will be given support determined by the appropriate pastoral staff in consultation with the Headmistress.

Please refer to peer-on-peer abuse in *Safeguarding Policy*.

## **Sanctions**

Any of the school's formal sanctions can be used against bullies as appropriate. For persistent offenders or incidents considered as serious breaches of discipline, a pupil could be permanently excluded. (See *Behaviour Policy*)

Parents will be informed at all stages of the process.

If a criminal act is identified, the police will be informed.

## **Involvement of Parents**

Parents, as well as all staff and pupils, should know that the school will not tolerate bullying, and takes a positive approach to educating pupils to combat it.

Parents of pupils who are being bullied and parents of the bullies will be involved in the solution to the problem as appropriate by relevant pastoral staff. School will offer advice to parents about how they can assist at home for example by restricting use of technology and having appropriate parental computer controls (relating to cyberbullying), by sharing with us and screenshotting any evidence they have and encouraging them to tell us the names of other children involved so that a more thorough investigation can take place. Parents are always reassured that we will look after their child in school.

Parents have the opportunity to share ideas relating to good practice and suggest experts to address the children or the staff via the Parents' Forum.

## **Involvement of Pupils**

Pupils will be involved in the development of positive strategies both through assemblies and form time. Pupils will have an input into the PHSE anti-bullying programme, and will be consulted on how it could be developed. They can contribute to policy/practice via the Pupil Forum/Junior School Council. We take part in Anti-Bullying Week and train Anti-bullying Ambassadors through the Princess Diana Award.

Pupils will be encouraged to tell someone they are being bullied, with strategies of how to do this.

## **Strategies for Dealing with Bullying**

Strategies could include:

### **From Age 5**

- Co-operative group work
- Circle time

### **From Age 9**

- Befriending
- The support group approach
- Mediation by adults
- Mediation by peers
- Girls on Board

### **From Age 11**

- Active listening/counselling-based approaches
- Assertiveness training
- Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Girls on Board

## **Criteria for Success**

Low numbers and seriousness of reported incidents of bullying – the further development of a culture in which all reject bullying behaviour.

## **Reporting and Recording**

All incidents must be recorded and reported on PASS/Bullying log to enable patterns to be identified. These must include any sanctions issued/support offered. Copies must be emailed to the Deputy Head or the Head of Juniors.

## **Staff Training**

The Deputy Head is responsible for arranging a programme of staff development, which will include anti-bullying strategies. This will include training for support staff. Whole Staff Training is undertaken online through Educare.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Deputy Head will keep the Headmistress informed of the incidence of bullying in school. The SLT and Trustees will keep anti-bullying strategies under review when policies are reviewed annually.

## **Bullying of Staff**

Hollygirt School is committed to ensuring that all staff are treated with respect and dignity, irrespective of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation or age. If staff feel that they are a subject of bullying they should report this to a senior colleague in the first instance. If the issue remains unresolved then they should follow grievance procedures within the Staff Handbook.

## **Cyberbullying**

---

This policy aims to:

- reinforce and safeguard the wellbeing of pupils and others who use the school
- promote understanding of the impact of cyberbullying
- make reporting cyberbullying easier
- promote the positive use of technology
- outline prevention activities
- outline the management of reported incidents

This policy applies to all pupils at Hollygirt School and has been written with regards to the DfE advice from November 2014.

### **Definitions of Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, to deliberately upset someone else.

#### **What is different about Cyberbullying?**

- Cyberbullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe and personal.
- The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying. Electronically forwarded content is hard to control and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for targets to move on.
- Cyberbullies can attempt to remain anonymous. This can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person cyberbullying may never be in the same physical space as their target.
- Cyberbullying can take place both between peers and across generations; teachers can also be targets. Age or size is not important. Bystanders can also become accessories in the bullying, by for example, passing on a humiliating image or comment.
- Some instances of cyberbullying can be unintentional. For example, saying something negative about another pupil or friend that is forwarded or viewed outside the immediate group.

### **Cyberbullying and the Law**

## **Education Law**

Bullying is never acceptable. The school community has a duty to protect its members and provide a safe, healthy environment. Schools have the power ‘to such an extent as is reasonable’ to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off site (The Education and Inspections Act 2006). This Act also provides a defence for school staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils.

## **Civil and Criminal Law**

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in UK law, there are laws which apply to harassing or threatening behaviour including menacing or threatening communications.

## **Relationship with other Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Information and Communication Technology Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- ICT Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

## **Staff with Key Responsibility for Cyberbullying**

Whilst all staff to whom an incident is reported are responsible for listening, discussing and reporting the issue, the Deputy Head of Juniors and the Senior Teacher (Pastoral) will collate the evidence and speak to the individuals concerned. The Deputy Head / Head of Juniors will be informed. All incidents will be logged on the pupil's file.

## **Education**

Key safety advice for pupils when using the internet/chat rooms/social networking sites/mobile phones and other relevant technologies, as well as age appropriate information about internet sites containing violent or adult content, grooming and the sharing of personal information/photographs will be issued via assemblies, the Issues/PSHE programme time and ICT Schemes of Work. Regular communications will be sent to parents to alert them to the negative and potentially harmful use of such technology and encourage their support.

Hollygirt School ensures children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through the curriculum and PSHE. School practices help children to adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks and build resilience, including to radicalisation, with particular attention to the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet. These practices are be age appropriate and delivered through the curriculum. Pupils understand the risks posed by adults or young people, who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people. Internet safety is integral to the school’s ICT curriculum and embedded in PSHE and sex and relationships and sex education (RSE). Any planning on these issues takes into account the resources listed below:

- *The use of social media for online radicalisation*
- The UK Safer Internet Centre ([www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk))
- CEOP's Thinkuknow website ([www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk))

## **Staff Support and Training**

Regular staff in service training will be held on changing technology and the impact it may have on pupils. Key staff will be offered training in dealing with anti-bullying strategies including cyberbullying.

## **Management of Cyberbullying in School**

### **School ICT Support**

Hollygirt has a filtering and monitoring proxy server, which blocks social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other chat sites, pornographic content and web-based email sites. There is complete control over the internet connection. If there is an issue with a specific site or a specific user, filters can be added as necessary. Therefore, most reported incidents are likely to have taken place off site or on pupils' own devices. Nevertheless, all cyberbullying incidents will be properly recorded and investigated by key staff.

- Pupils are advised to keep evidence of emails or texts and to keep screen capture shots and note web addresses of online cyberbullying.
- Pupils are advised of simple preventative strategy for example changing contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chat room.
- Appropriate steps will be taken to identify the bully which may include looking at the school systems, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses and contacting the police and service provider if necessary.
- If the person responsible is known, they will be asked to remove any offending content from the internet. If not, attempts will be made to contact the host (e.g. the social networking site) to make a report to get the content removed. Parents will be informed.
- Phones are prohibited for use in school unless under the guidance of staff for specific curriculum time.
- In cases of illegal content, the police will be informed.
- The person being bullied will be supported pastorally and parents informed where necessary.

### **Sanctions**

Once the bully is identified, steps will be taken to change their attitude/behaviour, to encourage them to consider the impact on the victim and to understand their motivation.

Sanctions will include:

- Carrying out useful tasks to help the school
- Detention
- Withdrawal of break/lunch time privileges
- Withholding participation in education visits or sports events which are not essential to the curriculum

Persistent bullying, threatening, abusive behaviour or incidents involving racism will be considered a serious breach of discipline and will incur:

- A fixed term suspension (1 to 5 days)
- or
- Permanent exclusion

In these cases, parents will be informed at the first opportunity, a copy will be kept on the pupils' files and sent to the Chairman of the Trustees. Parents have a right to appeal against the decision to permanently exclude.

**Covid-19, remote learning and cyberbullying** – staff at Hollygirt School are regularly reminded to remain vigilant whilst pupils are remotely learning. As far as practicable normal procedures for the reporting of and dealing with cyberbullying will remain in place. The school implements guidance as per <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-staying-safe-online>

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually in line with changing technologies, legislation and good practice.

*Updated August 2020*