



St Hilda's School
HARPENDEN
Caring, Curious & Confident

Preventing and Tackling Bullying Policy

Important Note

Unless otherwise stated, all Policies of St Hilda's School apply to the school in its entirety. This comprises all staff and pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the Junior School (Key Stage 1) and the Senior School (Key Stage 2).

REVIEW DATE: January 2021

REVIEWED BY: Dan Sayers (Headmaster)

SIGNED: *Dan Sayers,*

DATED: 29.01.21

AIMS

St Hilda's School encourages and values the good relationships that are promoted in its aims:

- To achieve the highest standard of education in a happy, purposeful working environment
- To instil in all pupils a love of learning, independent thinking and good manners
- To strive to nurture every girl's individuality, developing talent and ability to the full

Concerns relating to pupils are discussed at staff meetings and minuted. Clear lines of communication with parents are maintained via parents evening, emails and telephone conversations all of which are recorded and put on pupils files.

Any allegation of bullying is taken seriously. We acknowledge the negative psychological effects that bullying can have on individuals and the learning environment, and that bullying can cause in extreme cases, suicide. We strive to create an environment free from fear. Bullying is unacceptable in St Hilda's School and will not be tolerated in any form.

The school also recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside of the school that spills over into the school. The school does what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying.



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DEFINITION

The Preventing & Tackling Bullying Policy of St Hilda's School has been drawn up with regard to 'Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti-Bullying Work in Schools' (2007 DCSF) and DfE guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017).

"Bullying may be defined as: Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally". Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools (see references).

Bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including sexual), verbal (including email, chat room and SMS messages), and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Pupils, staff and parents may be perpetrators or victims of bullying. The school defines bullying as deliberately hurtful behaviour, whether physical or psychological, repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

It may include but is not necessarily restricted to, the following:

- Physical (e.g. pushing, hitting, kicking, theft of or hiding belongings, invasion of personal space)
- Verbal (e.g. name calling, teasing, insulting remarks for example on race, sexual orientation, religions, cultural differences or gender, unkind notes)
- Social or psychological (e.g. spreading nasty stories, exclusion from a group, staring in an intimidating manner)
- Visual (e.g. texting, phone calls, e-mails, MSN or similar service for social networking, blue tooth, videoing, photography, mobile phones)
- Inter-relationship bullying between classes/groups
- Peer on peer (e.g. banter, sexting, cyberbullying)

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

The school's policy on anti-bullying is designed to help staff and pupils to recognise and deal with bullying when it occurs but, even more importantly, to 'prevent' it from occurring wherever possible. The policy follows Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2020 guidance.

- 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 in off-site activities.



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- To support all staff and pupils in any action that identifies and protects those who might be bullied
- To demonstrate that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying
- To promote an environment where pupils are encouraged to report bullying and where they feel safe and confident telling someone about bullying
- To promote self esteem and positive attitudes in pupils so that they feel better equipped to challenge bullying behaviour

In order to deliver the aims stated above, St Hilda's undertakes to:

- Deliver an anti-bullying programme as part of the PSHCE curriculum, Circle Time and pastoral sessions and assemblies, to raise awareness, promote self esteem and refer to the anti bullying policy in age appropriate terms
- Encourage teaching staff to take opportunities as appropriate in the course of their teaching to highlight issues that relate to bullying. Examples may include elements of projects, drama, stories, literature, historical events, current affairs as well as other subject areas
- Use Form times to explore these issues
- Challenge racist or homophobic language, acknowledging diversity and difference
- Encourage pupils to keep a record of any bullying via text, e-mail or messaging services.
- Avoid drawing undue attention to differences of SEN pupils
- Discuss these issues at School Council Meetings if appropriate
- Create relevant displays
- Hold regular school assemblies to address the issue, including National Bullying Week.
- Pay attention to the results of pupil questionnaires
- Discourage any exclusive or unfriendly behaviour by staff or pupils
- Ensure that the Designated Senior Person (the Headmaster) reports annually to the nominated Governor for Safeguarding/ Child Protection
- Provide support to Form Teachers and other staff in order to raise awareness, and to enable action to be taken to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is deemed most likely

SPECIFIC TYPES OF BULLYING

Racist Bullying

This type of bullying is when an individual is targeted for representing a group based on colour, background, culture or religion. This type of bullying can take the following form: name calling, racist jokes, graffiti, offensive mimicry, physical threats/attacks, provocative use of badges, racist literature, inciting others to be racist and refusing to co-operate in lessons or extra curricular activities with others.



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Homophobic Bullying

Pupils do not necessarily have to be lesbian, gay or bisexual to experience bullying around sexual orientation. This type of bullying can take the form of any of the aforementioned behaviour.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Bullying

This type of bullying can take the form of any of the aforementioned behaviour.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Bebo, Facebook, Instagram and Myspace, emails and mobile phones, used for SMS messages and as cameras and can be defined as deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Peer on peer abuse will be taken seriously and acted upon. It will not be dismissed as “banter” as “growing up” or as “just having a laugh”. These issues will be part of the PSHCE lessons and discussions. Victims will be fully supported by the School. Any hate crime / incident will be reported through the usual Safeguarding channels.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming shy and nervous, withdrawn, feigning illness/genuine illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, a lack of concentration, or truancy, lateness, lost belongings, isolation, under-achievement

PROCEDURES TO DEAL WITH BULLYING

All reported incidents will be treated seriously and investigated fully; all parties will be heard and given appropriate support.

What staff should do

If any member of staff or School Helper witnesses overt bullying, the incident should immediately be reported to the Form Teacher, who should then inform a senior member of staff. The senior member of staff will speak with the pupils involved and take written notes of the incident. If the incident is of a serious nature, the Headmaster will be informed immediately. Any incidents involving members of staff should be reported directly to the Headmaster. If the incident involves the Headmaster/SMT it would be



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reported directly to the Governors for immediate action. Written logs of all such incidents are kept on the pupil's file.

What pupils should do

If a pupil witnesses or experiences bullying, the incident should immediately be reported to any member of staff. Pupils are encouraged to confide in Form Teachers, Classroom Assistants, Mentors or Senior Staff. Pupils will be encouraged to keep a record of any bullying via text, e-mail or messaging services. All reported incidents will be treated seriously and fully investigated; all parties will be heard and given appropriate support.

What Parents Should Do

If a parent is aware that their child is being bullied, he or she should:

- Provide an open, non-judgemental environment and listen to the child while she talks about her problem
- Tell them they have been understood and support will be given. Remind them they have the right to feel safe
- Suggest they speak to a member of staff, such as their mentor, with whom they feel comfortable and safe
- If the problem seems particularly serious, or ongoing, the parent should contact the Form teacher or Headmaster immediately
- Try to avoid an angry or emotional response
- Recognise that actions such as phoning the parent of the bully and discussing the matter with other parents can inflame the situation
- Contact the school straight away if the issue continues to be unresolved
- Trust the school to carry through actions that will solve the problem

When bullying is found to have occurred, appropriate action will be taken to:

- Ensure the immediate safety and well being of those involved
- Provide ongoing support and counselling for the individual being bullied
- Inform the individual who has been responsible for the bullying that this behaviour is unacceptable
- Counsel the individual to understand the implications of bullying
- Establish whether further support and/or counselling are required to rectify behaviour
- Advise the individual of the consequences of further bullying
- Discipline the offender as appropriate
- Inform the parents
- Follow up with the individuals to provide any necessary support
- All reports are placed in a sealed confidential envelope and kept on the pupil's file



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CYBERBULLYING – PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

In addition to the preventative measures described above, St Hilda's School:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its charter for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet
- Issues all pupils with their own personal school email address
- Adheres to the BECTA guidelines regarding E-teaching and the internet
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHCE lessons, which covers blocking and removing contacts
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe
- Does not permit mobile phones in school.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

Usually parents will be invited into the school and appropriate action will be taken. This may include a disciplinary hearing. Disciplinary sanctions may include a formal warning and contract of good behaviour, suspension, removal of privileges or specific supervision and there may also be a requirement that the bully has specialist counselling. In serious or repeated incidents the outcome of the disciplinary hearing may require removal or expulsion.

In all cases, both the victim and the offender will be monitored until such a time as both parties are confident that the situation is resolved to the school's satisfaction. In all instances both victim and offender will receive support, the former to ensure the restoration of self-confidence and the latter to ensure a fuller understanding of the impact of her behaviour and to ascertain any underlying cause for concern and to seek to support the perpetrator.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The school's Preventing and Tackling Bullying policy is the responsibility of the Board of Governors. The policy's effectiveness and implementation is reviewed annually by the Headmaster.

(Information on specific responsibilities of Governors is available on the School website.)

This policy will be reviewed annually, by the Senior Management Team, in line with the school's review schedule for policies.