

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Introduction

We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment in which all children are treated fairly by staff and in which they are expected to deal with one another with respect and with tolerance. Such an environment discourages bullying. We are equally committed to dealing constructively with any instances of bullying that occur. This policy has regard to the DCSF guidance: 'Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools'.

Aims and objectives

Bullying is the intention to hurt, frighten, or intimidate others either physically or verbally, to ridicule them by persistent teasing or to exclude them unreasonably from a group. It is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

- We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety. This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the elimination of bullying in our school.
- Pupils are made aware, in assemblies, tutor group meetings, form periods and, as appropriate, in private, that bullying is unacceptable at our school.
- The School Council has devised a children's policy against bullying which is printed each year in the homework diary and which is attached as an appendix to this policy.
- They also need to understand how normal and innocent activities can lead, often unintentionally, to situations where children will feel themselves bullied.
- They are told that the only way to beat the bully is by telling someone, preferably a member of staff, and that they should do this without fear of recrimination.
- Bullying feeds on secrecy: openness is the key to its being defeated. Prompt reporting is vital.

Definition of Bullying

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as follows: *"The intentional, repetitive or persistent hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power."*

Bullying is an extremely serious offence and can cause psychological damage and even suicide. Bullying exists in many different forms, and can be either physical or emotional.

Emotional Bullying

Examples of emotional bullying might include making offensive remarks or name-calling. These remarks could be about: physical appearance; race; religious belief; cultural differences; academic or sporting ability and achievement. Remarks might be homophobic in nature or be offensive about disability, sexuality or gender. Remarks might be mocking or taunting in nature; these remarks might include the spreading of rumours or gossiping about a child with other children. Bullying behaviour might involve excluding a child from

social or activity groups with the intention of offending; threats and intimidating behaviour might be used; the sending of hurtful text messages by mobile 'phone, email or posted on social websites; the taking of or damage caused to a child's belongings in order to cause distress.

Physical Bullying

This might include kicking, hitting or pushing with the intention of physically hurting the child. The common element in all of these forms is that the 'bully' intends to cause physical or emotional pain.

Symptoms of Bullying

There is no science to spotting when a pupil is being bullied, and intuition is likely to be the most important tool. However, behaviour as listed below may suggest a pattern of bullying:

- Persistently low morale, perhaps tearfulness.
- Mood swings.
- An unwillingness to come to school.
- A reluctance to be involved in peer activities.
- A decline in academic achievement.

Awareness of staff and children to the school's policy on bullying

In each autumn term, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) holds an assembly on the theme of bullying at school. This takes place during week where the assembly theme is 'Anti Bullying' and this subject is covered in the PSHE programme and through circle time, drama and in 'Forum' periods. The children discuss what constitutes bullying, and they are reminded of the procedure for the reporting of bullying. Appropriate INSET training is provided to staff and courses made available so that everyone is aware of the strategies to deal with bullying in the school. All staff are provided with copies of this policy which is discussed and reviewed by them on a regular basis.

Staff supervision of pupils is an essential ingredient in the school's strategy against bullying and it is especially important that staff are vigilant in play times, meal times and break times for any potential incidents. Places such as the changing rooms, corridors and the woods need to be carefully patrolled as these would be the areas where bullying could occur. The School Council has drawn up a pupils' policy against bullying and they review this each year. It is contained on the homework diary given to all Middle School and Upper School children

Dealing with bullies

There needs to be a careful investigation as to what is happening and where and when the alleged bullying is taking place - we need to remember our responsibilities to all parties involved. We keep Concerns/Incidents Record Forms in the staff room where we record all incidents of bullying that occur both inside and outside lesson time. In addition to this each child has a pastoral record form which would need to be completed. If any adult witnesses an act of bullying, they should record the event in the files. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) checks the record forms daily before taking action and making further notes on pupils' files. In this way, patterns of bullying can be identified.

- Bullies should be made aware of the misery they are causing and to see their behaviour through the eyes of the victim.
- They should be asked to suggest ways in which they could help the victim.
- The situation should be carefully monitored and both the victim and the bully be asked, separately, if things have improved. (In most cases, the above procedure is successful)
- Punishment may be counter-productive but if bullying persists, one, or a combination, of the following steps may be taken:
 - The bully will lose breaktime privileges.
 - A formal commitment will be signed by the bully, countersigned by the headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral). Parents will be sent for and asked for support re sanctions, etc.
 - In extreme cases, suspension or expulsion will be considered and/or referral to psychiatric help required.

It is hoped that success can be achieved more by improving the understanding and self-esteem of the parties involved, rather than relying too much on sanctions, which run the risk of producing negative results. It is above all important to preserve an atmosphere in which all are respected and valued.

Staff procedure for the recording and reporting of bullying

Incidents or patterns of bullying should be reported the Deputy Head (Pastoral) using the 'Concerns/Incidents Record Form' who subsequently records the information on the relevant pupils' pastoral record forms and where appropriate posts a copy on the staff room notice board. The incident should then be discussed with the member of staff who reported it, and a decision would be made as to how to deal with the incident or pattern of behaviour.

Where appropriate, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) would liaise with the Form Teacher and decide on an appropriate course of action. He would then talk to the pupils concerned to gain a clearer idea of the reported bullying. If the incident was considered particularly serious, or the bully failed to change his/her behaviour despite guidance from teachers, the parents of all children concerned may be contacted.

When the members of staff involved are satisfied that the issue has been resolved, at least in the short-term, a copy of the paper trail would be kept in each of the following:

- The 'Concerns/Incidents Record Forms' kept in the Staff Room.
- The individual file of the child kept in the relevant staff room.
- It is usually necessary to keep a copy in the file of the 'bully' and the 'bullied' child.
- Recurring or particularly nasty cases of bullying would be brought up in the Staff Meetings and in the Senior Management Meeting. However, if considered necessary, the Headmaster or other members of the S.M.T should be consulted sooner.

The role of parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher, tutor or senior member of staff immediately. Parents have a responsibility to support the school's

anti-bullying policy and actively to encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

Boarding

- This policy is not only provided to the parents of boarders but it is available and known to staff and boarders, including junior and recently appointed staff.
- There are no 'initiation ceremonies' intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation.
- Through discussions we have determined that pupils do not identify bullying as a problem in the school.
- If bullying does occur then the victim would be suitably supported, and the bully would be given suitable support and guidance.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Headmaster and SMT, and it is made available to governors.

Reviewed: September 2011

Review date: September 2012



OUR POLICY AGAINST BULLYING

It is important for everyone in the school to feel that they are safe and happy. No-one should feel afraid to take action by seeking help if they are unhappy or notice someone else who is upset. **Everyone needs to take positive steps** to make sure that St Hugh's is a happy and a trusting school where bullies - of any sort - are not tolerated.

What is bullying?

If you repeatedly do something which deliberately makes someone else unhappy then you are probably bullying them.

Bullying can be **physical**:

- Hitting another person
- Ganging up on someone
- A repeated kick or punch to someone in a passage or corridor
- Pushing or shoving with the aim of causing hurt or humiliation

Bullying can be **verbal**:

- Sneering at someone (and encouraging others to do the same) for lack of success in sport or work. Sometimes being too successful can attract envy
- Having fun at someone else's expense
- Constant criticism of someone because of the way they look, or behave
- Deliberately leaving someone out of your games and conversations
- Being unkind in your language, particularly when addressed to one person
- Making it clear that you do not like someone, and persuading others to follow your lead
- Intentionally taking, hiding or damaging someone's property is also bullying

What can I do to stop it?

If you spot an incident of bullying you should take steps to stop it by doing one or more of these things:

- Tell a member of staff
- Tell your parents
- Tell another pupil, preferably an older one
- Tell a friend or any other child whom you trust

- Point out to the bully- if you are brave enough - that such behaviour is unacceptable

Never meet violence with violence. If you take the law into your own hands you may be the one who ends up in trouble.

Physical bullying is easy to spot but other forms of bullying are just as hurtful and probably just as dangerous in undermining confidence and causing unhappiness. No one likes a bully although some may appear to, simply because they are afraid of him or her. Although children often bully in groups the leader is often the only active bully and the rest have been pressurised into joining in or they will be bullied themselves. This is the 'if you can't beat them join them' technique. **The followers of the leader don't realise that if they left the leader he would be the weakest of them all.**

It is up to everyone in the school to make sure that bullying is not tolerated. This requires courage, sticking up for your friends and telling the truth. To tell on a bully is for the good of everyone - the victim, the bully and the whole school community. Not telling is making the situation worse for everyone.

To whom do I turn for help?

If you feel you are being bullied, then the really important thing to do is to **tell someone**. The situation will not get worse, it will get better and you will feel happier once it has been dealt with. Here is a list of people who can help and a suggestion of places where you can find a listening ear in confidence, or to whom you could pass a note if you felt worried about speaking to them :

Who ?	Where ?
Your parents	At home or at work
A friend	Anywhere
Any member of staff	Staff Room / Class room
Your form teacher	Class room / Staff Room
Your tutor	Class room / Staff Room
The house parents	The boarding house
Mr Nott	In his Study
Mr Avery	Classroom/ Staff room
Mr Matthews	Classroom/ Staff room
Miss Creed	Classroom / Staff room
Matrons	In the Day Room
Childline	0800 1111
Our independent listener	Mrs Rayne - 01367 870215

TAKE ACTION - DON'T TOLERATE BULLYING!

St Hugh's School Council