

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY HEATHLANDS

This document takes into account DFE Preventing and tackling bullying October 2014.

# Heathlands School

## Policy on preventing and responding to Bullying

Heathlands recognises and affirms the right of every child to live in a safe and secure environment and is committed to implementing strategies to prevent and respond to bullying. It is recognised that bullying can seriously disrupt an individual's educational progress and wellbeing. This policy aims to

- Reduce and eradicate wherever possible instances in which pupils are subjected to bullying
- Establish appropriate means of after-care should a bullying incident occur
- Ensure all staff and pupils are aware of the policy and fulfil their obligations to it.

Heathlands will pay particular attention to ensuring that all prejudice-based hurtful incidents are identified and prevented from escalating. This will apply to special educational need, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender identity or disability. Heathlands will be sensitive to wider issues of prejudice in relation to pupils' appearance or personal circumstances.

### Defining bullying

The Department for Education provides the following guidance:

*'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgments about each specific case.'*  
**"Preventing and Tackling Bullying" DfE 2011**

#### At Heathlands three key factors have been identified

1. The behaviour is either intended to cause distress or results in significant distress (*claims that the behaviour was intended as fun is not an excuse*)
2. The behaviour is repeated or results in multiple impacts on the target
3. There is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator/s of bullying and the target/s whether as a result of the prior context, the content or the experience of the hurtful behaviour

This will be discussed with pupils so that there is a shared understanding of what bullying behaviour constitutes. This will include a child friendly approach using language appropriate to the ages and abilities of pupils.

e.g. *"People hurting or upsetting you repeatedly and on purpose by doing nasty or unkind things."*

Bullying behaviour can include the following hurtful behaviours

- name-calling, taunting, teasing, mocking and making offensive comments

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- offensive, threatening or personalised graffiti or other written material
- excluding people from groups
- gossiping and spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours
- kicking, hitting, pushing
- taking belongings
- cyber bullying – including sending inappropriate, offensive or degrading text messages, emails or instant messages, setting up websites or contributing content to social networking sites that is designed to embarrass or upset individuals or collective exclusion of individuals from social networking sites.

***It should be noted that not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all reported hurtful behaviour should be taken seriously and resolved at the earliest opportunity.***

### **Heathlands Code of Conduct**

The school aims to develop an environment and ethos in which all members of the school community are expected to

- Treat everyone with kindness and respect
- Promote inclusion.
- Act with thought and consideration to others
- Behave courteously, being polite and helpful at all times
- Be friendly and co-operative
- Be honest and truthful
- Treat school and other people's property with respect
- Value own education and the education of others.

Pupils will be involved in the development and review of the code of conduct, behaviour and anti-bullying practice.

### **Action to be taken by school staff**

Staff must be seen to act firmly against bullying whenever it appears. Staff should model the respectful behaviour expected of pupils when dealing with bullying. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to deal with incidents of bullying that come to their attention.

### **Staff will be alert to the following warning signs of bullying**

- Unexplained injuries
- Lost or destroyed property
- Illnesses, possibly faked
- Changes in eating, sleeping habits
- Decline in school performance

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- Loss of friends and avoidance of social situations
- Self destructive behaviour e.g. self harming, running away
- Loss of self esteem

#### **If an incident of possible bullying is observed staff should**

- Intervene immediately and separate the children involved
- Make sure everyone is safe
- Address any immediate medical needs
- Reassure pupils
- Commence an investigation

If an incident of bullying occurs outside the school staff are expected to intervene promptly and in the same manner they would in school.

#### **Investigating Incidents**

Investigate in a calm manner without forcing pupils to say publically what they saw. Pupils should not be questioned in front of others or as part of a group. The children involved should be kept separate whilst investigating. Staff should listen, try to understand what happened and not call the behaviour “bullying” whilst still investigating.

Complete a bullying investigation form (appendix 1) and if the three criteria of bullying are met pass to a senior member of staff.

Senior staff will follow up as necessary on action already taken and store all bullying records in a centrally held file.

#### **Dealing with bullying behaviour**

Through PSHE lessons, assemblies and class teacher/form tutor mentoring pupils will learn what constitutes bullying and what to do about it. They will have the opportunity to develop the skills to stand up to bullies. They will learn that to know about bullying by and to others and do nothing is unacceptable. They should be fully aware that they must report incidents of bullying and be reassured that they will be supported.

Where a pupil is known to have bullied others the following approach will be taken with the intention of bringing about a genuine change in behaviour.

- 1/ Make sure pupils know what the problem behaviour is; let them see it's taken seriously.
- 2/ Try to understand why children bully: to fit in/acting out problems from home/ repeating bullying they experienced?
- 3/ Use consequences to teach, build empathy, involve the bully in making amends e.g.

- Lead a class discussion on friendship
- Write a story about the effects of bullying/ importance of team work
- Role Play
- Projects about civil rights and bullying
- Make a poem for the school about bullying
- Write a letter of apology
- Help, do a good deed for the victim

- 4/ Avoid group treatment of bullies as group members reinforce each others' bullying behaviour

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5/ Sanctions that have negative consequences e.g. exclusions will only be used as a last resort as they don't often change behaviour.

Parents will be informed/ involved in all cases of serious or persistent bullying.

Staff will regularly review procedures and policies to evaluate and update.

### **How to support pupils who are bullied**

Early intervention is important as persistent long term bullying can leave the victim wondering what is wrong with them and feeling isolated. They may start to feel they deserve the teasing and harassment and may become withdrawn.

Pupils will be encouraged to develop social skills so that they are better prepared to manage potential bullying incidents. They will be encouraged to make decisions and build self esteem so that children have the confidence to reject the bullies and assert themselves positively.

- Listen and focus on them
- Assure them bullying is not their fault
- Don't blame them for provoking the bullying
- Give strategies e.g. identify safe places
- Discuss what needs to happen to make them feel safe
- Help the pupil build a support network of peers

The victim will not be encouraged to retaliate.

### **Staff**

It is recognised that sometimes adults can bully others; other staff or children. All members of the school community, children and adults, have the right to work in an environment free from bullying adults.

Staff may also need to consider how what they say can be misinterpreted e.g. their use of a child's nickname or references to personal attributes. Children experiencing difficulties should not be subjected to ridicule by adults.

### **Parents**

All parents will be informed how they can report an incident of bullying to staff. Information on this will be placed on the website.

Information and advice is given using social media and the website to ensure parents know of the effects of bullying and the importance of monitoring electronic devices.

## Investigation and record of bullying incident

Completed by name and role:

Date:

Name and role of individual/s making the allegation e.g. pupil, parent/carer, midday supervisory assistant:

Form of referral e.g. verbal report, letter, e-mail, phone call:

Details gathered to date:

Action taken to date:

Date:

Signed:

## Factors to help determine if incident constitutes bullying

- Incident was bullying (all 3 amber warnings confirmed)
  - Hurt has been deliberately/knowingly caused (physically or emotionally)
  - It is a repeated incident or experience e.g. multiple incidents, cyberbullying or the involvement of a group
  - Involves an imbalance of power:
    - target feels s/he cannot defend her/himself, or
    - perpetrator/s exploiting their power (size, age, popularity, coolness, abusive language, labelling/namecalling, etc.)
  
- Incident was not bullying on this occasion because it was
  - the first hurtful incident between these children
  - teasing/banter between friends without intention to cause hurt (should not happen again)
  - falling out between friends after a quarrel, disagreement or misunderstanding
  - conflict that got out of hand (should not happen again)
  - activities that all parties have consented to and enjoyed (check for subtle coercion)
    - got out of hand
    - parental concern
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Resolution process agreed:**

**Support and/or sanction for those causing hurt or offence:**

**Support needed for the hurt party:**

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### Focus of Bullying/Hurtful Behaviour

Please tick all elements which apply in your understanding of the incident(s) and record specific language:

	Definitely applies	Possibly applies
Age/ Maturity		
Appearance		
Size/weight		
Class/Socio-economic		
Family circumstance (e.g. caring role)		
Ethnicity/Race		
Religion/Belief		
Gender		
Transphobia/Gender identity		
Homophobia/sexuality		
Sexualised		
SEN and Disability		
Ability/application		

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