	Anti-Bullying Policy **Heathlands School**	Ofsted Outstanding Provider

This document takes into account DfE Guidance Preventing and tackling bullying July 2017

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Board.

The policy was agreed by the Full Governing Board on 8 July 2020.

Next Review due July 2022.

Signature …………………………………………….. Date ……………………………
Co-Head Teacher

Signature …………………………………………….. Date ……………………………
Governor

Policy on preventing and responding to Bullying

Introduction

Heathlands recognises and affirms the right of every child to live and learn 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:

- Create a culture that 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.

With due regard to The Equality Act 2010, Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) 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, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care 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 judgements about each specific case." [1]

The Anti-bullying Alliance defines bullying as the **repetitive**, **intentional** hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an **imbalance of power**. It can happen face to face or online. [2]

These three key factors are identified in defining bullying and form the basis of anti-bullying awareness and investigation of bullying incidences at Heathlands.

1. Behaviour is **intended** to cause distress or results in significant distress. Claims that the behaviour was intended as fun is not an excuse, all members of the community must work to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not cause harm or distress to others.
2. 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.

Bullying behaviour can be direct or indirect, physical or verbal and take place online. Bullying behaviours may include:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.

- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online /cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion
- Indirect - Can include the exploitation of individuals.

Key points

Bullying is hurtful behaviour that is:

❑ **intentional**

❑ **repeated**

❑ **power imbalance**

Tackling bullying

Tackling Bullying at Heathlands takes a wide ranging whole school approach. This involves three main strands:

1. Education, ethos and awareness.
2. Thorough investigation of any reported concerns.
3. Action and support for both perpetrators and victims.

1. Education, ethos and awareness

Staff and students work together to ensure that the culture and ethos of Heathlands School is a supportive and respectful community and that each member of the community is treated with respect and value. Staff must take care and consideration to ensure that their actions or comments are not misinterpreted e.g. use of a child's nickname or references to personal attributes. Staff and students are empowered to speak up and speak out against unkind and intolerant behaviour in order to prevent it from escalating. Students expressing concerns will be treated with kindness and respect.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language are not tolerated and there are clear procedures in the Behaviour Policy for dealing with this. Embedded within the Behaviour Policy is the House point system that is clearly linked to rewarding kind and inclusive behaviour. The supportive and positive culture is modelled regularly through celebration of achievements in weekly assemblies where all members of the community are genuinely celebrated. Students are confident to receive recognition of their achievements and celebrate the achievements of their peers with enthusiasm.

An anti-bullying ethos is directly embedded into the Heathlands code of conduct which is displayed around the school and referred to regularly (Fig. 1). Pupils are involved at all stages in the development and review of the code of conduct, behaviour and anti-bullying practice. The anti-bullying policy is summarised in pupil-friendly language in the anti-bullying charter (Appendix 1) which is

similarly displayed around the school. The anti-bullying message is revisited regularly throughout the year through the PSHE curriculum, reflection time in form periods, assemblies and awareness campaigns. Class teachers and form tutors are responsible for discussing bullying definitions with pupils so that there is a shared understanding of what bullying behaviour constitutes. This includes a child friendly approach using language appropriate to the ages and abilities of pupils. Pupils should be supported to develop the skills to stand up to bullies and their responsibility for challenging and reporting bullying behaviours. They must be reassured that they will be supported. Support staff are responsible for reinforcing these messages.

Useful resources include:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJF4hHhkrJw
https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/deaf-zone/
https://www.antibullyingpro.com/resources
https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/

Student led anti-bullying awareness work is carried out by members of the student leadership team who run campaigns and awareness events. From 2020 the new role of Peer Champions will carry out peer led work in mentoring, peer listening and acting as anti-bullying champions. Anti-bullying messages and resources are included in the pastoral section of the school website. In addition parents and carers are informed about how to support their child and report any concerns.

<u>**Key points**</u>

❑ All staff and students are responsible for creating a culture where bullying is not tolerated.

❑ All staff and students are empowered to **challenge** unkind behaviour and to **report** bullying.

❑ The anti-bullying ethos is central to the Heathlands **Code of Conduct**.

❑ All staff are responsible for **reinforcing understanding** of bullying and **emphasising** the anti-bullying message.

❑ Student led anti-bullying work is carried out by student leaders.

❑ **Peer Champions** lead work on mentoring and peer listening.

Figure 1 <u>Students agreed Code of Conduct - The Heathlands Charter</u>

We believe
• Everyone is equal
• Everyone is important
• Everyone can be different

We want
• To stop bullying
• Everyone to feel safe
• Everyone to enjoy school
• A nice school environment

We will
• Stand up for what we know is right
• Be honest
• Work together and not leave anyone out
• Be respectful and responsible
• Not judge others
• Respect other people's belongings
• Look after the school environment

2. Thorough investigation of any reported concerns

While not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, all reported hurtful behaviour will be taken seriously, thoroughly investigated and resolved at the earliest opportunity.

Action to be taken by school staff

Staff must act promptly and proactively against bullying whenever it appears. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to deal with incidents of bullying that come to their attention.

Staff should model the respectful behaviour expected of pupils when dealing with bullying.

If an incident of bullying occurs outside the school, staff are expected to intervene promptly and in the same manner they would in school. The Co-heads should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

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
- ❒ Start the investigation process

Investigation Process

The process for managing investigations is outlined in a flow chart in Appendix 2. This must be followed carefully. Where staff have concerns or require additional guidance they should seek support from the leadership team.

Investigate in a calm and non-judgemental manner. 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.

In investigating cyber-bullying the law makes provision for any member of staff who has been formally authorised by the Co–heads to seize electronic devices and examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. If the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. If they do not suspect it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

Complete an electronic bullying investigation form (Appendix 3) and if the three criteria of bullying are met notify a senior member of staff. Senior staff will review the form electronically and note when this has been done.

Senior staff will follow up as necessary on action already taken. All bullying records will be stored in a centrally held file on the staff drive.

3. Action and support for both perpetrators and victims.

The class teacher or form tutor is responsible to lead ongoing support work for both victims and perpetrators of bullying. They may do this in conjunction with other staff such as mentors, support staff etc.

Parents should be informed and involved in all cases of serious or persistent bullying.

Supporting perpetrators

Where a pupil is known to have bullied others support should be given with the aim of bringing about a genuine change in behaviour.

- ❒ Make sure pupils know what the problem behaviour is; let them see it's taken seriously.
- ❒ Try to understand why children bully: to fit in/acting out problems from home/ repeating bullying they experienced?
- ❒ Use consequences to teach, build empathy, involve the bully in making amends e.g.
    - o Lead a class discussion on friendship
    - o Write a story about the effects of bullying/ importance of team work
    - o Role Play
    - o Projects about civil rights and bullying
    - o Make a poem for the school about bullying
    - o Write a letter of apology
    - o Help, do a good deed for the victim
- ❒ Avoid group treatment of bullies as group members may reinforce each others' bullying behaviour.
- ❒ Sanctions that have negative consequences e.g. exclusions should only be used as a last resort as they don't often change behaviour.

Useful resource:
https://www.buzz.org.uk/others-think-im-bully-can-i-stop/

Supporting victims

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
- ❐ Encourage them not to retaliate.

Useful resources:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJF4hHhkrJw
https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/deaf-zone/
https://www.buzz.org.uk/where-to-get-help/

If needed, class teachers can refer pupils for further support such as mentoring, counselling and so on through discussion with the leadership team.

Staying vigilant

Class teachers and form tutors should continue to monitor pupils and check in with them.

Staff should also be alert to the following warning signs that bullying may be occurring and report any concerns that they have to the class or form tutor:
- Unexplained injuries
- Lost or destroyed property
- Illnesses, possibly faked
- Changes in eating, sleeping habits
- Decline in school performance
- Loss of friends and avoidance of social situations
- Self destructive behaviour e.g. self harming, running away
- Loss of self esteem

If necessary, staff should also follow the safeguarding procedures to report their concerns to the designated safeguarding personnel.

> **Key points**
>
> ❑ The class teacher or form tutor is responsible to lead ongoing support work for both victims and perpetrators of bullying.
> ❑ They may do this in conjunction with other staff such as mentor, support staff etc.
>
> ❑ All staff will be alert to the warning signs of bullying and report any concerns.
>
> ❑ If necessary, staff should also follow the safeguarding procedures to report their concerns to the designated safeguarding personnel.

References

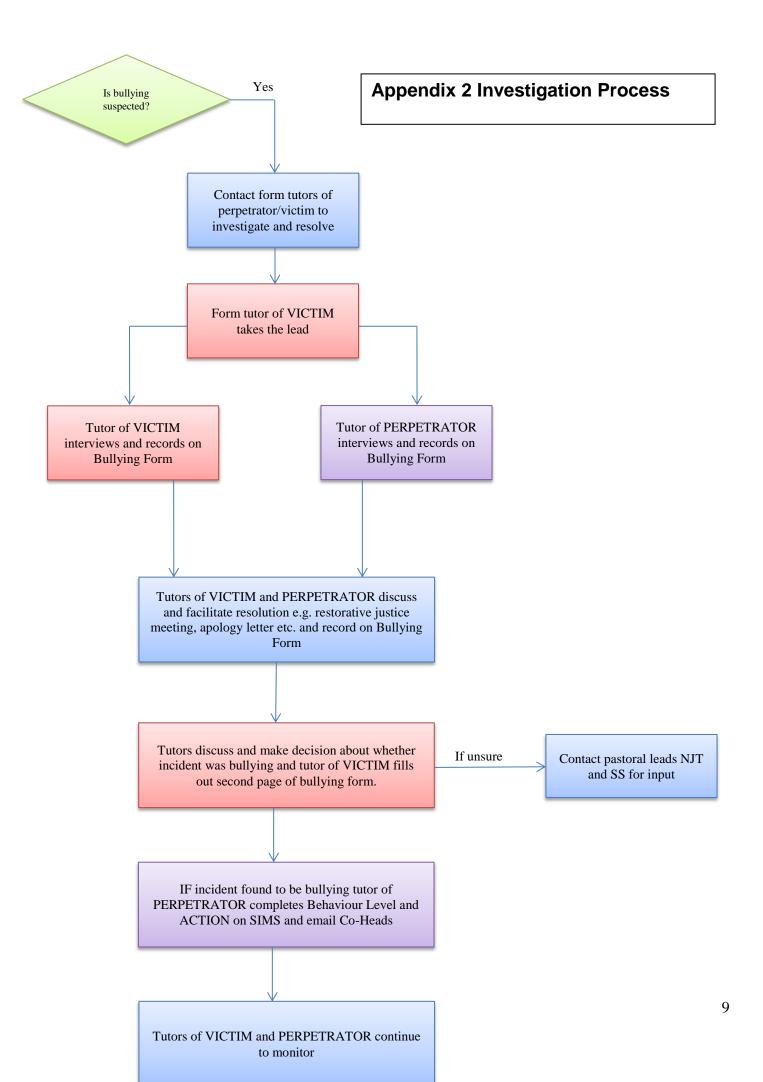1. Department for Education, July 2017 Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Available at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf [Accessed 3/6/20]
2. Anti-bullying Alliance, 2020 Available at: https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/what-bullying/aba-definition-bullying [Accessed 3/6/20]

Appendix 2 Investigation Process

Is bullying suspected? — Yes

Contact form tutors of perpetrator/victim to investigate and resolve

Form tutor of VICTIM takes the lead

Tutor of VICTIM interviews and records on Bullying Form

Tutor of PERPETRATOR interviews and records on Bullying Form

Tutors of VICTIM and PERPETRATOR discuss and facilitate resolution e.g. restorative justice meeting, apology letter etc. and record on Bullying Form

Tutors discuss and make decision about whether incident was bullying and tutor of VICTIM fills out second page of bullying form.

If unsure → Contact pastoral leads NJT and SS for input

IF incident found to be bullying tutor of PERPETRATOR completes Behaviour Level and ACTION on SIMS and email Co-Heads

Tutors of VICTIM and PERPETRATOR continue to monitor

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Appendix 3 Bullying Investigation Form

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)
- ☐ Other _____

Resolution process agreed:

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

Support needed for the hurt party:

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		