Anti Bullying Policy

Heathlands School

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 PWC Committee on 14.6.22.

Next Review due June 2024.

Signature …….. Date ……
Co-Headteacher

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 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 victim.
3. There is an **imbalance of power** between the perpetrator/s of bullying and the victim/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 scope 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 through Personal Learning and Thinking skills. 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 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 also responsible for reinforcing these messages.

Children and young people are still learning and developing social and emotional skills. Deaf children in particular may have delays in language, vocabulary and social skills. Class teachers and form tutors will work with pupils to teach them to distinguish between conflict and bullying and teach ways to resolve and manage conflict.

Useful resources include:

https://onetoughjob.org/blog/2018/10/school-safety-series-differentiating-conflict-vs-bullying

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. Peer Champions are being trained to 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.

Figure 1 Students agreed Code of Conduct - The Heathlands Charter

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

Key points

- ❑ 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.
- ❑ Class teachers and form tutors will teach pupils to **distinguish between conflict and bullying** and teach ways to resolve and manage conflict.
- ❑ **Peer Champions** lead work on anti-bullying, mentoring and peer listening.

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 suspected 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 headteacher 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 headteacher 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.

Key points

- ❑ All staff are responsible to deal with incidents of bullying that come to their attention.
- ❑ Staff should intervene immediately to ensure everyone is safe and address medical needs.
- ❑ The investigation process should be followed using the flow chart in Appendix 2.
- ❑ In investigating cyber-bullying staff have the authority to seize, examine and if needed delete contents from a pupil's electronic device that has been brought into school.
- ❑ If a pupil's device is found to contain evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable without deleting the material.

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 mentor, 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.
    - 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
- ❒ 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, play therapy and so on through discussion with the leadership team.

Restorative Justice

Support for perpetrators and victims may include a restorative justice meeting facilitated by the class teacher or form tutor. This allows those who have been harmed to convey the impact of the harm to those responsible and for those responsible to acknowledge this impact and take steps to put it right. Ground rules for the meeting should be gone through with all participants (see Appendix 4). With further training, it may be possible for Peer Champion student leaders to be involved with leading restorative meetings for any low level conflicts.

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 1 Anti-Bullying Charter

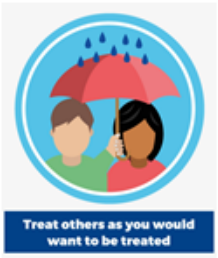
Heathlands Code of Conduct

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

Anti-Bullying Charter

Stop and think before we speak or type



Treat others how we would like them to treat us

Use social media safely and to spread positive messages

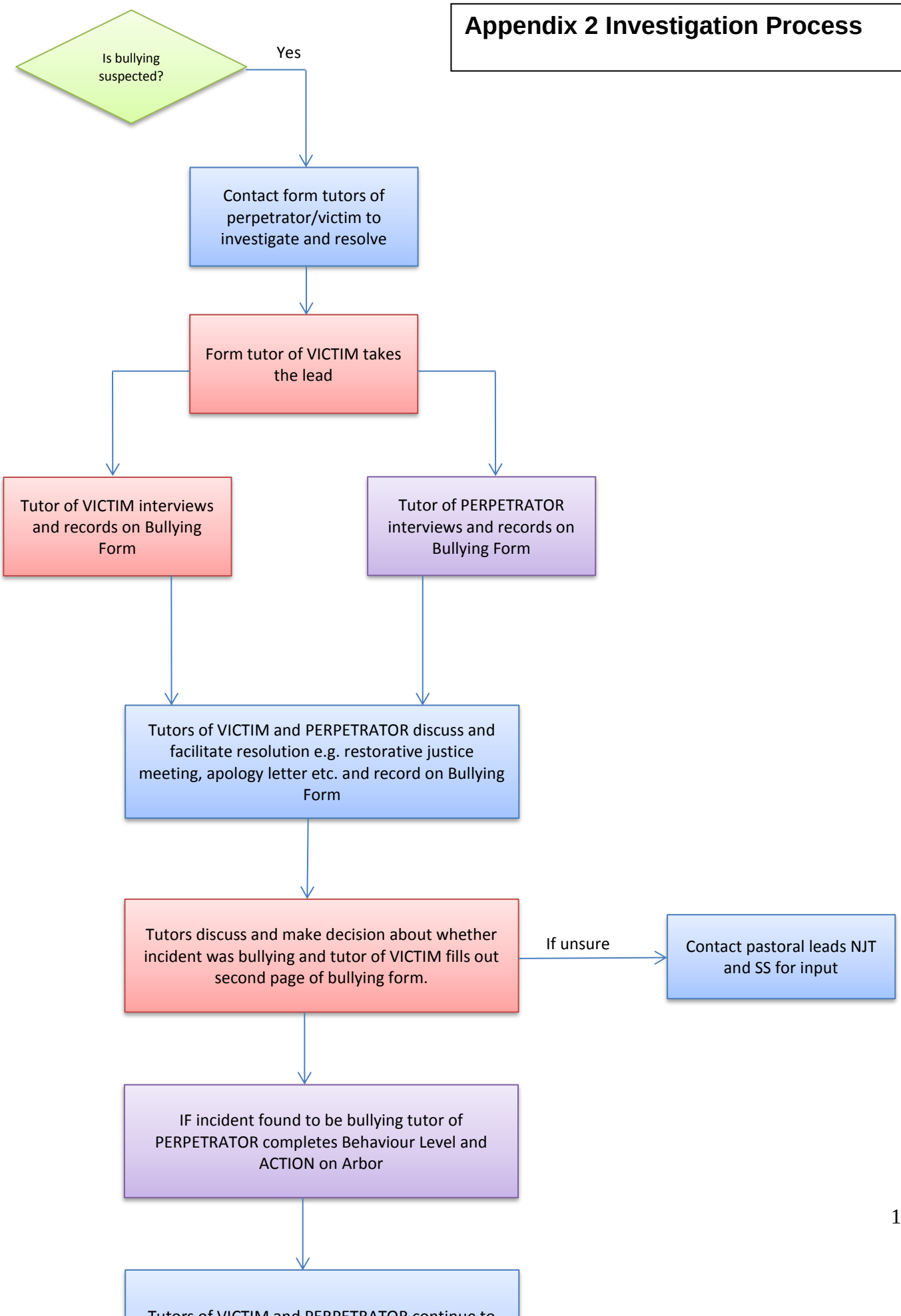
Challenge any unkind behaviour

Use respectful language at all times. Especially when referring to someones race, gender, sexuality, religion, belief or ability.

Report bullying

Try to understand others who are different to us. Be quick to listen and slow to judge.

Appendix 2 Investigation Process



Appendix 3 Bullying Investigation Form

Heathlands School
Bullying Investigation

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.

Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)
Name and form	Name and form

Details of Concern:	
Name of individual/s making the allegation:	
Role of individual/s making the allegation e.g. pupil, parent/carer, LSA:	
Form of referral e.g. verbal report, letter, e-mail, phone call:	
Logged by (name and role):	
Date:	

ACTION:
Now contact form tutors/class teacher of perpetrator/victim to investigate and resolve

Form tutor/class teacher of VICTIM takes the lead

Form Tutor of VICTIM interviews victim:			
Tutor Name		Date	
Form Tutor of alleged PERPERTRATOR interviews perpetrator:			
Tutor Name		Date	

Other actions taken: e.g. pupils separated, witnesses interviewed etc.

Resolution agreed by tutors of victim and perpetrator e.g. restorative justice meeting, apology letter etc.

Does incident meet criteria for bullying? Form tutors discuss and decide. If unsure contact pastoral leads to discuss.			
YES. All three criteria must be met for incident to be considered bullying. (Place an X in the box).		**NO**. Incident was not bullying on this occasion because… (Place an X in the box).	
Hurt has been deliberately/knowingly caused (physically or emotionally)		The first hurtful incident between these children	
It is a repeated incident or experience e.g. multiple incidents, cyberbullying or the involvement of a group		Teasing/banter between friends without intention to cause hurt (should not happen again)	
Involves an imbalance of power e.g. victim feels s/he cannot defend her/himself, or perpetrator/s exploiting their power (size, age, popularity, coolness, abusive language, labelling/name-calling, etc.)		Falling out 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:	

Tutor of PERPETRATOR logs Behaviour Level and FOLLOW UP ACTION on Arbor			
Complete		Date	

Feedback to VICTIM parents/carers: (Place an X in the box).					
Face to Face		Phone/video call		Email/text	
Tutor Name		Date			

Feedback to PERPERTRATOR parents/carers: (Place an X in the box).					
Face to Face		Phone/video call		Email/text	
Tutor Name		Date			

Support for VICTIM e.g. form tutor check-in, mentor notified, referral for ELSA or play therapy or CAMHS	Support for PERPERTRATOR e.g. form tutor check-in, mentor notified, referral for ELSA or play therapy or CAMHS

	Definitely applies	Possibly applies	(Place an X in the box).	Definitely applies	Possibly applies
Age/ Maturity			Gender		

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

Appendix 4 Ground Rules for a Restorative Justice Meeting

Restorative Justice Meeting

Ground Rules

☑ Listen well

Give all your attention to what others are saying. Try to understand the speaker's perspective. Consider each of the harms that are voiced and what it might take to repair those harms.

☑ Share air time

The person holding the talking piece is allowed to speak without interruption.

Speak respectfully and concisely when it is your turn.

☑ Confidentiality

By agreeing to participate in this process, we all agree to keep confidential everything said in the meeting. You may describe the process and your own participation to people outside the circle, but do not repeat what occurs or what other people say in the meeting.

☑ Respect others

Use respectful body language. You will respect each other's feelings; creating a safe place to express thoughts and emotions.

☑ All are equal

Each member of the meeting is valued. We are all here to learn and heal. Each participant will have a chance to help create the restorative agreement.

The goal is to reach a consensus which is fair and appropriate.

HONESTY

☑ Honesty

The meeting succeeds when all are completely truthful.