

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### RATIONALE

Safeguarding the wellbeing of our students is the first priority at Heckmondwike Grammar School. Every person here has the right to feel comfortable, secure and accepted as an individual without being subjected to behaviour which makes them feel distressed.

This Anti-Bullying Policy forms an essential part of our Safeguarding Policy Portfolio and demonstrates our commitment to ensure that our students feel safe in our school. Heckmondwike Grammar School takes the issue of bullying seriously. We aim to provide each student with a safe learning environment in which they can be successful learners and reach their potential academically, socially, physically and emotionally.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

This policy reflects our commitment to reduce bullying and enhance learners' opportunities in our school. In determining this policy the school has taken account of current DfE guidance, giving due regard for the Safe to Learn guidance issued by the then DCSF.

Headteachers have a legal duty to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students.

### AIMS

**The aims of this policy are to:**

- clarify the school's position and procedures on dealing with bullying;
- recognise, reduce and, wherever possible, eradicate instances in which students or staff are bullied;
- establish appropriate means for dealing with bullying;
- promote strategies for dealing with incidents of bullying to all members of our school community;
- raise awareness and allow students to consider and discuss key issues through the curriculum;

**In the implementation of this policy, we will ensure:**

- All governors, teaching and support staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is;
- All governors, teaching and support staff know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported;
- All students and parents know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises;

- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported;
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

## DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING

Bullying is defined as any repeated words or actions, which are aimed at causing someone to feel frightened, miserable and helpless in school. It is sometimes defined as 'behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally' (DfE, Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2014)

Bullying is:

- Deliberately hurtful;
- Repeated over time;
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures) deliberately and frequently;
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- Threats and extortion;
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- Homophobia, bi-phobia or transphobia: focussing on the issue of sexuality;
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading malicious rumours, teasing;
- Cyber- bullying: all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls;
- Misuse of associated technology e.g. filming on camera phones;
- Damage to belongings

## DfE / DCSF GUIDANCE

Government guidance documents have been produced to support anti-bullying in schools. These include:

***Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2017)*** which provides an update to the document ***Safe to learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools*** which was the overarching anti-bullying guidance for schools and was launched in September 2007. The guidance document includes specialist advice on cyber bullying and how teachers can tackle it in school, as well as advice on prevention and intervention and the application of the Equality Act 2010. This is in addition to the existing guidance on tackling bullying related to race, religion and culture that was issued in 2006 and the ***Guidance for schools on preventing and responding to sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying*** which was published 10 December 2009.

We fully support the **Anti-bullying Charter** which shows our commitment to tackling all forms of bullying, and use the principles of the Charter to self-evaluate their anti-bullying policies and practices. We also include an annual anti-bullying week in our pastoral programme and use resources from the **Anti-bullying Alliance** to support this.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

At Heckmondwike Grammar School, we take our responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying seriously. We raise the awareness of all learners regarding bullying and the procedures we use to address any issues.

## **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school;
- doesn't want to go on the school/public bus;
- begs to be driven to school;
- changes their usual routine;
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) ;
- begins to truant;
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- feels ill in the morning;
- begins to do poorly in school work;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing";
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully) ;
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost";
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen) ;
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

## **PROCEDURES**

At HGS students are encouraged to report incidents to the following members of staff:

- Form Tutors;
- Student Support Managers;
- Designated Safeguarding Leads;
- Learning Mentors;

- A teacher or member of support staff in whom a learner feels confident to invest their trust.

If a bullying incident is reported the school is committed to acting promptly, consistently and sensitively. Any member of the teaching or associate staff may be called upon to deal with a bullying incident, because:

- he/she has witnessed it;
- a victim has confided;
- an eye witness has confided;
- a contact has been made by a parent;
- a referral has been made by another colleague from either the teaching or associate staff.

**The following procedure should be used when dealing with an allegation of bullying:**

- The member of staff receiving the complaint should log the incident on SIMS;
- The member of staff should report the incident to the form tutor and the relevant Student Support Manager. If you believe the incident to have Child Protection implications, you must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSLs - see Child Protection Policy;
- On receiving the referral, a detailed investigation of the alleged bullying will be made by the form tutor or Student Support Manager. This will involve interviewing separately the victim, the bully and the witnesses;
- A written record should be made of each interview, which must be signed and dated.
- The detail of the incident and proposed subsequent action should then be passed to the relevant Student Support Manager who will then agree or modify the recommendation, implement appropriate action and log it on their electronic logging system (CPOMS).

There are two possible ways forward here once the victim has been seen, their story has been outlined, and discussions have taken place with the victim about what they should do next:

- a. The incident, though unpleasant and hurtful, was a 'one-off' incident and was, therefore, not strictly speaking a bullying incident (*using the definition included in this policy - remember, true bullying incidents have the characteristics of deliberate intention and repetition*). The offender was in the wrong, has hurt the victim and has not upheld the values of the school. S/he will need to be spoken to and suitably punished.

The member of staff dealing with this will log how the incident has been dealt with on SIMS and inform the relevant Student Support Manager.

- b. The incident was a genuine incidence of bullying. It forms part of a pattern of deliberate and repeated hurtful behaviour towards the victim. In these circumstances, it may be referred on to the Student Support Manager, AHT responsible for the year group, or another Senior Member of staff.

If the victim's allegation is upheld and bullying has taken place, there are a range of strategies and sanctions available to the school and, depending on the nature and extent of the bullying, the following will be employed in the event of an incident being reported:

These include:

- discussion of what has happened, why and how the student became involved;
- support and counselling offered to the victim and bully;
- parental involvement – to reinforce the change of behaviour;
- peer support if appropriate;
- education on the issues relating to the bullying;
- official warnings to stop;
- restorative justice or withdrawal of privileges;
- detention and/or time in isolation with a member of the leadership team;
- Individual Behaviour Plan may be developed and monitored;
- outside agency involvement;
- referral to the Head;
- Fixed term or Permanent Exclusion in extreme cases (actual and serious physical and or psychological threat and actions).

## PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Issues around bullying are addressed both explicitly and discreetly through the curriculum and pastoral systems. Students have opportunities to address issues of bullying through subject areas such as English, Drama and the Skills programme. The PSHE programme in Years 7 and 8 deals specifically with bullying and aims to raise awareness of the nature of bullying and to involve all pupils in eradicating such behaviour. In addition, PSHE lessons in all years include the following related topics:

- The need to show respect for all individuals and live together in the school community;
- Peer influences and consideration for others; compromise and flexibility in judgements and opinions;
- Relationships and coping with problems with friends;
- Dealing with conflict;
- Equal Opportunities, accepting others for what they are and valuing each person as an individual.

Issues around bullying are also addressed through assemblies and student voice activities.

Tutor sessions also reinforce the Rewards and Consequences system (see Behaviour Policy).

In addition, students are provided with advice on e-safety and who to speak to if they have any concerns about themselves or others.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Assistant Headteacher (KS4) has the responsibility to ensure that the policy is kept up to date with the latest guidance. As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, he ensures that dealing with bullying is a major part of our whole school strategy to safeguard the wellbeing of our students. Together with the Assistant Heads (KS3 and Head of Sixth Form) and Student Support Managers, he has an overview of student care, guidance and support and can ensure that our systems and staffing are able to be deployed effectively.

Incidents of bullying are logged electronically (on CPOMS) and monitor it regularly for any trends or changes in frequency, taking action as appropriate.

The Safeguarding Governor ensures that we maintain our commitment to dealing with bullying as a serious issue and checks we are implementing the policy fully.

### CRITERIA FOR MEASURING PERFORMANCE WILL INCLUDE:

- Reduction in number of reported incidents over a set period of time;
- Measurable improvement in behaviour of individuals or particular groups known to be involved in bullying;
- Positive response from learner and parent questionnaires.

This policy will be kept under review and updated as necessary.