



HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Aspiration – Respect – Excellence

### Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

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# **HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE**

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policy/policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Behaviour
- PSHCE
- Young Person's Mental Health
- Attendance Policy

### **Introduction**

Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre considers that bullying of any kind is unacceptable and is never tolerated. We do not accept that it is a phase which young people go through, that it is part of growing up or that it teaches young people to stand up for themselves. The academy acknowledges, however, that bullying does happen from time to time, and we will deal with incidents as promptly and effectively as possible. Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre wants to uphold a caring ethos within the school environment where everyone can co-exist in our community, free from the fear of being bullied in accordance with our core values of Aspiration, Respect and Excellence.

Through the implementation of this policy, we seek to ensure that:

- There is a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying, how we prevent bullying and how we respond to reports of bullying.
- Students know how to report actual and perceived bullying incidents and have the confidence to do so.
- Our curriculum equips students with strategies to be able to talk about anything that worries them in any area of their lives.
- Reported bullying incidents are monitored by so that the effectiveness of the academy's anti-bullying work can be evaluated and adapted where necessary.

### **Responsibility and Accountability**

The Deputy Headteacher (Culture for Learning) is responsible for a whole-school approach to promoting prevention of and responding to bullying. The headteacher is legally empowered to address incidents of bullying and will do so in accordance with this policy.

- Anti-bullying CPD will be made available to all staff on induction and as part of the regular Safeguarding updates throughout the year.
- The attendance officer should record any absences which are related to bullying and report these to pastoral leads and the Deputy Headteacher (Culture for Learning).
- Instances of bullying are recorded using ClassCharts by all staff (in accordance with the Behaviour Policy) and on CPOMS (Category: Child-on-Child Abuse and sub-categories: bullying (online) or bullying (offline)).

## Bullying

The Anti-Bullying Alliance<sup>1</sup> 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. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online'.*

We recognise that,

- Bullying causes real distress, and the trauma could affect a person's health and development.
- In some instances, bullying can cause significant harm.
- All young people, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Bullying might be motivated by actual differences between children and young people, or perceived differences and opinions.
- Bullying may encompass unfavourable or negative comments, gestures, or actions directed at someone in relation to a vulnerability.
- Everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying. This includes swift action to ensure that behaviours described by young people as, 'banter' are not left unchallenged.
- Derogatory language is never tolerated, nor is discrimination or prejudice. However, calling out this behaviour should not lead to further bullying and unkindness.
- Bullying may take place in any location at Highdown School and Sixth Form, or on the way to school, on trips and visits and through virtual or cyber-bullying.
- Students exhibiting bullying behaviour will need to be clear that there are consequences for their actions but also the need to address, cease and not repeat these behaviours in the future with our support.
- Young people who witness bullying may exhibit similar signs to those who are being bullied. They may become reluctant to go to school, feel frightened, unable to act, and experience guilt for not intervening to help.
- Students become bystanders to bullying for many reasons and this must be tackled through direct interventions, the taught curriculum and by fostering an open culture of 'See something, Say Something'.

## Prevention

- All stakeholders should adhere to the behaviour policy, which outlines the expected conduct for all individuals involved in our organisation, whether in face-to-face interactions or online, and both within and outside of our activities.
- Senior and middle leaders will conduct frequent discussions with all stakeholders concerning bullying and strategies for its prevention. In addition, we will empower our student leaders to lead discussions with younger students and report back to Senior Leaders.
- We will ensure that all students know that they will be listened to and heard when they report issues and that all adults in the community will validate their concerns and feelings. Students must be confident that matters raised will be followed up in a timely and sensitive manner.
- Students who do not yet feel they can articulate their concerns, can use the Wellbeing facility in the Class Charts or the SHARP<sup>2</sup> reporting system to alert adults to bullying problems in our community.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://thesharpsystem.com/>

Students can also use their Office 365 email accounts to contact the Pastoral, Star Centre or Safeguarding teams.

- We will cultivate a school ethos that rejects bullying as acceptable, integrating this principle into the school curriculum, CCC (PSHCE and RSE), assemblies, as well as using posters, signposts, and shared information about bullying.
- Records of bullying will be recorded accurately so that patterns of behaviour can be analysed, shared with SLT and Governors and appropriate actions plans but in place for individuals and the community as a whole.

## **Diversity and Inclusion**

At Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre, we recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity. We will be proactive about seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate differences, increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers and young people and welcoming new members to our organisation. We plan positive action to identify and support pupils from particularly vulnerable groups. We work with all relevant staff members and provide additional support where necessary. Activities such as our summer Great Get Together, were introduced to teach students across the academy that, 'we are more united and have far more in common, than that which divides us'<sup>3</sup>.

## **Responding to Reports of Bullying**

At Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre, we will thoroughly investigate reports made by anyone, including the young person experiencing bullying, another student, a family member, or a staff member. Reports can be made to any member of staff, and they will ensure that the most suitable person investigates the matter, usually by informing a Head of Achievement or a Designated Safeguarding Officer. Concerns should be recorded on CPOMS.

We are committed to taking all reports of bullying seriously. In response, we will follow an established procedure (see Appendix 1) consistently, impartially, and promptly for addressing all allegations and incidents. Throughout the investigation and resolution process, our staff will ensure the protection and support of all young people involved. We guarantee that everyone affected will have the opportunity to be heard, and we will swiftly take appropriate action to put an end to any bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.

Concerns about or between members of staff should be referred to the Head of School and/or the Headteacher via Headteacher's PA.

## **Monitoring and evaluating the policy**

- To ensure the effectiveness of this policy, regular monitoring and evaluation will be implemented. This will encompass the analysis of bullying reports, as well as the use of questionnaires, surveys, group discussions, and feedback from all stakeholders.
- The governor responsible for safeguarding and behaviour matters will oversee the monitoring of bullying incidents and provide feedback to the Governing Body including actions that are to be taken as a result of this analysis.

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<sup>3</sup> Jo Cox maiden speech in the House of Commons 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015

## Appendix 1: Procedure for Responding to Bullying Allegations and Incidents

- Make sure the victim, bystander and perpetrator feel safe and are in a safe place before asking questions or requesting factual accounts. ***Ensure all that they are being listened to and heard.***
- Ask those reporting bullying to briefly **describe factually** what happened/is happening.
- Listen and speak to all young people involved about the incident separately.
- Assess the information to consider whether the report is a bullying incident. Cases of serious bullying incidents will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headteacher.
- Provide appropriate advice and support to help victims to process the experience and to develop self-esteem and trust in others.
- Reinforce to perpetrators that their behaviour is unacceptable and provide them with support to understand and ***change their behaviour***. Issue appropriate consequences in line with the behaviour policy. Inform the Designated Safeguarding Officers by recording the incident and uploading factual accounts to CPOMS. This will enable further to outside agencies such as (Early Help, No5, Police) to be made.
- Where necessary, Heads of achievement and DSOs will assess the time and place for any reconciliation and restorative conversations.
- Ensure that adults who need to know the outcome of the investigation and subsequent actions are kept informed.
- Share outcomes with the parents of all pupils (including bystanders) involved. Where appropriate, meet individually with the parents of all pupils involved to discuss the allegation, investigation and outcome.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place. This may include discussion with pupils, staff and parents.
- Some staff may find that dealing with bullying triggers emotions related to their own lived experience, these colleagues are encouraged to reach out for support in confidence in accordance with our staff welfare procedures.