



**Holmer Green Senior
School**

Anti-Bullying Policy

April 2016

Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the legal obligation for schools to have measures to prevent all forms of bullying among students. In particular (section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) the policy complies with the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.

Holmer Green Senior School does not tolerate bullying and recognises that bullying can be extremely distressing for the victim. Our aim is to work with all members of the school community to prevent bullying using two main approaches:

- to support victims and give them strategies for coping
- to work with those with bullying tendencies to help them to understand the underlying causes and modify their behaviour.

Definition

Bullying is when an individual or group, intentionally or unintentionally make another individual feel uncomfortable, unhappy or intimidated. It is repetitive or persistent.

Bullying may be verbal, physical or emotional and may be the result of racial, sexual, religious or disability intolerance.

Bullying can take many forms. The three main types in school are:

- Verbal: Teasing, name calling, abusive text using mobiles, emails or social networking sites, issuing threats, spreading malicious rumours. Verbal bullying includes the use of homophobic language such as 'gay'.
- Physical: Hitting, pushing, shoving, damaging a person's property and taking belongings including money.
- Emotional: Being unfriendly, giving hostile looks, excluding others from social groups.

All of these are unacceptable. All members of the school community have the right to spend their time at HGSS without these things happening to them.

Signs of Bullying

- Not wanting to go to school
- Truancy
- Being frightened to walk to and from school or be present in certain areas within school
- A change in behaviour, eg. becoming more aggressive, withdrawn, anxious, etc.
- Spending a lot of free time alone without peer support.

Aims and Objectives

HGSS seeks to maintain a caring, and positive teaching and learning environment for everyone who works or studies here, following the concepts of Every Child Matters.

All students are encouraged to see bullying as something that should not be condoned or tolerated. The Behaviour for Learning Rules include 'Encourage others' with a view to every teaching area being a bully-free area. Parents and carers should be confident that bullying will be firmly and fairly dealt with by the school. The school seeks to promote equality for all members of the community.

Procedures

If bullying does occur, students, in addition to telling a parent or carer, may tell one of the following:

- A subject teacher
- LSAs or cover teachers
- Their tutor
- Their Key Stage Pastoral Manager
- Their Learning Area Director (LAD)
- Any member of the school staff
- A member of the Anti-Bullying Committee

Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence.

If LAD's or parents feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police or advise parents to do so. For example, (under the Malicious Communications Act 1988), it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

A bullying incident will be viewed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. (Children Act 1989). Where this is the case school staff should inform the designated Person for Child Protection, Nick Golding, or Deputy Designated Person for Child Protection, Claire Hawkins, who will report concerns to social care.

Recording of Bullying Incidents

Bullying incidents are recorded on the school computer system (SIMS) and reviewed regularly by Pastoral Managers for follow-up intervention.

If bullying is of a racial nature ("Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person" - MacPherson Report 1999) it is also recorded on the school computer system (SIMS) as a Racial Incident. The school keeps a tally of the numbers of racial incidents for ongoing tracking and review.

Sanctions

Each case will be dealt with according to its particular aspects. Sanctions may include:

- Parents contacted and meeting arranged
- Detention
- Internal isolation for a day or number of days
- Exclusion from school for a fixed period.

Bullying Outside School Premises

The Headteacher has the statutory power to discipline and apply sanctions to students for poor behaviour outside of HGSS premises (Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006). This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the HGSS premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

Support

Support is needed for both the bullied and the bully. If the incident is of a physical nature, the parents of the victim will be informed. The following support opportunities are available to students:

- Assertiveness Training
- Anger Management
- Communication Skills
- Peer Counselling via the Anti Bullying Committee
- Restorative Justice (in liaison with the local police community officer)
- Special Resource Room operating at lunchtimes in the Speech and Language Block
- HUB Club

Pastoral and Curriculum Input

All students cover aspects of bullying through PSHCE:

- Year 7 Effects of bullying and its unacceptable nature
- Year 8 Peer pressure and dealing with conflicts
- Year 9 Human rights
- Year 10 Healthy lifestyles
- Drama lessons also cover the effects of bullying and its unacceptable nature.
- Assemblies are delivered several times a year, led by the ABC (Anti-Bullying Committee), to remind students of their responsibilities to others and where to seek help should they become victims of bullying.
- The ABC visit tutor groups to assist with the Anti-Bullying Week in November and the Safer Internet Day in February.

Training

The member of Senior Leadership Team responsible for anti-bullying measures attends County conference on bullying and keeps up to date with current materials available through anti-bullying websites. All new staff are instructed about our behaviour policy on induction and are given a staff hand book with information about our anti-bullying procedure in. Staff are reminded of Key Policy Procedures and expectations during training days. Tutor meetings and Faculty meetings are used to help staff to identify bullying and support students experiencing bullying, for example by using the Mediation approach.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Student questionnaires are issued annually, inviting dialogue on the causes and nature of bullying and the effectiveness of current anti bullying strategies at HGSS. Staff and parental surveys are carried out annually to identify student perception on a range of issues including safety and bullying.

Bullying incidents and strategies for tackling bullying are under constant review. The Pastoral team discusses bullying whenever incidents become known and parental feedback is always sought. The ABC meet comes up with new ways to support students who may be being bullied and bring the harm of bullying to the attention of all students. This data is used to inform the policy and implement any necessary changes.

Intervention Guidance

The following intervention guidance is made available to the appropriate audience in the following ways:

- Staff via the Staff Handbook;
- Students via displays and posters

Students

If you are being bullied in school:

- Talk to an adult in school that you trust, and take a friend if it helps, or use the student Anti Bullying Committee. You can contact them via your Form Tutor, Learning Area Director in The Hub, SLT or directly.
- Students can post worries and problems they face at school, including bullying, in the HUB post box located outside the HUB. This is checked regularly and followed up by the HUB staff.
- Don't listen to the bully when they say you will be in trouble if you talk to someone; if you don't talk to someone, it may continue.
- What you say will be heard in confidence and no further action will be taken without your prior knowledge and agreement.
- You will be taken seriously.
- If you need somewhere to be safe, there will be places for you to go while the problem is being sorted out. Your LAD will arrange this for you.

If you see someone being bullied at school, follow the 'See Something: Say Something' motto and tell a member of staff.

Staff

If a student comes to you and says they are being bullied in school, you must:

- Listen to what they have to say and take it seriously
- Encourage the student to use the student Anti-Bullying Committee.
- Make it clear that they have made the right decision to tell.
- Monitor those students involved in the future.
- Record any bullying incidents seen in a lesson or around the school directly onto SIMS and pass to the relevant Pastoral Manager or LAD in The Hub

Additional information on how to identify unreported bullying, and strategies for dealing with both victim and bully, can be found in the Staff Handbook.

Allegations Against Staff

HGSS believes that all members of the school community are entitled to protection from bullying. Inappropriate behaviour between students or staff will not be tolerated and any concerns or allegations of impropriety will be dealt with quickly, fairly and sensitively through the Grievance Procedure Policy. Any staff disclosing information, regarding inappropriate behaviour by colleagues, will be listened to and supported by the Senior Leadership Team, in line with the Whistleblowing Policy.

Parents

If your child is being bullied or is bullying in school:

- Contact the school and ask to speak to the Form Tutor or your child's Learning Area Director.
- Encourage your son or daughter to use the student Anti-Bullying Committee.
- Don't let your child talk you out of contacting school. If the problem is to be solved, it needs to be addressed.

Mediation Approach

This can be used with students doing the bullying as well as the bullied:

- Discuss with the victim what they would like to do about the situation.
- Talk to the bully about what has been happening.
- Get agreement with each that the bullied student is unhappy and that action needs to take place to prevent this situation from continuing.
- Chat supportively with the bullied student so that they realise that they can be in control of this situation and take steps to alleviate future bullying before it escalates.
- Check progress a few days later, and then meet all involved to reach agreement on reasonable long term behaviour – at this stage participants usually cease bullying.
- Check whether the bullying starts again or targets another student.
- If bullying persists, combine the method with some other action targeted specifically at that child, such as parental involvement or change of class.

Approved by Governors: April 2016

To be reviewed: April 2018