



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Statement of Intent

Highcliffe School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so that they can learn in a calm 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 a member of staff or a student Anti-Bullying Ambassador.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally (Department for Education advice, June 2021). 'Intentional' includes the perception of the victim as well as the viewpoint of the bully.

Bullying takes many forms, but the main types are:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Cyber: misuse of social media, messaging and gaming platforms
- Mobile threats by messaging, calls or pictures
- Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities
- Homophobic: because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Transgender: because of, or focusing on the issue of gender
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should understand what bullying is
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported
- All students and parents should 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

Procedures

- Bullying incidents must be reported to members of staff or an Anti-Bullying Ambassador
- Incidents are promptly and carefully investigated in line with the School Behaviour Policy; witnesses are spoken to and statements are taken
- Victim and bully are spoken to separately
- Parents are contacted as the situation requires and referred to the anti-bullying and behavioural policies
- If felt appropriate, a restorative approach may be taken - if appropriate and all parties agree, the bully faces the victim, apologises for his/her behaviour and convinces them that the behaviour will not be repeated
- Sanctions are applied as necessary in line with the School Behaviour Policy
- The bullying incident is recorded on the School Information System
- The situation is discreetly monitored for a period of time
- After a period of monitoring, the incident is revisited by staff to ensure there are no further problems
- Further follow up takes place as necessary

INFORMATION ABOUT BULLYING FOR STUDENTS

What should I do if bullying is taking place?

- If you are being bullied or you know someone else is being bullied, you should TELL SOMEONE
- If it is urgent, TELL the nearest adult or Anti-Bullying Ambassador
- If they do not listen TELL SOMEONE ELSE, DON'T GIVE UP. If you don't tell, it could get worse
- If you are being bullied, tell the bully to stop and that you dislike their behaviour
- Tell your parents or guardian and in school tell your Form Tutor, Pastoral Lead, any other adult that you trust, Peer Mentor or Anti-Bullying Ambassador
- If the person you want to tell is unable to speak to you immediately, ask them when they can see you and spend some time with you
- Walk away from any dangerous situations and GET HELP

You can help stop bullying by being an Upstander not a Bystander. Here is how to do that:

- Being friendly towards people you know are being bullied, including them in discussions, games, break times and lunch times
- Not laughing when someone is being bullied
- Saying out loud that you don't like what is going on
- Not joining in
- Letting an adult know if you see someone else being bullied
- Becoming an Anti-Bullying Ambassador. See Mr James for details

What will happen if you are found bullying other people?

In every case the incident will be taken seriously, and the responses can include some or all of the following:

- You will have to explain your behaviour to a member of staff
- An account of what you have done will be written down and you will have to sign a copy
- Your parents will be informed of the incident and may be invited into school to discuss the matter
- Your Head of Achievement and Pastoral Lead will keep a record of the incident
- You will have to apologise to the person you bullied
- You will have to replace or repair any possessions you damaged
- You will have to do something to improve things for the person you bullied

Depending on the severity of the bullying incident you have been involved in, one or a combination of the following will apply:

- You may be placed in a detention after school or lunch time
- You may be placed on daily or weekly report or sign a contract detailing your apology and desire not to repeat your actions
- You may undergo a series of sessions reflecting on your action
- You may be isolated from lessons for a limited period
- Those who persistently offend may be excluded from school for a fixed term or permanently
- You may have to explain your actions to the police if you assault another student
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***Make bullying stop by speaking out against it.
It is not 'snaking'; it is finding the answer to a problem***

INFORMATION ABOUT BULLYING FOR PARENTS

An anti-bullying culture, Highcliffe School provides opportunities for students to talk about and to share their problems in the following ways:

Anti-Bullying Ambassadors	This group of students have volunteered, been trained and are passionate about supporting students who are experiencing bullying. Tell you children to look out for the students with green lanyards.
Peer Mentors (Year 7)	These Year 10 students support a specific tutor group and are very approachable. Tell your children to look for the students with the light blue lanyards.
Assemblies	Assemblies outline and model expected behaviour.
PSHE classes	IN PSHE students learn about bullying and what to do about it.
Lessons	Subjects such as English, History and EPD use lesson content to reinforce and examine issues of moral behaviour.

Please remember that most students do see bullying as unfair and something to be reported

What can parents do?

- Encourage your child to tell and have the problem dealt with immediately within the school system (e.g.: form tutor, pastoral lead, Anti-Bullying Ambassador, peer mentor)
- If the victim will not tell, contact the school personally to discuss the matter
- Advise your child to tell the bully to stop and that they dislike the behaviour. (This seems obvious, but some victims laugh off the hurt)
- Advise your child never to give in to threats. The bullying may only get worse.
- Do not tackle the problem yourself either with the bully or their parents. This can result in 'fixed' attitudes that are difficult to overcome later. Parents' defence of their own family is natural but may cloud judgements and not solve the problem

Signs and Symptoms

A young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Below is a list of possible signs. The possibility of bullying should be investigated further if he/she:

- is frightened of walking to or from school or does not 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) or begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- is unwilling to talk about his/her day, becomes withdrawn from the family
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for, or starts stealing money (to pay bully) / has dinner or continually "losing" money
- 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, or starts 'comfort-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 or is nervous/jumpy when a message is received

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

CYBER-BULLYING

This school believes that all people in our community have the right to teach and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We believe that every individual in school has a duty to report an incident of bullying whether it happens to themselves or to another person.

WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

There are many types of cyber-bullying. Although there may be some of which we are unaware, here are the more common.

Messages – either direct messages or via social media that are threatening or cause discomfort

Picture/videos - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed. These images can be edited

Phone calls — silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim's mobile phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible

Emails — threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name or account

Instant messaging (IM) — unpleasant messages sent while students conduct real-time conversations online using social media apps such as Snapchat, Instagram, Whatsapp or other such live chat

Bullying via websites or 'Flaming' — use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal "own web space" sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram— although there are others

Denigration - this is when someone may send information about another person that is fake, damaging and untrue. Sharing photos of someone for the purpose to ridicule, spreading fake rumours and gossip. This can be on any site online or on apps. We even hear about people altering photos of others and posting in online for the purpose of bullying

Exclusion - this is when others intentionally leave someone out of a group such as group messages, online apps, gaming sites and other online engagement. This is also a form of social bullying

Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Cyber-bullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe.

At Highcliffe School we take this bullying as seriously as all other types of bullying and, therefore, will deal with each situation individually. Such behaviours taking place outside of school may still be followed up in school if the results are apparent in school. School responses might include a simple verbal warning and a parental discussion. Clearly, more serious cases will result in further sanctions, in line with the School Behaviour Policy, which could include exclusion. Where necessary, outside agencies, including the police, will be contacted.

What should a student do if they have been bullied in this way?

- Do not keep silent – let someone know!
- Do not reply to any hurtful messages
- Keep copies of any hurtful material. Never delete this, as it is evidence
- Make sure that your privacy/'friends' settings on the apps and websites you use are set appropriately

At Highcliffe School, students are taught (in PSHE lessons, assemblies, tutor time and ICT lessons) how to:

- Understand how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them
- Know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyber bullied
- Report any problems with cyber bullying. If they do have a problem, they can talk to the school, parents, the police, the mobile network (for phone) or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it

These topics are revisited across the curriculum and across year groups.

The Highcliffe School Organiser, which every student has, contains the ICT Acceptable Use Guideline