



ANTI- BULLYING POLICY
SEPTEMBER 2015

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Heath Park is committed to working together with students and parents to stop bullying. We believe that challenging bullying effectively will improve the safety, happiness and achievement of students, show that the school cares, and make clear to those children who use bullying behaviour that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Definition of Bullying

There are many definitions of bullying but we consider it to be

- Deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
- Repeated over a period of time
- Difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves against

Bullying can take many forms, but the three main types are:

- Physical: hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal: name-calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect: spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious emails or text messages on mobile phones.

Name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics, but students can be called nasty names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour, sexual orientation, or some form of disability.

Racist Bullying

In racist bullying a child is targeted for representing a group, and attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Racist bullying is therefore likely to hurt not only the child being bullied, but also other children from the same group, and their families. Racist bullying is defined as 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person' (MacPherson Report 1999).

Incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse by name-calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry
- Physical threats or attacks
- Wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines
- Inciting others to behave in a racist way
- Racist graffiti or other written insults – even against food, music, dress or customs.
- Refusing to cooperate in work or in play.

Sexual Bullying

Sexual bullying has an impact on both genders. Boys are also victims – of girls and other boys. In general sexual bullying is characterised by:

- Abusive name-calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching.
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content
- In its most extreme form, sexual assault or rape.

Sexual bullying can also be related to sexual orientation. (Homophobic bullying) Students do not have to be lesbian, gay or bisexual to experience such bullying. Just being different can be enough.

Special Educational Needs /Disabilities

Children with special educational needs or disabilities may not be able to articulate experiences as well as other children. However they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific difficulties or disability.

Cyber Bullying by text message, on mobile phones, over the internet

This is an increasing problem. (further information contained in the use of the internet policy)

Students are encouraged to be careful who they give their phone numbers to and to keep a record of the date and time of any offensive message they are concerned about. They are encouraged to let a member of staff see them. Students who are being bullied in this way will be encouraged to save messages they are concerned about.

When students report bullying text messages the school will take the complaints seriously. The child's family will be contacted, and where necessary the police will be involved.

Malicious emails or messages on the school system will be treated in the same way, and where this is being mis-used, children will be denied access.

Aims and objectives

The aims of this policy are

- To reinforce the message that bullying blights young lives and that all forms of bullying are unacceptable, and will not be tolerated.
- To ensure that students feel safe, secure and valued, so that they can maximise their potential and get the best possible start to their lives from their time in school.
- To ensure that there is awareness of types of bullying and the symptoms and signs of this.
- To ensure that all adults involved are clear as to strategies and sanctions which should be used.

Who to Tell

The school teaches that students must 'not suffer in silence'. Bullying will never be ignored. All staff have received bullying awareness training and students can go to any adult in the school. Key people to talk to would be:

- Miss Fletcher, Pastoral Manager Assistant – Child protection Deputy Designated Officer
- Mr Clarke, Pastoral manger
- Mrs Parker – Onions, Pastoral administrator – Key Stage 3
- Form Tutors
- Mr Mills, Senior Leader – Student Services
- Mrs Bowen, Senior Officer Learning Support
- Mrs Sue Watts, School Nurse
- Ms Leadbetter, Education Welfare Officer
- Peer Mentors
- Mr Barber, Deputy Headteacher
- Mrs Welfair Assistant Headteacher Child Protection Designated Officer

All students are given a small anti-bullying alert card. This fits into a purse or wallet, and can be shown to staff to alert them that there is a problem. This might be to alert staff to them being bullied, or that someone they know is being bullied. There are useful websites and phone numbers on the card.

Every Child Matters Boards around the school clearly indicate to all students who they can talk to both in and out of school. A confidential email help line operates and is accessible to all children.

Recording bullying incidents

All incidents reported to the school by children or parents will be followed up. We make a commitment that this will NEVER be ignored however trivial it may seem. The incident will be recorded on the student's files and in the bullying incident book. Parents will always be informed whether their child is the bully or the bullied. All incidents are recorded on SIMS and the logs used to initiate levels of support and intervention.

Strategies for dealing with incidents

- All incidents reported will be followed up however trivial. The school believes that a half-hearted approach may make the situation worse.
- All incidents should be recorded on conduct logs, and incident reports placed on student files.
- Students should be led to understand the consequences of their actions through discussion, circle time, group sessions, peer mediation, restorative justice.
- Parents of the bully and the bullied will always be notified, and involved.
- Students will be listened too and given time to express their opinions and views.
- A student's account of bullying will be carefully documented.
- Where necessary there will be multi-agency working with police, youth service, Education Welfare, MAST etc.
- Peer mediation through trained peer mentors will be used to resolve conflict, raise awareness, and expose problems.
- Tutorial and PSHCE will be used to explore issues relating to all types of bullying, and develop understanding of relationships. Explore issues of diversity and difference, and discuss what schools can do to end discrimination
- The school will do all it can to recognise and challenge sexual, homophobic and racist content within verbal

abuse.

- The school guarantees confidentiality and appropriate advice to lesbian and gay students.
- The school will do all it can to avoid undue attention to differences between Special Educational Needs children and others.
- Students will be taught assertiveness and social skills where necessary
- Drop-in facilities at lunchtime
- Incidents of bullying will be followed up repeatedly, to check that the bullying has not resumed.

Intervention techniques

The following are used as techniques to work with students in a pro-active way. This is aimed at helping to prevent bullying in the first place, but also to prevent an escalation of a situation.

Circle Time

Circles of friends

Buddies

Adult mediation

Peer mediation

Restorative Justice

Drop-in

Curriculum Support relationships with others.

Anti-bullying week each year is used to raise awareness of the schools policy and practice in relation to bullying, and to involve students and parents in the commitment to challenge bullying behaviour and provide support for students in all aspects of bullying.

Through aspects of the pastoral/PD curriculum students will explore

Why people bully each other, the effects of bullying on the bullied, on the person doing the bullying, and on those who watch, and what we can do to stop bullying.

In addition the school operates a weekly drop-in facility, has Every Child Matters notice boards throughout the school which clearly sign post support both in and out of school.

Involving Parents

The school believes that parental support is often the key to success or failure in anti-bullying initiatives. Parents will be consulted and involved in all incidents of bullying, and can help to create an ethos in which positive behaviour is encouraged, and bullying considered unacceptable.

Parents will have regular anti-bullying information from the school, and invited to participate in discussion.

Advice is given to parents through an annual leaflet. The leaflet highlights the types of bullying, key signs to look out for, what to do if there are concerns, and some useful websites and numbers.

The leaflet also has a parental response sheet which gives regular feedback from parents on their satisfaction/recommendations regarding school policy and practice.

The Parent Council which meets each half term regularly discusses school policies regarding anti-bullying, and makes recommendations.

When tougher measures are required

Where students do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, action will be taken. Disciplinary action, in line with the schools behaviour and discipline policy will always be taken when violence or aggression towards other students is involved, and parents and students are aware that this will not ever be tolerated.

Sanctions might include

- Removal from the group
- Isolation at break and lunchtime
- Detention
- Withholding participation in school trips, or events
- Fixed period exclusion

Where serious violence is involved the Headteacher reserves the right to permanently exclude, and the Governors of the school would uphold this decision.

Training Policy

All school staff receive regular training, and up-dates on bullying issues.

Any child can be bullied, but staff are taught that certain factors can make bullying more likely:

- Lacking close friends in school
- Being shy

- An over-protective family environment.
- being from a different racial or ethical group to the majority
- Being different in some obvious respect eg. a stammer
- Having special educational needs or disability
- Possessing expensive accessories such as mobile phones or computer games.

Staff are taught to watch for signs. Some children who are being bullied may behave passively or submissively, signalling to others that they would not retaliate if attacked or insulted.

Children who are being bullied are often reluctant to attend school, staff should be aware and make referral to the attendance officer and the EWO where they have concerns.

Symptoms of bullying which may be noticed in school may be:-

- Fits
- Faints
- Stomach ache
- Vomiting
- Headaches, sleeping difficulties leading to tiredness in school
- Sadness and depression
- Children not wanting to go out at break and lunchtime
- Children obviously remaining close to where they know staff will be.

All staff on duty at break and lunchtime are encouraged to be vigilant and perceptive in their observations of interaction between students, and to be aware of students standing alone, or hiding in remote areas of the site.

Bullying is a serious issue. We will never ignore it. We work together with all concerned to stop it happening in our school.