

HARLINGTON UPPER SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PRACTICE

Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over a period of time that intentionally hurts or harms.

Every student at Harlington Upper School has the right to enjoy learning free from intimidation.

AIMS

The aims of the policy are to:

- Create an open, positive atmosphere in which every student is respected and valued as an individual.
- Assert clearly that we do not tolerate bullying or any kind of harassment.
- Open up channels of communication so that students feel able to report bullying.
- Develop modules of work within the school curriculum to raise awareness and create a positive, open atmosphere.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Governing Body	Ensure that a bullying policy is in place, implemented and regularly reviewed.
Headteacher	To ensure all staff are aware of the policy and procedures. To make policy available to parents upon request.
Deputy Headteacher	To advise House Leaders on appropriate action in the event of bullying incidents. To review and implement school policy. To support students in the implementation of support strategies and mentoring group.
House Leaders	To deal with incidents of bullying and liaise with parents, staff and other students as appropriate. To ensure appropriate input during PSHE lesson / tutor time to combat bullying.
All school staff	To report and take appropriate action when bullying behaviour is observed or reported.

IMPLEMENTATION

- House Leaders should ensure school policy is clear to all students, via an assembly before the end of September each year.
- Relevant excerpts from anti-bullying policy and strategies to be included in student planners.
- Supportive action to be taken when bullying incidents are reported, so that students feel reassured.
- All members of the school community should be made aware of what is meant by bullying and to report incidents of it.
- Systems are in place to enable pupils to report incidents of bullying without fear of making things worse – these include a dedicated school e-mail address, a bullying box in the school library and a Peer Mentoring service set up by trained students for students.
- All allegations of bullying should be investigated and, if confirmed, acted upon, using procedures and sanctions set out within this policy and in the school behaviour policy and agreed by the Student Anti-Bullying Forum.
- All incidents of bullying and outcomes should be recorded on the school's behaviour log – this information will then be used to review policy and procedures.
- The PSHE/Citizenship curriculum includes work to build self-esteem, self-confidence and responsible assertiveness – the Student Anti-Bullying Group will work with House Leaders and the Key Stage Directors to help develop suitable modules.
- The Behaviour Working Group will review action taken in cases of bullying and ensure in-service training occurs to refresh staff understanding and inform new staff of how to manage behaviour generally and how to detect and respond to bullying.

STRATEGIES

- If a group of bullies develops, staff should use strategies to break up the group; this will help minimise intimidation.
- Encourage students to use peer pressure to prevent bullying.
- Staff and students should discuss ways of helping bullies develop acceptable behaviour.
- A positive atmosphere should be developed whereby:
 1. Staff and older students intervene sensitively in public and try to avoid or defuse confrontations;
 2. A culture of turning to a chosen member of staff or peer is developed by creating as many means of asking for help as possible (e.g. Peer Mentors, Sixth-Form Mentors, Bullying Post Box and school e-mail 'stopbullying@harlington.beds.sch.uk').
 3. Staff and older students challenge name calling or any other form of aggressive or insulting behaviour.
 4. Staff are punctual to lessons to minimise queuing time, students are encouraged to move quickly at lesson changeover and lateness is challenged.
 5. Staff step out into corridor at lesson change to help create a positive, reassuring atmosphere.
 6. Staff avoid leaving a class unsupervised as students feel vulnerable when there is no teacher in the room.

7. Students are listened to sensitively if they report an incident of bullying or intimidation and action is taken to support the student.
8. Parents are notified when there is a specific concern.
9. Students should be empowered to resolve their own difficulties in an appropriate way, without always expecting or needing adult intervention.
10. Mediation is available to those who wish to participate – the mediators' role is to listen, assess what is happening, reflect their own view of what is happening to those involved and to assist in creating some kind of resolution. A disputes register is kept to log all requests for mediation. The outcomes of mediation sessions are recorded.

PROCEDURES AND SANCTIONS

A member of staff dealing with an incident of bullying should ensure that an investigation occurs with written records within twenty-four hours, either personally or in association with relevant colleagues. Written statements should be taken from anyone witnessing the incident. Form Tutors and House Leaders should be informed about the situation.

Any physical attack should be reported immediately to a senior member of staff so that the bully can be isolated and the victim treated, re-assured and protected. Parents should be contacted by telephone and/or letter.

Victims, witnesses and those reporting a bullying incident may need reassurance and counselling. This is probably best done by the form tutor in liaison with the House Leader or Deputy Head. Where appropriate, the peer mentors may become involved.

Whilst appropriate action will be taken to punish the bully, the victim should feel comfortable with the action taken. In addition to supporting the victim, work should be undertaken with the bully to investigate the underlying causes of their behaviour.

A violent incident is likely to lead to a fixed term exclusion from school but persistent violent offences are likely to result in permanent exclusion.

CURRICULAR APPROACHES

Assemblies

Each House Leader will make bullying the focus of a year assembly before the end of September. Bullying and how to deal with it will also be discussed with new intake students at the time of transition planning.

PSHE & Citizenship

New intake students complete a module of work entitled 'Know Thyself'. Students consider aspects of bullying and how to deal with it – this work is completed with each student signing a copy of the School Anti-bullying Charter. Sixth form students work within tutor groups as peer supporters, they also carry out questionnaires and discussions to define bullying behaviour and strategies.

Date policy written: February 2005
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