

High School for Girls Anti-bullying Policy



Reviewed and updated: April 2018

This policy has been formally approved and adopted by The Governing Body at a formally convened meeting.

Policy approved: B. SA Date: 2 MAY 2018

(Chair of HR and Pastoral Committee)

Date of Policy Review: 2nd MAY 2021

HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy statement presents a true and accurate reflection of current practice in the area to which it relates. Its review forms part of our continuing process of School improvement taking the School forward and is informed by local and national needs and developments. The policy was developed through active consultation with staff, students, parents, stakeholders and governors and reviews will endeavour to continue effective consultation. Included in this policy are procedures for staff and students.

VALUES AND BELIEFS

To create a supportive and co-operative school environment, with staff and students working towards the shared goal of learning and achievement, where individuals are encouraged to establish personal responsibility for behaviour and performance goals and the values of the school are actively promoted through the curriculum and environment. Our community is inclusive and committed to improving outcomes for all students, eliminating all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying in order that each individual is able to fulfil their potential.

This will be achieved by staff, students, parents, governors and local partners where appropriate, working as a team to implement a whole-school policy that covers all aspects of school life, both on and off-site.

Students can feel totally at ease with approaching any member of staff about being bullied or friends of the victim can inform any member of staff.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The ABA (Anti-Bullying Alliance) defines bullying as:

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another(s), where the relationship involved has an imbalance of power. Bullying can be carried out physically, verbally, emotionally or through cyberspace.

Bullying can take many forms and may be one/more of the following examples. This list is by no means exhaustive:

Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching or any other forms of violence.

Verbal - name calling (due to weight, height, appearance, family etc.); sarcasm, spreading rumours; threats, or non-verbal i.e. ignoring someone

Emotional - excluding (e.g. from friendship groups); tormenting (eg. hiding books or possessions); ridicule or humiliation.

Cyber bullying - this is rapidly becoming the most prominent form of bullying amongst young people. Any bullying behaviour across the internet, social networking sites, through the use of mobile phones or other electronic devices will be managed in the same way as bullying during the school day. Additionally, any such bullying behaviour that takes place outside of school will also be managed in the same way as bullying during the school day.

The following are examples of actions that would be considered as bullying behaviour, if undertaken to deliberately cause hurt:

- Posting hurtful comments (either direct or indirect comments)
- Sending threatening private messages (over internet, text or other means)

- Negative internet polling about another
- Stealing passwords
- Creating misleading, negative or derogatory webpages/blogs about another person
- Altering the webpages/social networking sites of others
- Sending pictures through e-mail or other mobile technology without the subject's permission
- Sending malicious code
- Sending junk email or instant messages
- Impersonation of another over the Internet or using mobile technology

These are examples included for the avoidance of doubt but are not intended as an exhaustive list of the ways the internet and technology can be used to bully. In addition, the combined effect of comments, posts, likes, dislikes etc. from a number of different people (whether planned together or not) can result in emotional harm and each individual who contributed to the combined effect could face action by the school in the context of bullying. The principles of responsible use of technology are embodied in the school's ICT Acceptable Use Agreement that all members of the school community are required to sign and adhere to.

Hate Crime is also a form of Bullying. What is Hate Crime?

Hate incidents and hate crime are acts of violence or hostility directed at people because of who they are or who someone thinks they are.

Mate Crime is also a form of Bullying. What is Mate Crime?

Mate Crime incidents are where an individual befriends someone with the express purpose of taking advantage of them. Acts of violence, hostility or abuse occur as a result.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RESPOND TO BULLYING?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

The school has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

All complaints regarding bullying are taken seriously and are dealt with as a matter of urgency. In deciding how to deal with the matter, the member of staff who is in possession of the information, should follow school procedures in reporting to the appropriate member(s) of staff.

Suspected and actual bullying will be dealt with in exactly the same way.

PROCEDURES

The immediate investigation of signs or allegations of bullying which comes from a member of staff, students or parents/carers shows that the school means what it says about not tolerating bullying.

The procedures are as follows:

- Identify a member of staff with whom the victim can talk openly.
- Encourage the victim to co-operate fully in identifying the bullies as this is the best way of securing the victim's safety and that of others in the future.
- Establish with the victim, as precisely as possible, what led to the incident and, where appropriate, what steps can reasonably be taken to avoid similar situations in the future.

- Interview students individually where allegations of bullying are made about a group of students.
- Ask individuals to make a written record of what was done or heard regarding the incident. The Bullying Incident Record should be filled in by the member of staff conducting this interview.
- Bring the victim and the alleged bully or bullies together at certain points in the enquiry (but with their permission), if this is deemed to be in the best interest of the victim.
- Make it clear that close supervision is to be maintained while the investigation continues and that any further attempt to intimidate the victim will result in immediate sanction.
- Involve the parents/carers of the alleged bully or bullies in the investigation to question their daughter/son, about their role, if any.

School Action

- The bully and the bullied should be interviewed separately in accordance with school procedures.
- Sanctions imposed could range from detentions, isolation, internal exclusion, external exclusion (fixed term) or external exclusion (permanent). The range of sanctions varies considerably in gravity and the context of the situation will determine which sanction is the most appropriate, fair and proportionate.
- When students return to school they may need to confront their own behaviour with the help of appropriate staff in accordance with school procedures. The focus here is on trying to get the bully to identify with the victim and to understand the distress caused as a basis for a genuine apology.
- In school, pastoral sessions, tutorial activities, assemblies, and subject lessons all contribute to raising students' awareness and understanding of the need to combat bullying. In PSHE, students explore issues of equality, discrimination and oppressive behaviour. Students are encouraged to enter into role play in such lessons and have honest discussions with the PSHE staff.
- Through the teaching and learning process, our school encourages teachers to provide good opportunities for students to work constructively and co-operatively with each other and develop excellent teamwork.

OUTCOMES

The High School is extremely fortunate in having to deal with very few bullying incidents throughout the academic year. We help students to manage relationships and behaviour productively.

Both the bully and the bullied have equal access to Student Support who will monitor incidents, and carry out 'follow-up' interviews.

Effective liaison with parents/carers is vital to tackle bullying successfully. We are aware of the need to involve parents/carers early on in order to explain a situation fully and parents/carers are kept informed at every stage of the process. Discussions with parents/carers are based upon well documented evidence.

The school reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action in any bullying case. Other appropriate responses will involve follow up work with an appropriate person.

A series of sessions with the bully, the bullied and their friends may well be needed in order to sort out the problem sympathetically. Mediation between the two sides can steer the case to a successful conclusion.

STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING THE LIKHOOD FOR BULLYING

- Students and staff to be proactive in areas of the school perceived as possible concerns, such as locker area at social times
- Use PSHE time to draw attention to the issues
- Use assemblies to highlight the positive moves to combat any bullying in our school
- Monitor the number of incidents by recording in an Incidents Book
- Review the policy regularly – at least every 2 years
- Use questionnaires to discover how effective the policy is.

The School will review this policy every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. Students, staff and parents will be consulted on whether the policy is effective or not. The policy has been referenced with the Safeguarding Policy.