



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



## EPT Document Control

This policy applies to all Education Partnership Trust Schools.

Date of last review	September 2018
Date of next review	September 2020
Policy status	Statutory
Owner	Governing Body/ Board of Directors
Lead Contact	Rob Kershaw

## **Foreword**

The Department for Education (DfE) has recently published advice on preventing and tackling bullying, which is for school leaders, staff and governing bodies. The document has been produced to help schools prevent and respond to bullying as part of their overall behaviour policy, to understand their legal responsibilities in this area, and to understand the DfE's approach.

The document replaces previous advice to schools. It outlines, in one place, the government's approach to bullying, legal obligations and the powers schools have to tackle bullying, and the principles that underpin the most effective anti-bullying strategies in schools. It also lists further resources through which school staff can access specialist information on the specific issues that they face.

*The advice has been included as Appendix 2 and the good practice it identifies has been included in this policy.*

*This policy on preventing bullying has regard to DfE Guidance "Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools".*

## **The Equality Act 2010**

Under the Equality Act 2010, new duties on schools and other public bodies came into force in April 2011. The Act strengthens and simplifies existing equality legislation. The Act brings together existing duties not to discriminate on grounds of race, disability and gender, with which schools are already bound to comply, and it extends these to include duties not to discriminate on the grounds of age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and gender reassignment. It places a requirement on governing bodies and proprietors of schools to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities, some of which they will already be doing. It will apply to school policies for tackling prejudice based bullying. The Heights Free School staff and governors will take heed of the Act and ensure all types of bullying are recognised and acted upon.

## **1 Introduction**

1.1 The Heights Free School believes that everyone has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. It is only when these conditions exist that all members of the school community will be able to achieve their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this from happening and prevents equality of opportunity. It will be the responsibility of all at The Heights Free School to prevent bullying. To this end, pupils, staff and parents will be actively involved in writing and reviewing our Anti-bullying Policy.

## **2 Aims**

2.1 Where bullying exists the victims must feel confidence in the systems in place and we want to create a school in which all accept that bullying in all forms is unacceptable and any instances will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively in accordance with our Anti-bullying Policy.

This policy aims are to:

- Raise awareness of bullying and create a culture of positive behaviour which encourages students to disclose and discuss instances of bullying behaviour. Staff will provide close supervision of students in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, particularly of vulnerable learners and in order to model positive behaviour.
- Bring about conditions in which bullying is less likely to occur in the future by promoting equality and celebrating diversity
- Reduce and, if possible eradicate all incidents of bullying
- React to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate way
- Provide support for the victim whilst also developing strategies to enable perpetrators to be accountable using Restorative Justice practices

### **3 Bullying defined**

3.1 There are many definitions of bullying. Most forms of bullying have three things in common:

- a) It is deliberately hurtful behaviour
- b) It is repeated often over a period of time
- c) It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

3.2 Bullying can take many forms. The four main types are:

- a) Physical: (for example: hitting, kicking, taking belongings)
- b) Verbal: (for example: name calling, insulting, making racist remarks)
- c) Indirect/  
Emotional: (for example: spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups)
- d) Cyber Bullying: (for example: the use of text messaging, emailing, videoing and internet usage deliberately to upset someone else)

3.3 It is a legal obligation to report a single incident of racist, homophobic or sexual harassment bullying. Any such incident will be reported on the individual reporting forms and then sent to the Head of School, Assistant Head (Pastoral) or Behaviour manager.

## **4 Possible signs of bullying**

4.1 Both teachers and parents are in a position to observe changes in the behaviour of a child, which may indicate that they are being subjected to bullying.

4.2 The following is a list of signs to look out for;

- Damage to or losses of items of clothing, property, money or school work. If this occurs frequently, then start to ask questions
- Are there signs of physical injuries, e.g. cuts or bruises?
- Academic achievement is perceived to have changed in a negative way
- Playing truant or a reluctance to travel to and/or attend school
- Being aware of children who register, but fail to go to lessons
- An unhappy child who may not wish to go out at breaks or lunchtimes
- A child who threatens to self-harm

4.3 Other behaviour patterns demonstrated by the victim, e.g. is the student conspicuously loud or quiet; is their behaviour appropriate when engaged in normal classroom interaction; is there unexplained behaviour changes e.g. moody, tearful, temper, frightened, reluctant to talk to or sit with friends?

## **5 Our approach to combating Bullying**

### **5.1 Why we should be concerned**

5.1.1 There are a number of very important reasons for challenging bullying behaviour:

5.1.2 The safety and happiness of students: When students are bullied:

- Their lives are made miserable
- They may suffer injury
- They may be unhappy about coming to school
- They are likely to lose self-confidence and self-esteem over time
- Some may even blame themselves for inviting the bullying behaviour

### **5.2 Our approach and staff responsibilities**

5.2.1 It is important that students are aware that the school will deal swiftly with any instances of bullying. They, therefore need to know what types of behaviour constitutes bullying.

5.2.2 The Heights Free School will talk openly about bullying and will raise awareness through assertiveness and self-esteem work in PSHCE and by cross curricular work around diversity.

5.2.3 If a bullying incident does occur it will be dealt with immediately by a member of SLT discussing the incident confidentially with the student concerned, discussion with parents, deciding on a course of action and filling in the

appropriate record keeping which will be sent to the Governors to ensure transparency. Action will be:

Staff within the school to discuss issue with student

Incident recorded - Staff will record all incidents on the bullying incident sheet (*See Appendix 1*).

5.2.4 By role modelling appropriate behaviour, we would hope to diminish the occurrence of bullying in the school. The school staff also raise awareness of and tackle bullying through -

- SEAL
- Creative learning
- Multi-agency working
- Pupil consultation on bullying policy

### 5.3 Scope of policy outside of school

5.3.1 The school endeavours to have open and supportive communication with parents in relation to all bullying incidents. Parents, who are concerned that their child may be being bullied, or who may suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact the school immediately. Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school. For incidents outside of the school;

- Normal procedures will be followed for on and off school site bullying
- Parental support will be sought involving all pupils involved in bullying incidents

### 5.4 Students

5.4.1 Students *who have been bullied* will be supported by members of staff in the following ways:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the student
- Offering continuous support
- Taking measures to restore self-esteem and confidence
- informing parents or guardians (with permission of student)

5.4.2 Students *who have bullied* will be helped by members of staff in the following ways:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the student

5.4.3 The following disciplinary steps may/can be taken:

- Official warnings to cease offending
- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

## **6 Monitoring, evaluation and review**

6.1 Incidents of bullying will be recorded, monitored and addressed on a day-to-day basis, through staff supervision, team meetings, and general care practice. In summary;

- All incidents will be reported to the Head of School or Pastoral Team
- Incidents will be recorded both for individuals and also for the school as a whole
- Monitoring of Incidents will address ways to ensure safety for the young person and to also identify any trends which may need addressing in partnership with other professionals. In order to track and enable further analysis of this data we will record details including gender, ethnicity, SEN and type of bullying.
- The school will maintain records of all incidents of bullying and include details in the Annual Report to The Governors. The Head of School will ensure that these records are available for inspection by OFSTED
- The Governing Body will determine how often this policy will be reviewed and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school



<b>How were Pupils Involved:</b>	
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## Appendix 2 - DfE Advice and Guidance

### DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION ADVICE: PREVENTING AND TACKLING BULLYING ADVICE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS, STAFF AND GOVERNING BODIES

#### About this advice

This document has been produced to help schools prevent and respond to bullying as part of their overall behaviour policy, to understand their legal responsibilities in this area and to understand the Department's approach.

#### Who is this advice for?

This advice is primarily aimed at school staff, school leaders and governors in schools, 6th forms and colleges including Academies, Free schools, Pupil Referral Units and alternative providers.

It may also be useful for FE and community settings.

#### What has changed?

This document replaces previous advice to schools. It outlines, in one place, the government's approach to bullying, legal obligations and the powers schools have to tackle bullying, and the principles that underpin the most effective anti bullying strategies in schools. It also lists further resources through which school staff can access specialist information on the specific issues that they face.

#### What does the law say and what do I have to do?

##### The Education and Inspections Act 2006

There are a number of statutory obligations on schools with regard to behaviour, which establish clear responsibilities to respond to bullying. In particular, Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 does the following:

- provides that every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy, which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents
  - gives Head Teacher and teachers the ability to ensure that pupils behave when they are not on school premises or under the lawful control of school staff

## **The Equality Act 2010**

Under the Equality Act 2010, new duties on schools and other public bodies will come into force in April 2011. The Act strengthens and simplifies existing equality legislation. The Act brings together existing duties not to discriminate on grounds of race, disability and gender, with which schools are already bound to comply, and it extends these to include duties not to discriminate on the grounds of age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and gender reassignment.

It places a requirement on governing bodies and proprietors of schools to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities, some of which they will already be doing. It will apply to school policies for tackling prejudice based bullying.

## **Safeguarding children and young people**

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff members should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue that has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

## **Criminal law**

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour - or communications - could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communication 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.

## **Bullying outside school premises**

Head Teacher and teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Head Teacher teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school 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 should be investigated and acted on. The Head Teacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or antisocial behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the actions taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

## **Dealing with bullying**

Bullying can be physical or emotional and it can take many forms (e.g. cyberbullying). Immediate physical safety and stopping violence come first, but bullying can also be because of prejudice against particular groups (e.g. because of special educational needs, on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or transgender status, or because of caring duties).

School staff, leaders and governors are best placed to decide how best to respond to the particular issues that affect their pupils. There is no single solution to bullying which will suit all schools.

Successful schools have clear policies in place to deal with bullying and poor behaviour, which are clear to parents, pupils and staff so that, when incidents do occur, they are dealt with quickly.

Schools should apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case, the child engaging in bullying behaviour may need support themselves.

Schools that excel at tackling bullying have created an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment - in the playground, corridors, classrooms and beyond the school gates.

Staff and older pupils setting an excellent example to others reinforce the knowledge and values that children are taught in lessons. Schools that achieve this are successful in preventing bullying from arising in the first place.

Successful schools also do the following:

- Involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home
- Involve pupils. All pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders

- Regularly evaluate and update their approach to take account of developments in technology; for instance, by updating acceptable use policies for computers
- Implement disciplinary sanctions. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. Schools can also teach children that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable
- Use specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems. Schools can draw on the experience and expertise of anti bullying organisations with a proven track record and/or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying
- Provide effective staff training. Anti bullying policies are most effective when all members of school staff understand the principles and purpose of the school's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems and where to seek support. Schools can invest in specialised skills to help their staff understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) pupils
- Work with the wider community, such as the police and children's services, where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed. Successful schools also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school
- Make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school, including cyberbullying
- Create an inclusive environment. Schools should create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination
  - Celebrate success. Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue

### **School's accountability**

Pupils will learn best in a safe and calm environment that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus.

*In January 2012, the new Ofsted framework came into force and includes 'behaviour and safety' as one of its key criteria for inspections. Schools should be able to demonstrate the impact of anti-bullying policies.*