



Hilden Grange School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy reviewed by M Gough

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Reviewer's Signature: M Gough

Head Teacher's Signature: M. Gough

Please note: 'School' refers to Hilden Grange School; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

Whole School Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Policy Statement

Hilden Grange School is committed to providing an environment free from bullying and to creating a culture of tolerance and understanding where all pupils feel safe and confident in raising any concerns. We believe that a culture and ethos of tolerance and understanding regardless of age, special needs or disability, racial/cultural heritage, religious belief or sexual orientation is central to our anti-bullying approach. This Anti-Bullying Policy forms a fundamental part of our approach to providing excellent pastoral care to **all** pupils.

Key documents with which this Policy is in accordance:

- Children Act 1989
- Education and Inspections Act 2006,
- The Equality Act 2010
- Independent Schools Standards Regulations
- Education Act 2011
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying guidance October 2017
- Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020
- Independent Schools Inspectorate Handbook - The Regulatory Requirements

2. Aims

The **aims of this policy** are:

- to **try and prevent bullying**, as far as possible **and**
- to help staff, pupils and parents to **deal with bullying when it occurs**

At Hilden Grange School our community is based upon respect, good manners, fair play and mutual tolerance. The school and the Alpha Plus Group are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop his/her full potential.

This **ethos means** that:

- Bullying of any kind, harassment, victimisation and discrimination are not acceptable and will not be tolerated
- We seek to treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school
- We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and to co-operate so that they can learn in a relaxed; but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other
- We believe parents/guardians have an important role in supporting Hilden Grange School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and home have consistent expectations of behaviour and co-operate closely together
- We have regard to relevant legislation, guidance and the Independent Schools Inspectorate regulations listed above in Section 1, with which this Policy complies
- Our anti-bullying approach also involves other school policies, especially the Discipline and Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Exclusions Policy, School Rules, 'Hilden Grange Way' and E-Safety Policy
- We use PSHEE lessons and activities, assemblies, projects, stories and literature, current affairs, historical events, tutorials and other curriculum approaches to discuss and tackle bullying and to help create a culture where bullying is most likely to be prevented in the first place
- We train staff to recognise the potential signs of bullying and how to deal with it when it occurs and have systems in place for investigating bullying at a suitably senior level. These are summarised below in Sections 4 and 5

3. 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. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend

themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

This DfE definition includes:

- hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical means, including sexist and sexual violence (for further information see Safeguarding Policy)
- verbal bullying (including electronic media like chat room and SMS messages)
- emotional bullying (by excluding someone, tormenting them or spreading malicious rumours about them)
- manipulating other people to tease or torment someone
- complicity that falls short of direct participation in bullying.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, religious or cultural and which focus on disabilities or physical attributes (such as their appearance, hair colour or body shape), or a person's sexuality.

Using ICT in these ways is also bullying – we call it 'cyber-bullying'. It can involve using mobile phones, social or networking sites, like Bebo, Facebook and Myspace, emails, text and SMS messages, voicemails and the posting of photographs, video clips and other electronic media on the internet.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time – even in the very best schools with highly effective systems of pastoral care. Sometimes it is overt and intimidatory but it is often hidden and subtle. Whatever its nature, bullying is treated seriously at Hilden Grange School because:

- it is against our ethos and values
- it is hurtful to others and to the school community
- it can cause great distress, unhappiness and psychological damage. At its worst, persistent and severe bullying can even lead to suicide
- it can also be a criminal offence, for example if the behaviour amounts to harassment or to threatening behaviour

4. Possible signs of bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoiled by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)

- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical Room or School Office with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

5. How we deal with bullying.

Preventative measures:

- Use appropriate Assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our PSHEE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to support the messages within the 'Hilden Grange Way'
- Utilise other lessons, such as RS, History, English and Drama to highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour
- A strong and experienced pastoral team of Pre-Prep Class Teachers, Prep Form Tutors and the School Nurse, who support the Head of Pre Prep, Assistant Heads, Deputy Head and Head to identify possible signs of bullying and to take appropriate action
- Our senior pastoral team give support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies.
- Advice is displayed in the Medical Room and around the School on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and web sites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline, Kidscape, Get Connected, Samaritans.
- Pupils are provided with access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private.
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures

- The School acknowledges its responsibility to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils

NB Bullying outside school premises

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises “to such an extent as is reasonable”. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises and cyber-bullying, Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on by the Assistant Head Pastoral or Deputy Head. The Headmaster will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying the teacher can only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member.

Procedures to follow to prevent and deal with bullying

At Hilden Grange School we:

- Encourage all our pupils to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place. This could be via peer supporter, drop in boxes or a written note handed in at the staffroom
- Provide leadership training to our Year 7 and 8 pupils and the Year 6 Girl Head of House (when applicable) which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils
- Provide a point of contact for parents to report incidences of bullying through the Class Teachers (Pre-Prep) and Form Tutors (Prep) or The Head of Pre Prep, the Assistant Head Pastoral or Deputy Head
- Investigate and record all reported incidents immediately and always monitor reported incidents
- Expect all pupils to adhere to the Hilden Grange School code of conduct for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils’ use
- Impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet
- Adhere to the national guidelines regarding E-teaching and the internet
- Offer guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHEE lessons, which covers blocking and removing contacts from “buddy lists”
- Offer guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe
- Mobile phones are not permitted in classrooms, public areas of the school, or where they may cause annoyance to others. For safety reasons Years 7 and 8 (and by special parental request Year 6 pupils) may bring mobile phones to school but they must be left in the School Office during the school day

If an incident of bullying is reported:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved
- He/she will inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible. In all serious incidents, the Deputy Head or Head will be informed and may investigate/deal with the matter directly or delegate this to an appropriate senior member of staff.
- The victim will be interviewed on his/her own and may be asked to write an account of events
- The bully(ies), together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and may be asked to write an immediate account of events
- The incident will be recorded
- Other tutors, as relevant will be informed
- The victim will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator. He/she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself
- The alleged bully will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and invited to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought and they will be kept informed about how the strategies put into place progress through regular meetings
- Factual, contemporaneous notes will be kept of all investigatory meetings, meetings with parents, telephone calls and other relevant information.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and if necessary counselling, will be agreed. This will recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, can be considered if judged helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place
- A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm'. All bullying issues are dealt with in conjunction with our anti bullying policy
- In very serious cases, and only after the Head has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Social Services. However, it is the policy of Hilden Grange to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the school's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely

6. Actions/Sanctions

Although each case may vary, where a pupil or pupils have been found to have bullied, then appropriate and proportionate sanctions will be applied, in accordance with the school's Discipline and Behaviour Policy and taking account of any cumulative effect of a pupil's behaviour.

Depending upon the particular situation, sanctions, either individually or in combination, may involve such steps as:

- loss of privileges
- transfer to another class, group or teaching set (in a particular case, the pupil who has been bullied may wish to move into a different group and this will be considered, provided that it is not perceived as in some way condoning or the action of the bully)
- 'on report' or equivalent requirement for monitoring of behaviour
- making restitution to the victim (for example, for items damaged or destroyed)
- detention(s), either at break or lunchtime or after school or on a Saturday
- service to the school community
- Parents asked to meet with a senior member of staff
- Meetings with parents should normally be followed up with a letter, summarising the main points and including any proposed action
- A warning given and recorded in the pupil's file
- A pupil may be asked to sign a school behaviour agreement
- fixed-term exclusion **
- permanent exclusion **

NB ** These sanctions will be imposed in severe or persistent cases of bullying, in accordance with the Exclusions Policy

7. Related policies are:

- Accessibility Policy
- Discipline and Behaviour Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

8. Further sources of Information

A number of useful additional sources of information can be found by following the link below to the DfE document 'Preventing and tackling bullying.'

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/409061/preventing_and_tackling_bullying_october2014.pdf