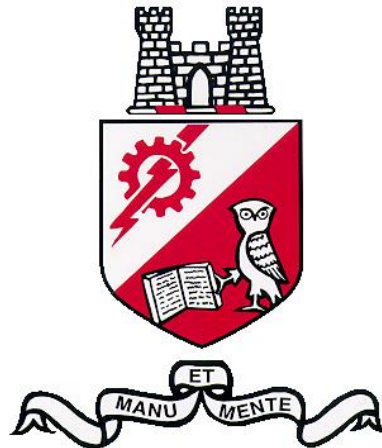


# WEST HATCH HIGH SCHOOL



THE BEST THAT I CAN BE

## Anti Bullying Policy

Policy reviewed

December 2015

Signed

*J A Haworth*

## ***ANTI-BULLYING POLICY***

This policy takes full account of the school's legal obligations under the Education Act of 1986 to:

- Have a policy to prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils
- To make a written copy of the anti-bullying statement available on request
- To set out the strategies to be followed with a system to implement them and a mechanism for monitoring and reviewing their effectiveness.

### **DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying can be defined in a number of ways. We follow DfES guidance which defines bullying as:

“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.”

### **Bullying has been described by pupils as:**

- name calling
- teasing
- physical abuse e.g. hitting, pushing pinching or kicking
- having personal possessions taken e.g. bag or mobile phone
- receiving abusive text messages or e-mails
- being forced to hand over money
- being forced to do things they don't want to do
- being ignored or left out
- being attacked in any way due to religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance or racial or ethnic origin.

### **Specific Examples of Bullying:**

**Racist bullying** - an incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. This can be in the form of:

- verbal abuse, name calling, racist jokes, offensive mimicry
- physical threats or attacks
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- ringing 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 co-operate in work or play

*Macpherson report 1999*

**Sexual bullying** - this can be characterised by:

- abusive name calling
- looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- inappropriate and uninvited touching
- sexual innuendos and propositions
- pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content
- in it's most extreme form, sexual assault or rape.

**Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender** - this can happen even if the pupils are not lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Just being different can be enough. This can be in the form of:

- use of homophobic language or transgender slurs
- looks and comments about sexual orientation or appearance
- looks and comments about gender or appearance

**SEN or disability** - These pupils are often at greater risk of bullying. This can be characterised by:

- name calling
- comments on appearance
- comments with regard to perceived ability and achievement levels.

The need for adult sensitivity should be taken into account in a number of instances, e.g. when grouping children, marking children's work, sharing of results and assessment arrangements as well as an awareness of appropriate language being used when addressing pupils.

**Cyberbullying** - Cyberbullying is when a child is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or targeted by another child using the Internet, mobile phone, or other type of digital technology. (more information on this aspect of bullying can be found in appendix 1).

## **SCOPE**

The policy embraces all aspects of life within West Hatch High School. It refers to all pupils, staff and adults who work at the school.

## **SCHOOL STATEMENT OF INTENT (WITH REGARD TO ITS POSITION ON BULLYING)**

This school believes that:

- Bullying is undesirable and unacceptable.
- Bullying is a problem to which solutions can be found.
- Seeking help and openness are regarded as signs of strength not weakness.
- All members of the school community will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Everyone has the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from fear.
- All of us have a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others.
- Young people should talk to an adult if they are worried about bullying and have a right to expect that their concerns will be listened to and treated seriously.
- Young people should be involved in decision making about matters that concern them.
- We all have a duty to work together to protect vulnerable individuals from bullying and other forms of abuse.

## **AIMS OF THE POLICY**

- to assist in creating an ethos in which attending school is a positive experience for all members of the school community.
- to make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable at school.
- to enable everyone to feel safe while at school and encourage pupils to report incidences of bullying.
- to deal effectively with bullying.
- to support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to.
- to help and support bullies to change their attitudes as well as their behaviour and understand why it needs to change.
- to liaise with parents and other appropriate members of the school community.
- to ensure all members of the school community feel responsible for combating bullying.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- to maintain and develop effective listening systems for pupils and staff within the school.
- to involve all staff in dealing with incidents of bullying effectively and promptly.
- to equip all staff with the skills necessary to deal with bullying..
- to acknowledge the key role of the class teacher/form tutor in dealing with incidents of bullying.
- to ensure that all incidents of bullying are recorded and appropriate use is made of the information and where appropriate shared with relevant organisations.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of all teachers and pupils to alert the appropriate members of staff when bullying is perceived to have taken place.

## **PROCEDURE**

There must be consistency in following the guidelines on bullying and the rules must apply to teacher/pupils in the classroom as well as between pupils and staff.

## **ROLE OF THE TEACHER**

If bullying is perceived to have taken place, teachers should always aim to investigate / deal with the incident(s) as soon as possible.

Depending on their assessment:

- i incident may be dealt with on the spot. All incidents must be followed up with an incident report on the learning gateway.
- ii if the member of staff considers the case to be serious and needing further attention, this should be highlighted on the incident sheet.

Teachers and support staff must be vigilant in their duty and follow up any incidents that could be bullying.

## **ROLE OF HEAD OF HOUSE**

The Head of House will decide whether this will be investigated further.

This further investigation may involve:

- i obtaining independent written statements from victims, bullies and witnesses;
- ii using these statements, pupils would be interviewed and appropriate action taken.

Responses will vary depending on the nature of the incident, but may include:

- Assertiveness training (target)
- Counselling (Tutor, Pastoral Manager, HOH, SLT, other)
- Restorative justice
- Mentoring
- Use of report (see Discipline policy)
- Involvement of external agencies
- Monitoring by Tutor/Head of Year
- Peer support/peer mentoring
- Formal recording (bullying, racism, homophobia)
- Use of Behaviour Agreement Contract
- Liaison with parents/guardian/social worker
- Internal exclusion
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Parents should always be informed if bullying incidents are serious (both bully's and target's parents).

Following an incident identified as bullying, Head of House will log the incident on the learning gateway and will then meet any victims of bullying one week, 1 month and 3 months after the event has been dealt with.

Persistent bullies must be dealt with firmly and kept in no doubt that they will be excluded and finally permanently excluded if they persist in their action. Where a problem persists a pupil will be referred to the school counsellor for further support with their parents having to meet with the Headteacher.

## **ROLE OF THE SCHOOL**

The school will endeavour to educate its pupils on the impact bullying can have on a young person's life. Assemblies will be held with all year groups exploring our anti bullying ethos and PSEC lessons during form time will integrate both bullying and cyber bullying into the curriculum to allow students to be aware of the impact bullying can have on the victim and the bully. A drop down days for pupils can focus on bullying and how to deal with bullies.

Our student voice will have a lead who focus on anti-bullying, within the strand of welfare, and lead on assemblies and work within tutor time on this subject.

Finally, we have a confidential line on the school website where pupils and staff are able to place a concern which will be emailed directly to the Assistant Headteacher Laurie McVittie to investigate.

## APPENDIX 1

### CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is when a child is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or targeted by another child using the Internet, mobile phone, or other type of digital technology.

The most common ways of cyberbullying are through:

- Chat rooms, blogs and forums – although many of these are moderated, people involved in discussions can be sent abusive responses
- Text messaging – abusive and threatening texts can be sent to mobile phones
- Abusive or prank phone calls – these can be made to your child's mobile phone
- Picture and video clip messaging – offensive images can be sent to mobile phones
- Email – new addresses can be set up in minutes and used to send offensive messages and images
- Social networking and personal websites (like Facebook or MySpace) – offensive or humiliating messages and images can be posted on these sites
- Identity theft – in many cyber environments fake profiles can be set up pretending to be someone else with the aim of bullying others
- Instant message services – quicker than email, these allow users to have 'real time' conversations, and offensive messages or content can be sent in this way
- Webcams – usually used to view each other when chatting online, children can also be sent abusive images or encouraged to act in an inappropriate way while being filmed
- Video hosting sites (like YouTube) – children may find themselves the subject of films being shown (happy slapping) or be accidentally exposed to pornographic images
- Gaming sites, consoles and virtual worlds – chatting is possible within many games, and name calling, abusive remarks and picking on particular players can occur
- Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.
- Bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites, which can provide new opportunities for cyberbullying.
- Trolling: Posting derogatory messages about sensitive subjects on newsgroups and chat rooms to bait users into responding, often using a pseudonymi

What's different about cyberbullying? <sup>ii</sup>

Bullying is not new, but some features of cyberbullying are different from other forms of bullying:

- 24/7 and the invasion of home/personal space.
  - Cyberbullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal.
- The audience can be very large and reached rapidly.
  - The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying. Electronically forwarded content is hard to control, and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for targets to move on.
- People who cyberbully may attempt to remain anonymous.
  - This can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person cyberbullying may never be in the same physical space as their target.

- The profile of the bully and target.
  - Cyberbullying can take place both between peers and across generations; teachers have also been targets. Age or size are not important. Bystanders can also become accessories to the bullying; for example, by passing on a humiliating image.
- Some instances of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional.
  - It can be the result of not thinking (something sent as a joke may be deeply upsetting or offensive to the recipient) or a lack of awareness of the consequences – for example saying something negative online about another pupil, or friend that they don't expect to be forwarded or viewed outside their immediate group.
- Many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence.
  - This is one of the reasons why it's important to know how to respond!

### **What can schools do about it?**

- While other forms of bullying remain prevalent, cyberbullying is already a significant issue, especially amongst young people. West Hatch High School recognises that staff, parents and young people need to work together to prevent this and to tackle it whenever it occurs.
- School Governors and the Headteacher have a duty to ensure that bullying via mobile phone or the Internet is included in their mandatory anti-bullying policies, that these policies are regularly updated, and that teachers have sufficient knowledge to deal with cyberbullying in school

### **West Hatch High School ensures that:**

- The curriculum teaches students about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely including personal rights
- All e-communications used on the school site or as part of school activities off-site are monitored
- Clear policies are set about the use of mobile phones at school and at other times when students and staff are under the school's authority
- Internet blocking technologies are continually updated and harmful sites blocked
- They work with students and parents to make sure new communications technologies are used safely, taking account of local and national guidance and good practice
- Security systems are in place to prevent images and information about students and staff being accessed improperly from outside school
- They work with police and other partners on managing cyberbullying

### **Cyberbullying and the law:**

- Education law: Bullying is never acceptable. The school community has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment. A range of Education Acts and government initiatives highlight these obligations.
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyberbullying. Head teachers have the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off site. The EIA also provides a defence for school staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils.
- Civil and criminal law: Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in UK law, there are laws that can apply in terms of harassing or threatening behaviour, for example, or indeed menacing and threatening communications. In fact, some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, which has both criminal and civil provision, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, section 127 of the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

## **Responding to Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, and therefore all schools should already be equipped to deal with the majority of cases through their existing anti-bullying policies and procedures. This section outlines key steps to take when responding to cyberbullying.

Supporting the person being bullied

- Give reassurance that the person has done the right thing by telling someone, refer to any existing pastoral support/procedures and inform parents.

### **Advise on next steps:**

- Make sure the person knows not to retaliate or • return the message.
- Ask the person to think about what information they have in the public domain.
- Help the person to keep relevant evidence for • any investigation (e.g. by not deleting messages they've received, and by taking screen capture shots and noting web addresses of online cyberbullying instances).
- Check the person understands simple ways to • prevent it from happening again, e.g. by changing contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chatroom.
- Take action to contain the incident when content has been circulated:
  - If you know who the person responsible is, ask them to remove the content;
  - Contact the host (e.g. the social networking site) to make a report to get the content taken down.
  - Use disciplinary powers to confiscate phones that are being used to cyberbully.
  - Ask the pupil to tell you who they have sent messages on to.
  - In cases of illegal content, contact the police, who can determine what needs to be kept for evidential purposes.

## **Investigating incidents**

Cyberbullying can be a very serious matter and can constitute a criminal offence. In UK law, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment or threatening and menacing communications.

Advise pupils and staff to try and keep a record of the bullying as evidence.

It can be useful to show parents, teachers, pastoral care staff and the police, if necessary, what has happened.

Take steps to identify the bully, including looking at the school systems, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses, and contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary. The police will need to be involved to enable the service provider to look into the data of another user.

## **ICT and Mobile Phone Policy**

If a cyberbullying incident directed towards a student or member of staff occurs using email or mobile phone technology, either inside or outside school time, West Hatch High School will take the following steps:

- Advise the victim not to respond to the message
- Refer to relevant policies, e.g. e-safety/acceptable use , anti-bullying, dignity at work and PSHE and apply appropriate sanctions
- Secure and preserve any evidence
- Inform the sender's e-mail service provider
- Notify parents of and students involved
- Consider delivering a parent workshop for the school community
- Consider informing the police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of the offence. The school recognises that some cyberbullying activities could be a criminal offence under a range of different laws including: the Protection from Harassment Act 1997; the Malicious Communication Act 1988; section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986



If malicious or threatening comments are posted on an Internet site or Social Networking Site about a student or member of staff West Hatch High School will also:

- Inform and request that the comments be removed if the site is administered externally
- Secure and preserve any evidence
- Send all the evidence to [www.ceop.gov.uk/contact\\_us.html](http://www.ceop.gov.uk/contact_us.html) if of a sexual nature
- Endeavour to trace the origin and inform the police if appropriate.

The schools use of electronic equipment policy can be found within the schools behaviour policy.

## **Working with Parents**

West Hatch High School has developed an Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) for both staff and students that includes clear statements about e-communications. The school seeks to regularly update both staff and parents on:

- What to do if problems arise
- E-communication standards and practices in school
- What's being taught in the curriculum
- Supporting parents and students if cyberbullying occurs by:
- Assessing the harm done
- Identifying those involved
- Taking steps to repair harm and to prevent recurrence

## **Key Safety Advice**

- Be aware, a child may as likely cyberbully as be a target of cyberbullying.
- Be alert to a child seeming upset after using the internet or their mobile phone. This might involve subtle comments or changes in relationships with friends. They might be unwilling to talk or be secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use.
- Talk with children and understand & familiarise yourself with the ways in which they are using the internet and their mobile phone.
- Use the tools on the service and turn on in-built internet safety features.
- Remind children not to retaliate.
- Keep the evidence of offending emails, text messages or online conversations.
- Report cyberbullying:
  - Report any incidents of cyberbullying to the designated Child Protection Officer
  - Contact the service provider.
  - If the cyberbullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed, you should consider contacting the police.
  - encourage them to talk to you or another adult about anything that's upsetting them
  - watch out for them seeming upset after using the internet or their mobile phone
  - try to understand the ways in which they are using their digital technologies
  - ask them to think about how their actions affect other users
  - suggest that they only use moderated chat rooms
  - encourage them to show you any abusive or offensive emails or messages they've received and keep a record of them
  - help them report any abuse to their school, the internet service provider, the website manager/moderator, the mobile phone company or the police
  - tell them never to respond to any abusive messages or calls – this is frequently what the abuser wants
  - discuss keeping their passwords safe and avoiding giving their name, email address or mobile phone number to people outside their circle of friends and family
  - change email address or telephone number if the abuse continues

- tell them about places where they can go for help and support like CyberMentors, ChildLine and Childnet International<sup>iii</sup>

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

By carefully collecting feedback at appropriate times from pupils, parents and staff, the school will be able to evaluate the impact of its procedures relating to bullying and cyber bullying.

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