



HOPE WOOD ACADEMY

“All members of Hope Wood Academy are treated with respect and as individuals in order to enable them to make full use of their lives and maximise their potential.”

Anti-bullying

Policy Review Date: -

September 2023

Ascent Trust Representative: -

Karen Hart (AHT PDBWA)

Ratified by CEO: -

Hope Wood Academy

Anti-bullying Policy

This policy was created in to underpin the Academy mission statement 'to provide a welcoming, purposeful environment where learners can flourish because their rights, needs and aspirations are met'. Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, schools can help to create safe, disciplined environments where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

Aims

At Hope Wood Academy, we aim:

- To provide a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere
- For all children to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity
- For pupils to tell someone if they feel unhappy
- For staff to listen carefully to what children have to say and to treat all children's accounts with due seriousness
- We are a UN Rights Respecting School and follow several programmes that support our policies in class
- We are an 'All Together' Gold School, a programme which supports the above aims through self-evaluation, CPD and pupil wellbeing assessment.

Reducing conflict – increasing understanding

Definition of 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, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

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.

Cyber Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

- threats and intimidation
- harassment
- cyber stalking e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts, defamation

- exclusion or peer rejection
- impersonation
- circulation of private information or images and manipulation.

Cyber bullying is deliberate and aggressive and is extremely destructive. A much wider number of students within a peer group can become involved than with face-to-face incidents. Close home-school contact and swift, effective measures by both home and school where cyber-bullying has been identified are vital in tackling such incidents.

Our approach – prevention

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989.

Where this is the case, the school staff will discuss the suspicion with the school's designated safeguarding lead, Faye Spanton.

Hope Wood Academy staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This involves talking to pupils about issues of difference, in lessons, through dedicated events or projects, and through assemblies. Staff themselves will be able to determine what will work best for their pupils, depending on the particular issues they need to address.

Hope Wood promotes an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect. That culture extends beyond the classroom to the corridors, the dining hall, the playground, and beyond the school gates including travel to and from school. 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 and are reinforced by staff and peers who set a good example to the rest.

- **Involving parent/carers:**

Hope Wood Academy will ensure that parent/carers 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. Parent/carers must 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.

- **Involving 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. Victims of bullying and their families are involved in the restorative process and corrective actions used to tackle perpetrators.

Student council members support the lead of anti-bullying strategies and all students are encouraged to act as 'defenders', supporting peers where bullying is witnessed by sharing information with staff. Anti-bullying champions are rewarded for their efforts in reducing bullying through reporting.

- **Anti-bullying team:**

The senior manager responsible for anti-bullying (M.Finlay) will regularly evaluate and update the approach in collaboration with the anti-bullying team and EHT to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers.

- **Academy staff:**

Are aware of and implement policy and practice as appropriate and are aware of the anti-bullying team available to support. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.

- **Lessons / assemblies**

Differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference, are openly discussed and celebrated within PSHEC sessions, assemblies and national celebratory days. Children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, are supported by tutors, the Young Carers' Charter and senior leaders responsible for LAC. Hope Wood Academy also teaches students that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable and actively tackles such language at point of use, recording incidents and interventions on Behaviour Watch and CPOMS.

- **External organisations**

Hope Wood Academy works with the wider community, such as the police and children's services, to agree a clearly understood approach to cases where bullying is particularly serious, persistent and/or where a criminal offence may have been committed.

External organisations and resources support the Academy with the audit of current practice and to develop policy, both in general and in particular areas such as bullying that targets those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) pupils.

Building an ethos of co-operation

- In Hope Wood Academy bullying is taken seriously and will **not** be tolerated
- Victims are encouraged to report incidents to peers, tutors, other staff and/or home
- Incidents will be dealt with firmly.

Whilst these are worthy intentions, which we share, we believe that they can only be applied effectively by spreading the message of understanding and respecting others.

In all our dealings with the students, staff emphasise the importance of respecting the feelings and emotions of others. If a student is struggling with bullying tendencies, staff will use Emotion Coaching techniques to help the student overcome the issues. There is then an expectation that the student will consciously work with staff to reduce this problem.

The curriculum builds on this ethos directly through PHSE and our Outdoor Education programme. Much of the programme for Outdoor Education demands team building and co-operation skills in physically and mentally demanding situations. The rest of the curriculum reinforces this message.

The process

When an incident occurs the following process should be put into practice.

1. *Talking with the victim* (Not necessarily the student's personal tutor).

The victim must be given time and the opportunity to speak. At Hope Wood Academy they are likely to want to concentrate on the facts and revenge. The member of staff will allow the victim to off load but will then lead the conversation towards talking about their feelings with the use of emotion coaching.

The meeting should conclude with the member of staff sympathising with the victim and saying that they will go and see the perpetrator. The member of staff will end the meeting by arranging to see the victim again.

II. Talking with an individual

The member of staff will ensure that the student's tutor is aware of the incident who will then see the perpetrator. This meeting will be particularly effective if some time has elapsed since the incident so that the perpetrator is less defensive. It is important that this conversation does not get tied down investigating the facts. The conversation needs to move on to trying to find out the reasons behind the needs of the perpetrator to intimidate others. A useful strategy is to talk about the student's relationships with other students, staff or other adults and not the victim.

If the conversation proceeds well and moves away from "he deserved it", staff should try to encourage the student to think about how the victim feels. The meeting should conclude with an agreement on how the student should behave in relation to the victim and to others generally.

III. Talking with a group

If the bullying involves a group, staff may be tempted to talk to those individually. However, staff should have the confidence to talk to the group as a whole and again the key is to concentrate not on the facts but on the feelings that resulted from the bullying.

This meeting in most cases should not include the victim unless it is felt that the perpetrators are genuinely feeling remorse and that the anger and or fear of the victim has subsided.

The meeting should conclude with an agreement on how the students are going to behave toward the victim. They should be encouraged to suggest ideas on how they can make up to the victim. This might start with just a simple but genuine apology.

IV. Follow up meeting

It is essential that both the victim and the perpetrator/perpetrators are seen later to see if the issue has been resolved. If there is a continuation of the problem, then the dialogue needs to be started again. For things to progress, the same principle applies, concentrating on the reasons behind the bullying and not the bullying itself.

Documentation

Incidents of bullying may be documented on the following forms or in the following ways:

Behaviour Watch system;

CPOMS;

Conclusion

An anti-bullying policy alone will not stop bullying. Bullying is an aspect of life that we strongly believe can only be reduced through an understanding of why it happens. Our policy is directed at improving this understanding and is an integral part of the Academy's ethos and philosophy.

Anti-Bullying team

Hope Wood Academy has joined the All Together Anti-Bullying Alliance scheme to audit and improve all areas, including the development of this policy and development of Academy practice. Hope Wood Academy has achieved the All Together Anti-Bullying Alliance Gold award.

Our policy also includes the need for an in house Anti Bullying Team. This consists of the following members; a member of the Senior Management Team (Mike Finlay), Phase Coordinators (Keeley Steel, Richard Dunn, Anne Marshall), the Behaviour Manager (Sally Cave) and the student council.

Vulnerable groups

All students who attend Hope Wood Academy have an EHC Plan and are therefore considered to be vulnerable. As such all students are provided with a Tutor who is responsible for the pastoral care of each of their tutees. Tutors, as part of their role, will act as an advocate for their tutees and will maintain close contact with homes to discuss progress and to ensure that their tutee feels safe and welcome in the Academy at all times and to respond accordingly should this prove not to be the case.

A particularly vulnerable group is the Looked After Children (L.A.C.) who attend Hope Wood Academy. To further assist this group Hope Wood Academy has a Designated Person for Looked After Children (who for the duration of this policy shall be Beth Chadwick) who, along with the Phase Coordinators, is responsible for overseeing the pastoral care of all students on the role of Hope Wood Academy who are placed in the care of a Local Authority.

Equality

This policy / procedure must be applied fairly and consistently to staff and students irrespective of their race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religious beliefs, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependents, disability, sexual orientation, trans-sexuality, age, trade union or political activities,

social class, residential location or spent convictions.