

Preventing Bullying

1 Statement of Purpose

Within the Hastings Academies Trust we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a calm and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our schools. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to talk in confidence, knowing that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Please study our Policy with reference to Department for Education (DfE) guidance: 'Don't Suffer in Silence'.

2 What do we mean by bullying?

Bullying involves dominance of one student by another, or a group of others, is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour. It is behaviour which is intended to hurt another person and results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful;
- Repeated, often over a period of time;
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

It can take many forms but the main types are:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, taking another's belongings;
- Verbal - name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks;
- Indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours;

Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which he or she may belong. Within school we will pay particular attention to:

- Racial harassment and racist bullying;
- Sexual bullying;
- The use of homophobic language;
- Bullying of students who have special educational needs or disabilities.

3 Bullying: The Academy's values and beliefs

The Academy's values and beliefs affirm that:

- All students and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included, as stipulated in the Every Child Matters Framework;
- Students and staff have the right to work in an environment without harassment, intimidation or fear;
- All bullying, of any sort, is therefore unacceptable;
- Students who experience bullying will be supported;
- We recognise the effects that bullying can have on students' feelings of worth and on their school work, and the school community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment.

Our curriculum and SEAL assemblies will be used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and our anti-bullying policy;
- Increase understanding for victims and help build an anti-bullying ethos;
- Teach students how constructively to manage their relationships with others.

Periodic posters campaigns on the school notice boards/ classrooms will be used to remind students that bullying is not acceptable, and to tell them what to do if they are bullied.

Our School Council offers a forum in which concerns about bullying can be discussed on a regular basis.

We will provide written guidance to all our students to explain what they should do if they are being bullied, or if they see another student being bullied.

We will provide written guidance for parents on the signs of bullying and what to do if they suspect their child is being bullied at the Academy.

Students who have been bullied should report this to their class teacher.

Students who see others being bullied should report this to a member of staff.

Members of staff who receive reports that a student has been bullied should report this to their line manager.

Reports of bullying will be logged by class teachers and their line managers informed.

All reports will be taken seriously and will be followed up by a member of the Head of School / Behaviour Support Manager.

4 Our Support for Students

Students will be reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied and this is not their fault.

We will:

- Assure them that it was right to report the incident;
- Encourage them to talk about how they feel;
- Try to ascertain the extent of the problem;
- Engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved;
- Try to ensure that they feel safe;
- Discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe;
- Seek to provide the opportunity for restoration;
- Ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us;
- Affirm that bullying can be stopped and that our school will persist with intervention until it does;
- Interview the student (or students) involved in bullying separately;
- Listen to their version of events;
- Talk to anyone else who may have witnessed the bullying;
- Reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect bullying to stop;
- Seek a commitment to this end;
- Affirm that it is right for students to let us know when they are being bullied;
- Adopt a joint problem solving approach where this is appropriate; students will be involved to help us find solutions to the problem. This will encourage students involved to take responsibility for the emotional and social needs of others;
- Consider sanctions under our school's Behaviour/Discipline Policy;
- Advise students responsible for bullying that we will be checking to ensure that

- bullying stops; and ensure that those involved know that we have done so;
- Ensure that when bullying occurs, we will contact the parents of the students involved at an early stage;
- Keep records of incidents that we become aware of and how we responded to them;
- Follow up after incidents to check that the bullying has not started again. We will do this within two weeks, and again within the following half term.

When Tougher Measures are Needed:

If necessary, we will invoke the full range of sanctions that are detailed in the school's Discipline Policy. These include:

- Removal from the group;
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges;
- C3 (detention) or C4 (isolation);
- Withholding participation in school events that are not an essential part of the curriculum.

It also includes fixed term and permanent exclusion from school.

5 Our Responsibilities

Everyone within school is expected to:

- Act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another;
- Adhere to and to promote the objectives of this policy.

Students are expected to:

- Report all incidents of bullying and suspected incidents that victims may be afraid to report;
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and that nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.

Parents can help by:

- Supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures;
- Discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying or involved in some other way;
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.

6 Bullying Outside the School Premises

Schools are not responsible for bullying that occurs off the premises but we know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school. The bullying may be done by students from our own school, by students from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a student or parent tells us of bullying off the school premises we will, as appropriate:

- Talk to students about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school;
- Talk to the Principal of another school whose students are bullying;
- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses;
- Use community links to set up restorative meetings;
- Talk to the police.

7 Concerns, Complaints ... and Compliments

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying - and we would ask that this is brought to the Principal's notice. If he/she cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the Academy's Complaints Procedure.

We would also be pleased to receive Compliments – feedback from parents when things have gone well.

8 Evaluating Our Policy

We will evaluate our policy on an annual basis, taking into account the perceptions of all stakeholders.

9 Help Organisations

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm) 0845 1205 204

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 020 8772 9900

Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk