

## Anti-Bullying Policy

### Introduction

Bullying is a pattern of persistent hurtful behaviour that is intended to diminish another person. It can take many forms: physical, verbal or through non-verbal forms of communication. Online bullying is increasingly widespread. SEN pupils are up to twice as likely to suffer bullying. Bullying will make the victim feel uncomfortable, insecure or threatened. It is important to recognise that pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND pupils) are often particularly vulnerable and that additional barriers (e.g. communication barriers) may exist when seeking to determine whether bullying has taken place.

At Heritage we acknowledge that bullying destroys relationships and that it can, if unchecked, inflict significant psychological damage upon the victim. It also diminishes the one perpetrating it. Bullying is, therefore, the opposite of what we are seeking to create: an atmosphere and culture characterised by good relationships (See our Behaviour Policy).

Bullying will not be tolerated. It can immediately be treated as a Serious Incident and, therefore, liable to suspension or exclusion (see our Behaviour Policy). Bullying, including online bullying, which takes place outside of school between pupils who attend Heritage School will be presumed to fall within the scope of this policy, given the impact it will have in school.

### Staff Training

Bullying and strategies to minimise it, in accordance with this policy, will be reviewed at regular intervals as part of ongoing staff training at INSET days and on other occasions, including by email updates or through the use of Educare online training modules. This will include reference to pupils with protected characteristics and the particular risks of bullying they may face and how the school will respond to bullying in relation to a protected characteristic.

### Aims

- To work actively to build good relationships throughout the school - between staff, with and between pupils and with parents - and maintain a warm and harmonious atmosphere, where all people connected to the school feel respected, safe and valued. Toward this end, our PSHE programme plays an important role, particularly it's emphasis upon online safety (see Appendix A in our Acceptable and Safe Use of Screens Policy).
- To help all pupils understand that good relationships are central to one's own and everyone else's sense of well-being.
- To ensure that the whole school understands what bullying means and that it is deeply damaging to relationships.
- To make it clear that no bullying of any kind will be tolerated.
- To positively encourage all pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and its consequences.
- To minimise all forms of bullying.

### Characteristics of Bullies

- They tend to be more aggressive.
- They are usually popular.
- They are usually low academic achievers.
- They usually have relationships with parents characterised by poor communication and threats of violence.

- They feel a need to dominate others.
- They understand that they are bullying and its effects on others.
- They have little sympathy toward the person they are bullying or to witnesses

### **Characteristics of Those Who are Bullied**

- Passive/submissive type:
  - They tend to be anxious or insecure.
  - They may suffer with low self-esteem or negative feelings about themselves.
  - They may have few friends.
  - They do not feel able to retaliate
- Provocative type:
  - They can have a mix of anxious and aggressive behaviour patterns, with poor concentration.
  - They can have an ability to provoke groups of people, not just individuals.
  - They tend to have poor social skills, sometimes associated with special educational needs, which can result in provocative behaviour.
- Signs that a child is being bullied include:
  - Clothes or possessions are lost or damaged
  - Asking for money or starting to steal (to pay the bully)
  - Unexplained bruises, cuts, scrapes
  - Asking to be driven to school or other places
  - Stopping eating normally or coming home hungry
  - Truancy or saying he/she is going somewhere but does not turn up
  - Claiming to be unwell and not able to go out
  - Changing their usual routine
  - Becoming withdrawn
  - Starting to stammer
  - Starting to self-harm or threatening suicide
  - Crying themselves to sleep or having nightmares
- Effects of bullying
  - Feelings of deep unhappiness that can lead to depression, anxiety
  - Feelings of shame, inadequacy or weakness
  - Feelings of deep anger or bitterness
  - Illness including stomach aches, stress, insomnia, exhaustion
  - Low self-esteem affecting ability to form friendships or academic success

### **Whole School Preventative Strategies to Minimise Bullying**

- The values which underpin good relationships will be emphasised regularly in assemblies.
- Children will be taught strategies to help them deal with difficulties that they may encounter in their relationships with other pupils, e.g. through circle time, through our PSHE programme, or when teachers are responding to specific incidents in the classroom or playground.
- Children will be taught not to be a passive witness / bystander, and to understand why this might be tempting (fear, assuming another might step in).
- Parents will be encouraged to promote good behaviour in keeping with the values of the school, e.g. through Parent Information and Discussion Evenings.
- Pupils, parents and staff will be encouraged to talk openly about difficulties that may arise between pupils.

### **School Response to Specific Allegations of Bullying**

Pupils are encouraged to report bullying without feeling they are telling tales. Children in the Infant and Junior School are encouraged to report any incidents to their class teacher, or their Head of School (Infants or Juniors). Senior School pupils are encouraged to report incidents to their Tutor or any teacher they feel comfortable approaching or the Head of Seniors.

Staff will respond rapidly to allegations of bullying. All allegations of bullying will be carefully investigated to substantiate the facts as far as possible. Throughout an investigation, we stress that it is the bullying behaviour, rather than the person doing the bullying, that we disapprove of. We will avoid labelling a child as a 'bully'.

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who is aware of it. The member of staff involved should seek early resolution using these tactics:

- Those who have been bullied should be reassured and offered regular support for a reasonable length of time to restore and build on their confidence and self-esteem.
- Those who have bullied will be helped to reflect on their behaviour, the consequences and the need to change.
- Both bullied and bullying parties will be informed that the situation is being monitored closely and that we have zero tolerance for bullying.
- Support will be given to the bullying child to raise their self-esteem and develop appropriate social skills.
- Sanctions for bullying will be deployed in keeping with the Serious Incidents of our Behaviour Policy.
- No racist, homophobic, sexist language (e.g. language that focusses upon Protected Characteristics - see our Equalities Policy) will be tolerated and will immediately be considered a form of verbal bullying and dealt with firmly.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, staff should refer to our Safeguarding Policy and respond to a disclosure accordingly. Particular attention should be given to the possibility of peer-on-peer abuse, including sexting or sexual violence, and the need to extend support to both victim and perpetrator. It should be noted that staff managing a disclosure of sexting or sexual violence should never view or forward illegal images of a child.

### **Logging Incidents**

Incidents of poor behaviour, including bullying, are recorded on the appropriate Behaviour Log by the class or specialist teacher and then reported to Senior Managers. Senior Managers track patterns over time and monitor progress.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

A systematic recording of incidents will help us to review and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and practise.

### **Anti-Bullying Code**

The following code is used to help students talk about bullying with children who witness it or are a victim of it.

If you see someone being bullied:

- DON'T rush over and take the bully on.
- DO let a teacher or another adult in school know.
- DO try to be a friend to the person being bullied.
- DON'T be made to join in.
- DO try to help the bully stop bullying.

If you are being bullied:

- TELL a teacher or another adult in school.
- TELL your family.
- TAKE a friend with you if you are scared to tell someone by yourself.
- KEEP telling people until someone listens.

- DON'T blame yourself for what has happened.

Authorised by	Jason Fletcher
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