



Highsted Grammar School

Anti-Bullying Policy

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Highsted Grammar School recognises that there are a range of types of bullying, these include: physical, verbal, threats, victimisation, social exclusion, homophobic and online (cyberbullying). A definition of “What is bullying?” that the school considers most helpful is provided by Kent Safe Schools and is based on research from young people who identify bullying as behaviour that is:

- Harmful, carried out by an individual or group.
- Repetitive, wilful or persistent.
- Where there is an imbalance of power, leaving the person being bullied feeling defenceless.

Every student in Highsted Grammar School has the right to enjoy learning, free from intimidation both in school and the surrounding community. Our school community will not tolerate bullying behaviour of any kind including unkind actions or remarks, verbal taunting, racist behaviour and exclusion from groups. **All incidents of bullying/harassment of people through text or e-mail messages or social networking sites are taken seriously and dealt with as part of the school’s normal course of action on bullying.** Highsted recognises the potential vulnerability to homophobic bullying of students whose parents have chosen a different family lifestyle, or those students who are Lesbian/ Gay/ Bisexual/ Transsexual (Transgender). Action will be taken to support all such students, in line with the school’s anti-bullying policy, in a fair and indiscriminate manner. This ethos will be communicated throughout the school by the attitudes and actions of all members of the school community and through the PSHCEE programmes in each year group.

Aims

- To prevent bullying at Highsted and to act quickly and effectively on any concerns.
- **To raise student awareness of bullying behaviour and the school’s anti-bullying policy and to empower students to be able to address issues of bullying.**
- To challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for both bullied pupils and those who choose to bully and to build an anti-bullying ethos within the school.
- To be aware of areas of the school that pose a threat to students and to take appropriate action to reduce those threats.
- To effect changes to the school environment which may be necessary to negate bullying.
- To create a caring community where no student need fear intimidation, by promoting an ‘open-listening’ ethos and encouraging pupils to support one another by reporting all instances of bullying.
- **To utilise vertical tutoring and the house system as the key tool to eliminate bullying.**

DELIVERY OF THE POLICY

The policy is delivered through the taught curriculum, the informal curriculum and through extra-curricular activities. In the taught curriculum, the policy is delivered mainly through PSHCEE focus days. Tutor time plays an extremely important and effective part in the delivery of the policy.



The PSHCEE programmes address anti-bullying issues both directly and indirectly. The content of the programmes covers specific bullying behaviour and associated areas such as self-assertiveness and responsibility towards others. Students receive guidance on their rights and responsibilities in school, why people might choose to bully, what to do if they encounter a bully and what to expect from the school if they experience or are involved in bullying.

The teaching and learning styles **employed in PSHCEE focus days** such as group work, role-play and interactive learning, enable students to develop their self-awareness, responsibility towards others and respect for others. The development of these skills is crucial to the anti-bullying ethos of the school and the creation of a strong community atmosphere.

Throughout the school, students are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school such as **form prefects, sports captains, house point monitors, charity representatives etc.** These roles enhance the anti-bullying ethos of the school community.

Details of these topics and the resources used are contained in the PSHCEE resources folder. The house system also provides opportunities for the Heads of House to set up buddying and coaching schemes within the vertical tutor system or within the house.

Highsted recognises the essential role played by parents in all aspects of the school's life. Effective communication and co-operation is essential to the successful implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy. The school will communicate promptly with the parents of any student involved in a bullying incident, offering support and guidance as appropriate.

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

All staff in the school, including support staff, play an important role in communicating the anti-bullying ethos of the school community. Specific staff members have particular responsibilities regarding reporting and referral of bullying incidents. **Form tutors or Key Stage Learning Mentors should be the first point of contact, by students and parents. Heads of House and when necessary, the Assistant Headteacher for the appropriate Key Stage, will be consulted and, when necessary, SLG will also be involved in order to resolve incidents of bullying.**

Signs of bullying may include students becoming withdrawn; a decline in the standard of work; spurious illness; erratic attendance; isolation; a desire to remain with adults; general unhappiness/anxiety/fear; late arrival in school; concern at home; unexplained injuries; being hungry; increased crying/ nightmares/ bedwetting; changes in behaviour. Often a child can provide improbable excuses for any of these features.

- Anyone can and should report any bullying incident - whether a passer-by, a victim, or a bully. **If an incident is deemed to be persistent, repetitive or wilful, the school will report the matter formally.**
- Students will be informed that someone wishing to report an incident can approach any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable. If the matter is urgent - a student should approach the first adult they encounter.
- All incidents of bullying/harassment of people through text, e-mail messages or online are taken seriously and dealt with as part of the school's normal course of action on bullying.



- Highsted recognises the potential vulnerability to homophobic bullying of students whose parents have chosen a different family lifestyle or those students who are Lesbian/ Gay/ Bisexual/ Transsexual (Transgender). Action will be taken to support any such students, in line with the school's anti-bullying policy in a fair and indiscriminate manner.
- All staff will be ready and willing to deal with any incident that is brought to their attention. If appropriate a member of staff will handle the situation individually. If circumstances dictate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher will be consulted.
- "Minor" incidents should be considered to be those of one-off or thoughtless comments/actions, rather than persistent, deliberately cruel comments or actions.
- When consulted about a bullying incident, the member of staff handling the matter will interview separately the victim, the bully, and any witnesses in order to establish an accurate account of events. Written reports by those involved may be made – students should not sign these reports, but should be asked to write their name and form at the top. The bullying incident report sheet (Appendix A) should be completed.
- Parents of both the bully and the victim must be contacted at the earliest possible opportunity, to explain what has happened, what action has been taken and why.
- Sanctions for bullying will remain at the discretion of staff members. There will be a uniform but flexible approach to the decisions which will usually involve up to three members of staff **e.g. Form Tutor/Learning Mentor, or teacher approached, Head of House and the Key Stage Assistant Headteacher. All factors will be considered including the nature of the incident and any previous involvement in similar offensive acts. It is to be emphasised that whilst sanctions will be seriously imposed, at times counselling for the bully may be the more appropriate response. When appropriate Restorative Conferencing in line with the Kent Safe Schools Restorative Approaches Pilot can be used.** Exclusion will be considered for any student who persistently bullies, despite intervention and support.
- Mentors in the 6th form are regularly identified by the SEND Manager and used appropriately to support students. A Buddy system was introduced in 2011 to improve the transition process for year 7 students. Student mentors also operate a system to support Year 7 and 8 students in need of general support in managing the transition to secondary education. Heads of house set up a buddying system within form groups to support students. Cybermentors were trained in March 2009 in conjunction with Beatbullying. From September 2015 students from Key Stage 3-5 will be trained as 'Anti-bullying Ambassadors' using a programme developed by the Kent Youth County Council (KYCC). In addition, students from Key Stage 3-5 will be trained as 'Childnet Digital Leaders' using a programme developed by Childnet, which will support aspects of online bullying (cyberbullying).

GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS

All students at Highsted have a responsibility to tell a member of staff about any bullying that they know is taking place. This may include name calling, persistently leaving someone out of groups and/or unpleasant e-mails/text messages or social media 'posts'. In the light of this the school has participated annually in the Anti-Bullying Alliance national campaign held each year in November. Student voice prominently features within these weeks to strengthen the message that bullying is not acceptable at Highsted.

School Council representatives noted that students must tell someone if they are being bullied. **Students can tell a teacher, their Head of House, Key Stage Learning Mentor or School Nurse, Helen Sharman.** Students can ask to see Helen – they should ask their Head of House and an appointment will be made for them as soon as Helen has space. Urgent requests are always dealt with as quickly as possible. Your discussions with the



Helen are confidential – unless you raise something that Helen thinks places you in immediate risk of significant harm. In these instances, she will always talk with you about what needs to be done next. Many students in the school have seen Helen, for a wide range of things to do with school and family concerns, and have spoken very highly of her advice.

Staff will deal with all reports of bullying very carefully – they know that you are worried about the person who is bullying you finding out that you have spoken to someone. However, the bully relies on the fact that you will be too scared to tell someone and may even threaten you with what they will do if you do tell someone. This gives them a feeling of more power over you. Tell someone at school, or someone at home, so that action can be taken. **People who persistently bully or engage in serious bullying incidents will be excluded from the school community, particularly if they threaten you or hurt you.** This is not tolerated at our school and serious action will be taken. Another way to look at this is that the person who is doing the bullying needs help to stop bullying. They can only get this help if you tell someone what is going on.

The School Council has also emphasised that if you know someone is being bullied, you must tell someone. If you don't tell someone, you leave someone in a very upsetting and difficult position, with no-one to help them.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

If a parent thinks their child is being bullied they should contact the school immediately. They should approach the child's Form Tutor, Head of House or Assistant Headteacher. In the event that none of these is available they should ask for another member of SLG. Parents should also encourage their child to talk to a trusted teacher about the bullying incident, to one of the Key Stage Learning Mentors or the School Nurse, Helen Sharman. Parents wanting their child to meet with Helen should contact their Head of House.

The school's normal course of action can be followed from this point.

RESOURCES

Inset training is available on many aspects of managing bullying in schools. External courses are offered when available to interested staff. Members of the Pastoral Team possess much information on all aspects of bullying and many related issues.

Suggested Key Resources for Staff

DfE (2014) Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies

Tattum, D (Ed) (1994) "Understanding and Managing Bullying" Heinemann Educational

Caprez, E (2004) "Real Life Issues: Bullying" – a pupil resource in the LRC

www.bullying.co.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.cybermentors.org.uk

www.ncb.org.uk/aba

www.parentlineplus.org.uk

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Bullying

www.childline.org.uk

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Helplines for Pupils

Childline: 0800 1111

Kidscape Helpline: 020 7730 3300 (open Monday to Wednesday 9.30am – 5.30pm)

Samaritans: 08457 909090

Helplines for Parents

Kidscape helpline for parents of children who are being bullied. Open Monday – Friday
10.00am – 4.00pm

Tel: 08451 204 204

Parentline Plus

Tel: 0808 800 2222

Review

The policy and its application will be reviewed annually by staff, pupils and parents

People Responsible

Supervision of the student mentors is carried out by the Key Stage Learning Mentor, Head of House and SEND Manager.

Overseen by the SLG in general but specifically Mr Quinn (Assistant Headteacher /Designated Safeguarding Lead).

NB: Please see the 'Racial Equality Policy and Procedure' for details on policy regarding racially motivated incidents.

Reviewed:

June 2001

June 2002

Reviewed and Updated:

January 2003; January 2005, Updated June 2006. Reviewed July 2008. Reviewed and updated July 2009. Reviewed 2010. Reviewed and updated 2011. Reviewed and updated 2012.

Reviewed and Updated: June 2014

Reviewed and updated: July 2015



Your Name

Highsted Grammar School Bullying Record Sheet

Date

Alleged bully's name(s) & Form:	Nature of bullying Tick all that apply	Frequency of the behaviour	Action taken Please tick all that apply	Outcomes Please identify all that apply
<p>Alleged victim's name(s) & Form:</p> <p>Date reported to you: Where & when did the incident happen?</p> <p>Has this behaviour happened before?</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes – once</p> <p>Yes – more than once</p> <p>Witnesses:</p>	<p>Physical</p> <p>Verbal (e.g. swearing, unkind words, belittling effort, etc...)</p> <p>Excluding others</p> <p>Online (Cyber bullying)</p> <p>Encouraging others to do any of the above</p> <p>Racial incident</p> <p>Homophobic</p> <p>Other (please specify)</p>	<p>First time</p> <p>Second time</p> <p>Third time or more</p>	<p>Encouraging friends to support</p> <p>Sanction (please specify)</p> <p>Restorative meeting with students</p> <p>Restorative meeting with students and parents</p> <p>Other (please specify)</p>	<p>No further incidents reported so far and victim seems happier</p> <p>No further incidents reported but victim still seems down</p> <p>No impact -Problem persists</p> <p>Situation still being monitored</p> <p>Other (please specify)</p>

Reportable Bullying includes any behaviour which is harmful to the recipient's physical or mental wellbeing; is repetitive or persistent and done on purpose; and where there is an imbalance of power, leaving the recipient feeling defenceless. It is not usually a 'one-off' incident, but you might include a child/group above if you can see a pattern of one off incidents by that child/group against a range of children.