HOLYWELL CHURCH OF ENGLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy for Holywell School

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Overview

As a Church of England School, our Anti-Bullying Policy is underpinned by our Behaviour for Learning Policy. Both policies are rooted in our distinctively Christian character and our core beliefs which are Gospel inspired and which support the school's Vision:

- to be **an outstanding Christian learning community**
- where **everyone is valued as a unique individual**
- and where **everyone feels safe**.
- We will aim **to be the best we can possibly** be,
- to **treat others as we wish to be treated**
- and **to make a positive difference** to our community and beyond.
- We strive to be **peaceful problem-solvers** with open minds and hearts,
- **living God's love**
- and **being kind**.

Aims

The specific aims of the Anti-Bullying Policy are:

- To ensure that we have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying
- To ensure that practices and processes for dealing with bullying behaviours are clear, just and fair
- To ensure that practices and processes are consistently, insistently and persistently applied

We aim to work towards the prevention of bullying by creating a safe environment in which everyone feels safe and is able to enjoy and achieve. We aim to create an environment which promotes trust, confidence, justice and fairness for all, by:

- Promoting effective and positive models of behaviour
- Actively implementing the schools' equal opportunities policy
- Providing students with strategies for dealing with bullying / intimidating situations
- Ensuring a clear understanding of what bullying is (and knowing the difference between disagreements, conflict, disharmony and bullying)
- Noticing when bullying happens

- Creating an environment where students and adults can raise bullying issues confidently and safely and where students are encouraged to talk about concerns
- Reporting all incidents of bullying
- Dealing with bullying quickly and effectively when it occurs
- Adhering to the school agreed procedures for monitoring and recording of incidents of bullying.
- Involving parents actively in solutions and outcomes
- Identifying appropriate support programmes for students and their parents/carers
- Incorporating anti-bullying strategies into Individual Education Plans (IEP) and Annual Review targets

DEFINITIONS: Disagreements, Conflict and Bullying

Sometimes, things go wrong and, as in all communities, there are times of disagreements, conflict and disharmony. We always seek peaceful solutions to difficult situations and aim for reconciliation and forgiveness. Where there are issues, we deal with these as unique incidents and act firmly and fairly to resolve the issue. We do however, make a distinction between disagreements, conflict and bullying. At Holywell School we use the following definition of Bullying:

Bullying
is behaviour which is:
intentional,
deliberately hurtful
and repeated over a period of time.

We take bullying seriously. We believe it is everybody's responsibility to deal with incidents of bullying in line with this policy, when they occur.

Bullies and victims share many of the characteristics common in the bullying equation. These include low self-esteem; under-achievement; feelings of rejection and/or isolation; and a genuine sense of being different from the majority. The feelings of power generated by the act of bullying are often an expression of inadequacy and insecurity.

TYPES OF BULLYING

Bullying can take many forms, but the main types are:
- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings, any use of violence
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks, sarcasm, spreading rumours
- Emotional – tormenting, manipulation, bribery, threatening gestures
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, intimidating looks or gestures, being made the subject of malicious rumours,
- Cyber - Setting up malicious websites, sending malicious e mails or text messages on mobile phones.

Specific targeted types of bullying:

Racist Bullying – a student is targeted for representing a group, and attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Incidents can include:
- Verbal abuse by name calling, racist jokes and offensive language
- Physical threats or attacks
- Wearing provocative badges or insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines
- Inciting others to behave in a racist way
- Racist graffiti or other written insults

Sexist bullying
Sexist bullying is based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual Bullying This is bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. In general sexual bullying is characterised by:
- Abusive name calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content
- In its most extreme form, sexual assault

Homophobic Bullying
Homophobic bullying is where students or adults who have disclosed their homosexuality are repeatedly and deliberately victimised. Homophobic bullying can include:
- Spreading rumours
- Social isolation
- Text messaging
- Frightening looks
- In addition to more obvious forms of bullying such as name calling

Transphobic bullying
Transphobic bullying is based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to traditional gender roles. "Transphobia" is an irrational fear, hatred or abuse of trans individuals which is based on actual or perceived gender identity. Any individual who is described as being transphobic may deliberately and directly harass or disrespect someone who is trans, e.g. by using the incorrect pronoun purposely. Transphobic incidents are often emotionally harmful and are dealt with as seriously as other bullying incidents within our school.

Cyber-bullying
Cyberbullying may be defined as 'the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person'. This typically involves sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children and adults may be reluctant to admit to being the victims of cyberbullying. It can take a number of different forms:
- threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant
- messages), sexting (e.g sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, primarily between mobile phones)
- vilification/defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private
- information/images and 'trolling' (abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online).

It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

In general, cyber-bullying is bullying via electronic communication devices, however it differs from other forms of bullying in several significant ways:
- Cyber-bullying can facilitate a far more extreme invasion of personal space.
- Cyberbullying can take place at any time and intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe and personal.

- The potential for anonymity on the part of the bully. This can be extremely distressing for the victim.
- The potential for the bully to play very rapidly to a larger audience so the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying.
- Through the knowledge that the data is in the world-wide domain, disproportionately amplifying the negative effect on the victim, even though the bully may feel his / her actual actions had been no worse than conventional forms of bullying
- The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages as more people get drawn in as accessories. By passing on a humiliating picture or message a bystander becomes an accessory to the bullying.
- The profile of the bully and target can be different to other forms of bullying as cyberbullying can take place between peers and across generations.
- Teachers can be victims and age and size are not important.
- Many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence so it is important the victim saves the information.

If cyber-bullying occurs, we use the simple mantra: STOP, BLOCK and TELL:
- STOP the communication and take a screen shot of the bullying behaviours on line.
- BLOCK the perpetrator – unfriend them, close the link down, delete them from your social media group.
- TELL an adult immediately – or, if it is outside of school, report the abuse either via the social media safeguarding processes or through CEOP – Child Exploitation and Online Protection Service: https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/.

Special Educational Needs

Students with Special Educational Needs may not be able to articulate experiences as well as other children; however, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific difficulties or disability. (It should not be forgotten that any child may experience bullying and that anything that can be seen as different by peers may potentially lead to bullying ie Able and Talented students, Children who are Looked After, etc.)

PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING BULLYING - STAFF

Where bullying incidents are identified, reported and/or suspected staff should:
- Establish whether the behaviour is actually bullying (ie. Is it repeated, deliberate and intended to harm)
- Record details
- Listen carefully to students and provide opportunities for them to express their views and opinions formally and informally
- When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:
    - The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately
    - Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the students interviewed, including electronic communication
    - If a student is injured, members of staff take the student immediately to the school nurse for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
    - A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
    - Witness statements are taken where possible – especially for serious incidents
    - If appropriate, all parties (bully, victim, witnesses) are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
    - Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgmental at this stage

- o Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete
- o All concerned students are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other students

Where bullying has taken place, the following processes take place:
- Use peer mediation and restorative practices to resolve conflict between students and establish a behaviour agreement where the bully guarantees no further antagonism or intimidation.
- Involve parents.
- Provide individual support and practical advice.
- Monitor the situation and ensure that there are no further incidents or repercussions.
- Due to the potential for sexist, homophobic, transphobic and sexual bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

Possible consequences for bullies include:
- Internal isolation
- External fixed term exclusion
- Student apology (verbal, written) and guarantee that the bullying will cease.
- Help for the bully to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.
- Reconciliation between bully and victim and genuine apology from the bully. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion is used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully. However, restorative practices and empathy are very effective ways of ensuring that the bully does not repeat the same unacceptable behaviours.
- "Voluntarily" completing an act of kindness towards the "victim".
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Permanent exclusion.

When any incident of bullying has been recorded, parents of both the perpetrator and the student experiencing the bullying should be contacted by their class tutors/SLT immediately to inform them of the incident and alert them to the fact that the school is aware of the problem and will be addressing it. The incident should be logged on SIMS. Parents / carers will be kept informed throughout any investigation of bullying and notified of the outcomes. Where bullying incidents are proved, they are always logged as a C8 – our most serious type of misconduct and there will always be a high-level consequence.

SUPPORT FOR STAFF
Support for staff is available through:
- The Induction Programme – with a nominated mentor.
- Continuing Professional Development – in-house and external

PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING BULLYING – STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Students should make sure that they have adults with whom they can confide – they need adults in school and outside of school and should develop a network of trusted adults. If students and/or parents think that bullying is taking place, students and parents should:

- Establish whether the behaviour is actually bullying (ie. Is it repeated, deliberate and intended to harm?)
- Record details (write up details or report to a member of staff for recording)
- Report the bullying incident to a trusted member of staff (this will usually be the form tutor, Head of Year, Well-Being Co-ordinator, SENDCo or member of the Senior Leadership Team) immediately! Do not suffer in silence! Be brave and talk to someone: "Everyone has the right to feel safe all of the time" and "We can talk with someone about anything even if it feels awful or small."
- Be prepared to discuss the incident with the bully and a member of staff to agree a resolution
- Monitor the situation and ensure that there are no further incidents or repercussions.
- If there are further incidents and/or repercussions, these should be reported immediately

How to spot bullying

We hope that all students at Holywell School have at least 5 trusted adults in school with whom they could talk if they were being bullied. These adults would then act on their behalf and be their advocates for a rapid and peaceful solution. Sometimes however, students are frightened to come forward. We may notice some of the following behaviours:

- Being frightened of walking to or from school
- Not wanting to go on the school / public bus
- Change to their usual routine
- Beg to be driven to school
- Being anxious and withdrawn
- Attempting or threatening suicide
- Crying themselves to sleep at night / nightmares.
- Feeling ill in the mornings
- Truanting
- Beginning to do poorly at school
- Coming home with books / clothes torn
- Having possessions go missing
- Asking for money or stealing money
- Continually losing pocket money
- Unexplained cuts / bruises
- Coming home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becoming withdrawn, lacking in confidence
- Becoming aggressive and unreasonable
- Bullying other children / siblings
- Giving improbable excuses for any of the above.

These behaviours may be indicators of bullying, however, they may also be indicators of other issues … they should always be investigated and never ignored.

Follow up support

The progress of both the bully and the victim are monitored by their form tutors. One-on-one sessions to discuss how they are progressing may be appropriate.

If appropriate, follow-up correspondence is arranged with parents/carers one month after the incident.

Students who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:
- Being listened to
- Having an immediate opportunity to meet with their head of year or a member of staff of their choice
- Being reassured
- Being offered continued support
- Being offered counselling, where appropriate

Students who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:
- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Reflecting on why they became involved
- Understanding what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents/carers

Bullying outside of school

Teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, the teacher can only discipline the student on school premises, or elsewhere when the student is under the lawful control of the member of staff.

The headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

The headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police or the anti-social behaviour coordinator of the action taken against a student.

If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed.

<u>**Review**</u>

This policy will be reviewed every two years by SLT and the Ethos Committee of the Board of Governors. The governing body may, however, review the policy earlier than this if they receive recommendations on how the policy may be improved.

Cross reference this policy with the following policies:

1) <u>**Equality, Access and Community Cohesion**</u>
2) <u>**Complaints**</u>
3) <u>**Behaviour for Learning**</u>
4) <u>**Marking and Feedback Policy**</u>
5) <u>**Curriculum**</u>

This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to the following:
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998