



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

BRAMHALL HIGH SCHOOL

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REVIEW DATE: Sept 2022
APPROVED DATE:

Our vision at Bramhall High School is for all students to maximise their potential

Our Aims are:

1. To make learning our priority
2. To ensure all students are safe and that barriers to learning are removed
3. To ensure that everyone is challenged and supported so that they can maximise their potential.

Our school's Anti-bullying policy supports the aims set out in the school vision, in particular helping to ensure all students are safe and that barriers to learning are removed.

Bramhall's statement of intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a safe, supported and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and be clear in the knowledge that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening has a duty to tell any adult or any member of the student leadership team at our school.

What is bullying?

We define bullying as any behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally.

Bullying is, therefore:

- Repetitive and persistent. Bullying is usually experienced as part of a continuous pattern and it can be extremely threatening and intimidating even when very subtle. Nevertheless, sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time.
- Intentionally harmful. The act of bullying intends harm to another individual although occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are present.
- Involves an imbalance of power. Bullying leaves someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it. In some cases, an imbalance of power may mean

that bullying crosses the threshold into abuse. This would require implementation of safeguarding procedures.

Methods of bullying

- **Physical** – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- **Verbal** - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling etc.
- **Emotional** – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion etc.
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, sexualised or gendered abusive language, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate content etc.
- **Online /cyber** – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion etc.
- **Indirect** – encouraging others to exclude, name-call or threaten etc. Can include the exploitation of individuals.

Hate crime: is a crime, typically one involving violence, that is motivated (or perceived to be motivated) by prejudice on the basis of a person's protected characteristics which include:

Ethnicity/race – prejudice based on ethnic origin, skin colour, nationality, culture, language.

Religion/Faith/Belief – prejudice based on a person's religion, faith or beliefs.

Sexual orientation – prejudice based on a person's sexuality, or perceived sexuality.

Gender Identity – prejudice based on how a person identifies. E.g. transgender, perceived transgender, someone who does not identify with gender norms or stereotypes or who has a transgender family member.

Disability/SEN – prejudice based on disability, special needs or health conditions. This applies to real or perceived disabilities, special needs or health conditions.

Hate incident: At Bramhall High School we aim to avoid the criminalisation of children, believing that education is key to ensuring children:

- - know how to keep themselves and others safe;
- - are respectful and tolerant;
- - understand and embody our shared British Values.
- A hate incident is any non-crime incident which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to have been motivated by hostility or prejudice based on any of a person's protected characteristics. In our school all incidents of hate are unacceptable and, whilst there is no statutory duty to do so, we share information relating to hate incidents with the Local Authority. In some circumstances, information relating to incidents that may be criminal in nature, will be shared with police or other agencies as appropriate.

The effects of bullying

Children and young people who are more susceptible to being bullied

Some children and young people seem to be more susceptible to being bullied and may need additional support. Children and young people who fall into this category include those who:

- have a physical disability and/or learning difficulty
- have experienced abuse or neglect
- are, or have been, looked after by foster carers or the local authority
- have witnessed domestic violence
- are refugees or asylum seekers
- are members of faith communities (in particular those who wear clothing that marks them out as members of their faith)
- are members of the travelling community
- are lesbian, bisexual, gay transgender, or those who are questioning their identity
- are young carers
- are overweight
- have other physical or linguistic characteristics that are perceived to be different from the norm
- have transferred schools, in particular mid-year; have had long periods of illness or spent extended time overseas
- have low self-esteem
- lack self-confidence
- are isolated or socially excluded
- live in families perceived as 'different' from the norm

Risk Factors Associated with Bullying Behaviour

Children and young people's behaviour is influenced by a number of factors that include their overall development, their environment and the behaviour they learn from adults who care for them.

Triggers for bullying behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be triggered by a number of factors; these may include:

- beliefs, values and prejudices;
- emotional or behavioural disorders affected by personal and home circumstances including witnessing or being subject to abuse and/or neglect;
- difficulty in using social and emotional skills e.g. lack of empathy, low self-esteem, underdeveloped ability to resolve conflict/problems through discussion;
- family influences e.g. parental modelling of bullying behaviour, parents encouraging their children to respond aggressively to conflict in an effort to prevent them from being bullied

Changes in Behaviour Associated With Being a Victim of Bullying

A child or young person usually gives an indication that things are not going well for them, usually through a change in their behaviour or emotional state. Sometimes this change may be a result of being bullied. The list below details changes in behaviour, one or more of which may be displayed by young people who are victims of bullying. Children and young people may:

- lack concentration on schoolwork or begin to perform poorly at school
- be intermittently absent from school
- be reluctant to walk to or from school or to any place that they may normally go; wanting a lift or wanting you to come with them
- want to change their usual routine
- be reluctant to talk about school
- not want to leave the house
- want to move or change schools
- become withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- lose, increase or change in appetite
- become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- have unexplained cuts, bruises or other injuries
- complain of headaches/stomach aches frequently
- start to stammer, when they did not do this before
- cry themselves to sleep, change their sleeping pattern or have nightmares
- start bedwetting

- cry or get angry with no clear explanation
- attempt or threaten to commit suicide or run away
- come home with torn clothes
- have possessions that are damaged or 'go missing'
- ask for or steal money on a regular basis (to pay the bully) or come home hungry because dinner money has been taken
- bully other children or siblings
- be afraid to tell you what's wrong
- be afraid to use the internet or mobile phone (when previously this was not the case) or be nervous or jumpy when cyber messages are received
- become clingy towards their parent or carer
- have a sudden change in social group, i.e. does not wish to talk about or play with certain friends give improbable excuses for any of the above.

Our response

Our staff and student leadership know to take issues of bullying seriously.

The school will respond promptly and effectively to all issues of bullying.

The objectives of this policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Staff Principles

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.

Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying.

Unpleasantness from one student towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident.

Staff always respect students' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless the student has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern.

If a member of staff believes a student is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

Follow-up support is given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

Procedures

1. Minor incidents will be reported to the victim's form tutor, who investigates the incident, sets appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and informs the head of year in writing of the incident and outcome.

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:

- The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed separately
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the students being 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.
- A witness is used for serious incidents.
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and 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 judgemental at this stage.
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not assigning blame until the investigation is complete.
- All concerned students are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other students.

2. Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic, sexual, etc 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.

Sanctions

If the headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the victim will be protected and supported, and the perpetrator will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.

The headteacher or deputy headteacher will inform the student of the type of sanction to be used in this instance, which will be proportionate to the incident(s) e.g. detentions or service-based activities, and future sanctions if the bullying continues.

If possible, the headteacher or deputy headteacher will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the perpetrator. 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 will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

The perpetrator is made to realise, by speaking once per week with their form tutor, that their behaviour was not acceptable and that it is unacceptable to behave in a manner that causes distress to others and that their behaviour must change.

Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

The head of year informally monitors the students involved over the next half-term.

Support

For a month after the initial complaint of bullying, the head of year, form tutor or pastoral support team will hold an informal discussion, on a weekly basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped.

The head of year or a member of the pastoral support team will hold a formal meeting, on a monthly basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped – these formal meetings will continue to take place once a month until the designated adult and victim are confident that the bullying has stopped.

If necessary, group dynamics will be broken up by members of staff by assigning places in classes and during unstructured time if required.

The victim will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

The victim will be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school club or activity.

The school, particularly the DSL, will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional therapy.

The school will acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. Perpetrators will be required to attend a mandatory counselling session, to assist with any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

The school will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

Follow-up support

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

If appropriate, follow-up correspondence will be arranged with parents one month after the incident.

Students who have been bullied will be 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 been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the DSL will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to CAMHS.

Where a student who has been the victim of bullying has developed such complex needs that alternative provision is required, the student, their parents, the headteacher and DSL will meet to discuss the use of alternative provision.

Students who have bullied others will be supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents and carers

In cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that the perpetrator cannot successfully reintegrate back into the school, the headteacher and DSL will look to transfer the student to another mainstream school with the consent and involvement of the student's parents.

Restorative Approaches and bullying

All staff at Bramhall have undergone training in restorative approaches. By this we mean that to punish actions without enabling students to reach an understanding of why their bullying behaviour is unacceptable and the effect their actions have had on others is not a way forward in preventing the same thing happening again. Staff and

students may be requested to engage in a restorative approach to help resolve an issue of bullying. On occasions this may also entail family involvement.

What is a restorative approach?

- It's about addressing the needs of victims and perpetrators
- It's focused on harm caused rather than assigning blame
- It's about accountability and inclusion
- It's about commitment to relationships and rebuilding relationships

Roles within school to prevent/stop bullying

Role	Responsibility
The local governing body is responsible for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring the overall implementation of this policy. • Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards diversity. • Ensuring the school is inclusive. • Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing the implementation of this policy in light of these.
The Headteacher & Deputy Headteacher is responsible for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping a Bullying Report Form of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected. • Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented. • Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

All school leaders are responsible for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that staff within their teams and the resources they use do not stereotype or are discriminatory.
Heads of year are responsible for:	Tracking and analysing bullying data that pertains to their year group.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying trends in data and implementing appropriate measures to tackle issues. • Managing and implementing proactive measures to mitigate the risk of bullying occurring. • Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary. • Providing a point of contact for Students and parents, when more serious bullying incidents occur.
<p>Teachers and Form Tutors are responsible for:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being alert to social dynamics in their class. • Being available for students who wish to report bullying. • Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents. • Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the student's heads of year of such observations. • Refraining from any stereotyping e.g. gender, racial etc when dealing with bullying. • Understanding the composition of student groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying. • Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a student for support.
<p>Pastoral support staff are responsible for:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering emotional support to victims of bullying. • Alerting the relevant heads of year regarding any incidents of bullying. • Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary. • Managing and implementing proactive measures to mitigate the risk of bullying occurring.

<p>Parents and carers are responsible for:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing their child's head of year or form tutor if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.
Students are responsible for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying. • Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying. • Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other Students in incidents. • Behaving in a manner that is respectful and not discriminatory nor threatening towards others. • Keeping evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying.

Further advice

www.bullying.org

www.bullying.co.uk

www.childline.org.uk

Cyber bullying and on line safety

www.kidscape.org.uk/cyberbullying

Review date

September 2022