



Challenge, Equality & Opportunity

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY 2024-25

In this policy, the term 'parents' refers to parents and carers of children on roll at the school.

Definition

At Havannah First School, any targeted behaviour, usually persistent and repeated over time, which is an illegitimate use of power by one or more persons with the deliberate intention of hurting others, physically, emotionally or psychologically, is seen as bullying behaviour.

There is no legal definition of bullying. The Government information on Bullying at School defines bullying as behaviour that is:

- usually repeated
- Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening behaviour teasing
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, use of derogatory language
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Extortion - demanding money/goods with threats
- Online – use of social media, messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic or biphobic - bullying because of sexuality or perceived sexuality
- Transphobic – because of gender identity or perceived gender identity

Rationale

All children have the right to an education, which is free from humiliation, oppression and abuse. It is our responsibility to ensure that our school provides a caring and protective environment for all our pupils. We believe that this right is extended to staff, parents and everyone in our school community.

Our policy and practice seeks to raise awareness of bullying, to develop a shared understanding about what constitutes bullying behaviour, to do everything possible to prevent bullying and to deal effectively and appropriately with bullying if and when it occurs.

In our school community:

- Everybody has the right to be treated with respect
- Everybody has the right to feel happy and safe
- No-one deserves to be a target of bullying
- Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving

National research has shown that some groups of pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying these include pupils with SEND, looked after children, pupils from minority ethnic groups or faiths, young carers, LGBT pupils and those perceived to be LGBT. At Havannah First School, we are committed to the inclusion and happiness of all of our children.

Aims, beliefs and expectations

1. The school expects every member of the school community to behave in a considerate way towards others.
2. We aim to provide an environment where all members of the school community feel accepted, safe, valued and respected.
3. In following Equal Opportunities practice and in being a No Outsiders school, we operate a policy of 'equal value' regardless of position, ability, faith, race or gender. This policy is applied consistently across the school.
4. We believe that bullying is wrong, that it is damaging and that it can potentially be very serious. We therefore do all that we can to prevent it by developing a school ethos in which there is a shared understanding that bullying is always unacceptable.
5. We are committed to supporting our young children as they learn to establish and maintain positive, respectful and mutually supportive relationships with others.
6. We are committed to supporting staff and other adult members of the school community to be able to maintain positive, respectful and mutually supportive relationships with others.
7. We know and understand that children cannot learn well when they are anxious or feeling stressed.

Guidelines for good practice

At Havannah First School we:

1. Recognise that preventing and raising awareness of bullying is an essential way to keeping incidents in our school to a minimum.
2. Acknowledge and reward children whose behaviour meets expectations, improves or who show kindness and consideration towards others.
3. Develop the use of learning opportunities provided by assemblies, Circle Time and PSHE to raise awareness of our Golden Rules and to discuss what we mean by acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
4. Through our professional discussions and in talking with children and with parents acknowledge and recognise the difference between bullying and incidents of inappropriate behaviour.
5. Are aware that bullying can take many forms.
6. Recognise that some children and groups of children are more vulnerable to being bullied or using bullying behaviour against others.

7. View bullying as a safeguarding issue.
8. Teach children that any act of bullying or 'hurting behaviour' (physical and emotional) is unacceptable and should always be reported to an adult in school.
9. Ensure that key areas in school and times during the day are identified as being potential 'trouble spots' and are supervised appropriately.
10. Are alert to early signs of distress which **may** indicate that a child has been, or is being, bullied. These may include withdrawn behaviour, deterioration in work, spurious illness, playing in isolation, unusually anxious to remain close to adults, erratic attendance without valid reason, general unhappiness/anxiety/fear, onset of bed wetting and other worrying signs reported by parents.
11. Treat seriously and investigate all acts of bullying or allegations of bullying. This will involve discussion with all parties involved – victim, alleged bully, witnesses etc.
12. Report any serious misbehaviour which may be bullying to Ms McKenna or Mr Burnett immediately.
13. Record on CPOMS any incidents and concerns (alerting both Ms McKenna and Mr Burnett).
14. Ensure that a member of staff shares concerns with parents of all children involved.
15. Work closely with parents in actively discouraging bullying and in dealing appropriately with incidents when they occur.
16. Where an incident is proven, sanctions will be applied in accordance with the Behaviour and Relationships Policy. Both the victim and the bully have a right and a need for appropriate guidance and support.

In promoting our whole-school anti-bullying strategy, we all:

- Take every opportunity to encourage the qualities of caring and nurturing
- In every area of the school establish and maintain a caring, co-operative ethos with an emphasis on mutual respect for others
- Support children in establishing and maintaining positive friendships
- Ensure adequate supervision of activities in and outside of the classroom
- Always take bullying, or allegations of bullying, seriously
- Avoid inadvertently give permission for bullying with responses like "You must have done something to deserve it" "It will sort itself out" "Don't tell tales"
- Reward non-aggressive behaviour in school
- Make clear to parents the unacceptability of bullying and aggressive acts towards others i.e. no 'hit him back' attitude
- Help children to see other points of view
- Make children aware of children who may be feeling shy, upset or lonely
- Give support to both the victim and the bully
- Find out why children are bullying as a measure of support and prevention of future episodes
- Ask for help when we need it

ACTION AGAINST BULLYING – PRACTICAL GUIDANCE AND TIPS FOR ALL STAFF

Immediate response

- Remain calm and react without emotion.
- Take the incident or report seriously.
- Take action as quickly as possible.
- Think hard about whether your action needs to be private or public, who are the pupils involved?
- Reassure the victim(s); don't make them feel inadequate or foolish.
- Offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim(s).

- Make it clear that you disapprove.
- Encourage the aggressor to be empathetic.
- Follow the Behaviour and Relationships policy at all times and with all parties.

AVOID

- Being over protective.
- Making judgements.
- Keeping the whole incident secret because you have dealt with it.
- Trying to hide the incident from the parents of the children involved.
- Calling in the parents without having a constructive plan to offer.

DO

- Get to know all the children involved and ensure that positive relationships are established.
- Give a clear and positive message to everyone involved.
- Encourage witnesses and victims to speak out.
- Listen.
- Encourage the victim to help him/herself. Silence and secrecy undermine the authority of the school and affirm the power of the aggressor.

Roles and responsibilities

The role of the class teacher

- Class teachers have high expectations of the children in terms of behaviour. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that school rules and values are promoted to their children and that their classroom culture reflects the fully inclusive, No Outsiders, whole-school ethos.
- Promote a caring ethos which gives children a voice and access to help and support either through adults, issues boxes, posters and helplines.
- Teachers ensure coverage and effective delivery of the No Outsiders programme.
- Class teachers will treat all concerns as safeguarding issues and report all concerns and incidents on CPOMS and talk to Ms McKenna and Mr Burnett.
- Class teachers are responsible for treating all children equally and fairly and for establishing in the classroom a climate of trust and respect for all. When teachers praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children the self-esteem of individuals is raised and bullying behaviour becomes less likely.
- When dealing with allegations or proven incidents of bullying, class teachers should act in accordance with this policy and seek advice/support from senior members of staff as appropriate.

The role of the headteacher

- The headteacher is responsible for ensuring the safety and welfare of all children in the school.
- It is the responsibility of the headteacher to set the culture and ethos of the school and to promote its policy of equal value which recognises and celebrates the fact that everybody (adults and pupils) contributes towards and shares responsibility for the success, happiness and well being of the community. When children feel that they are valued and supported and that they belong to a listening and welcoming school, bullying is less likely to be part of their behaviour.
- The headteacher is responsible for implementing the school's anti-bullying strategy consistently throughout the school. This involves ensuring that all staff are familiar with the policy and procedures and that they know how to deal with allegations or incidents of bullying when they occur.
- The headteacher decides if it is necessary to inform and seek the support of parents.

- The headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day monitoring of the implementation of this policy. She reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategy and about any associated issues or matters of concern.
- The headteacher supports staff in the implementation of this policy and, where appropriate, ensures access to training where it is available.
- The Headteacher will work with parents and staff actively and as swiftly as possible to investigate any reports of bullying.
- The Headteacher will determine whether bullying incidents are racially motivated, homophobic, child on child abuse or other categories of bullying and will report these appropriately.

The role of parents

The school values and enjoys working in partnership with parents. We provide many opportunities for parents to communicate with school and we try to build a supportive dialogue between home and school. We hope that children receive consistent messages at home and in school about how to behave towards others and also that they are helped to establish and maintain positive relationships with other children.

- Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy. In doing so they should actively encourage their child to interact with others in a pleasant and friendly way and to recognise that hurting others in any way is unacceptable.
- Parents should help their child to understand that, although it may not be bullying, they must speak to a school adult if they have been hurt or are feeling upset or worried in school.
- Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should discuss their concerns rationally and calmly with the class teacher or with the headteacher, remembering that both school and home must work together towards the same outcome: the safety and well-being of the child/children.
- When school has to use sanctions, parents should support these actions.
- If parents have any concerns they should initially contact the school. If the concerns remain after discussion with the headteacher they may raise them with governors in accordance with procedures set out in the School's Complaints Policy.

The role of governors

- The governing body are ultimately responsible for the effective implementation of the School's Anti-bullying Strategy although the headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the policy.
- The governing body gives full support to the headteacher in the interpretation and implementation of this policy. It is in full agreement with the aims, expectations and guidelines contained within the policy which has been formally approved by the board.
- The governing body will respond within 10 days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. Following such a request the Chairperson of the governing body will notify the headteacher of the allegation and ask her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to the designated governors. Further consultations with parents will be conducted in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedures and in line with Local Authority guidance.

Conclusion

The safety and well being of pupils is of the utmost importance. In promoting our school as a safe and caring community, we respond positively and effectively to any allegation or evidence of bullying. This policy has been written with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

Policy reviewed September 2010, September 2011, September 2012, September 2014, sept 2016, Sept 2018, Sept 20, November 22, October 23 October 24

Next review: October 25

Appendix 1

Cyberbullying

Definition

Cyberbullying is the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, to deliberately upset someone.

There are many types of cyberbullying. Although there may be some of which we are unaware, here are the more common:

1. Text messages that are threatening or cause discomfort
2. Picture / video-clips via mobile phone cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed
3. Mobile phone calls: silent calls or abusive messages or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible
4. Emails: threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name
5. Chatroom bullying: menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web based chatroom
6. Messaging: unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online
7. Bullying via websites: use of defamatory blogs, personal websites and social networking sites

How is cyberbullying different?

Bullying is bullying wherever and however it takes place.

Cyberbullying is a method of bullying that uses ICT to upset, threaten or humiliate someone and has the following key characteristics:

- Cyberbullying can take place at any time, in any location; technology allows the user to bully anonymously.
- Cyberbullying can occur on vast and rapid scale Electronic content is very hard to control; it can never be guaranteed to be removed totally from circulation.
- Bullies can take actions to attempt to be anonymous and can feel distanced from the incident Bystanders can easily become perpetrators.
- The 'profile' of a cyberbully or a target varies – age / size is not an issue
- Cyberbullying incidents can be used as evidence
- Cyberbullying can occur unintentionally often due to a lack of awareness / empathy – 'It was only a joke'
- Cyberbullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe
- Young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology, an area that can seem a closed world to adults.

At Havannah First School, we take this bullying as seriously as all other types of bullying and, therefore, will deal with each situation individually.

An episode may result in a simple verbal warning. It might result in a parental discussion. Clearly, more serious cases will result in further sanctions.

Key advice to pupils

The following points are taught to pupils on a regular basis, especially when teaching about internet use:

- Always respect others – think about what you say online and what images you send / post
- Remember that anything you publish online can be made public very quickly and you will never be sure who may have seen it; once something is posted you lose control
- Treat your password like a toothbrush: never share it with anyone and only give your personal information like mobile phone number or email address to trusted friends
- Learn how to block or report online bullies or anyone behaving badly!
- Don't retaliate or reply.
- Save the evidence – text messages, online conversation, pictures etc
- If you're worried, always make sure you tell an adult you trust or contact someone like Childline, the service provider e.g. website, mobile phone company, school or police
- If you see cyberbullying take place, support the victim and report the bullying

There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyber bullying. For example, www.kidscape.org.uk has some useful tips.

Key advice for parents

The following points are communicated to parents / carers in Newsletters:

- Be alert to your child being upset after using the internet / phones – they may be secretive, change friendships
- Your child is just as likely to be a bully as to be a target
- Talk to your child and understand how they are using the internet and their phone
- Use safety tools and parental controls – if you're not sure how, contact your service provider. Please note tools are not always 100% effective
- Remind your child not to retaliate
- Keep any evidence of cyberbullying – emails, online conversations, texts etc
- Report the cyberbullying
- Contact the school so they can take action if it involves other pupils
- Contact the service provider e.g. website, phone company etc
- If the cyberbullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed, then consider contacting the police

Appendix 2

Support Agencies

Anti-bullying Alliance - the alliance brings together over 60 organisations into one network with the aim of reducing bullying. Their website has a parent section with links to recommended organisations who can help with bullying issues www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk 02077303300

Childline – advice and stories from children who have survived bullying 08000 1111

Bullying on line www.bullying.co.uk

Parentline Plus – advice and links for parents www.parentlineplus.org.uk 08088002222

Parents Against Bullying 01928 576152

Useful sources of information

Stonewall - the gay equality organisation founded in 1989. Founding members include Sir Ian McKellen.
www.stonewall.org.uk

www.cyberbullying.org - one of the first websites set up in this area, for young people, providing advice around preventing and taking action against Cyberbullying.

<https://www.childnet.com/> has lots of ideas and teaching resources for schools and families to make the internet a safer place