



Anti-Bullying Policy

Last updated: **October 2020**

Date approved by Governors: October 2020

Date of next Review: **October 2022**

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 (PALS/Prefects) 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.

It can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- LGBT because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality/difference
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber all areas of internet ,such as email & social networking site
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera phones & video facilities
- Disablist bullying of children and young people with special educational needs/or disabilities

Methods of bullying

Bullying can take various forms and includes the following types of behaviour:

Physical bullying:

- pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, spitting, hair pulling or any use of physical violence
- sexual assault
- making people do things they don't want to do
- stopping people doing things they want to do
- damaging someone's belongings
- taking someone else's belongings e.g. mobile phones or money. The threat of violence very often accompanies thefts from persons and there can be clear instances of extortion focused on weaker pupils.

Verbal bullying:

- name-calling and other unpleasant language is wide and usually focuses on someone's appearance, personal hygiene, family or ability
- sarcasm, teasing, mocking, "put-downs"
- spreading rumours
- saying or writing nasty things
- blackmail and threats
- making offensive remarks including comments about someone's gender, race, disability, religion or sexual orientation. This form of bullying is also discriminatory behaviour that may be unlawful.

Indirect bullying:

- being unfriendly, not talking to someone
- excluding from social groups and activities,
- tormenting (e.g. hiding books), making someone feel uncomfortable or scared
- using threatening gestures, looks and signs/symbols.

What is Cyber bullying?

Cyber bullying is when one person or a group of people aim to torment, threaten, harass, humiliate, embarrass or otherwise target another person by using the internet, social media, interactive & digital technologies or mobile phones.

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 school work 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.

Our procedures for students

Students should report bullying incidents to staff (Core tutors, subject teachers, Heads of Year or any adult) or report bullying incidents to a student leader (PAL/Prefect) who will then talk to a member of staff.

It is helpful if the victim of bullying keeps a log of incidents of bullying. This can include any comments made by text message or on social media sites such as Facebook.

- All cases of bullying incidents will be recorded by pastoral staff on behaviour logs
- Parents will be informed and problems will be discussed
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

For their safety, students know that the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.

Our procedures for Staff and student leaders

- Take the problem seriously. It is vital that students see that *all* staff take bullying seriously.
- Inform appropriate members of staff about the incident and any action you have taken
- Pastoral staff should investigate the incident
- Are restorative approaches suitable for the incident? **This is more effective when pupils who are friends fall out, but is less effective when it comes to resolving full scale bullying.**
- Interview bullies and victims separately
- Interview any witnesses
- Keep a written record of incident and any interviews
- Make a written record of the outcomes and actions

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may, where appropriate, be asked to genuinely apologise.
- A formal warning is given to those involved in bullying
- In some cases, fixed term exclusion will be considered
- Where possible a restorative approach will be used
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure bullying does not reoccur.

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 in order to help resolve an issue of bullying. On occasions this may also entail family involvement.

So what is a restorative approach?

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

Responding to those harmed by bullying

- What happened?
- What have your thoughts been about since?
- How has this affected you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you need to happen next?

Roles within school to prevent/stop bullying

Who?	Action
Core tutor / teacher/support staff	Monitor core group/class for changes in behaviour associated with being a victim of bullying. Reinforce the school policy.
Head of Year	Carry out investigation of all allegations and ensure impact of actions. Including managing restorative approaches meetings.
Assistant Head	Monitor frequency of bullying incidents. Highlight issue of bullying during special events like anti-bullying week.
All adults	Reinforce school's anti-bullying message
Students	Report any incidents to an adult

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

October 2020

“Nearly everyone is bullied at some time in their lives, by brothers, sisters, neighbours, by adults or other children. If you are being bullied you may feel scared, vulnerable and quite alone, but you owe it to yourself to try and sort out the situation so that the bullying stops”.

“Remember, no-one deserves to be bullied”

(Kidscape, www.kidscape.org.uk)