

# HIGHGATE PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### 1. Statement of aims and objectives (para 58 (i), p16)

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any member of the Highgate community, pupil, employee or volunteer, has the right to learn and work without fear of being bullied. Through this policy, Highgate School aims to prevent bullying from occurring. Its objectives are to ensure that all members of the School community:

- Feel safe from bullying
- Recognise bullying behaviour
- Understand and support the school's stance against bullying
- Know how to report incidents of bullying
- Contribute to informing and, where possible, evaluating the policy

### 2. Definition (para 58 (ii), p16)

*Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.*

Bullying includes:

- Name-calling
- Taunting
- Mocking
- Making offensive or humiliating comments
- Gossiping
- Spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours
- Laughing or sniggering at someone in an unkind way
- Taking or deliberately damaging a person's belongings
- Threats or extortion
- Physical violence
- Using body language inappropriately e.g. giving 'dirty' looks
- Deliberately invading someone's personal space
- Cyber bullying, i.e. inappropriate text messaging, emailing and use of social network sites e.g. Facebook, Bebo, Myspace, Youtube, MSMessaging etc
- Sending or displaying offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet or email
- Producing offensive graffiti or writing unkind notes about someone
- Excluding people from groups
- Racist, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, homophobic, special educational needs disability-related language and comments

It is also bullying if someone feels hurt because of things said about their ethnic, cultural or economic background, religious faith, gender, sexuality (homophobic/transphobic), disability, special educational need, appearance or issues in their family.

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour, it can cause psychological damage and even suicide. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the culture at Highgate Pre-Prep is one where all members of the community work to prevent bullying. (para 58 (iii), p16)

### **3. Procedures**

Everyone at Highgate Pre-Prep has the ability to contribute towards making the School a safe and happy place where bullying will have no place and where bullying will be challenged and eliminated.

Staff can and should:

- Be familiar with the definition of bullying and the School's Anti-Bullying Policy
- Monitor changes in pupils' or colleagues' behaviour (e.g. becoming shy, nervous or withdrawn; pretending to be ill; taking unusual absences; in the case of children, clinging to adults)
- Ensure that pupils understand the definition of bullying and know the School's stance on bullying and are confident about the School's ability to deal with it
- Ensure that pupils reporting bullying are heard
- Ensure that pupils understand that staff cannot promise confidentiality
- Pass on the information to the appropriate member of the pastoral team
- Make sure that the person being bullied feels safe and knows how and where to get support
- Record and report cases of bullying (see Appendix 7.1)
- Help to foster a climate of respect through their own words and actions
- Prevent use of inappropriate language (e.g. the casual and pejorative use of the term 'gay')

### **4. Bullying**

#### **4.1 Pupils who engage in bullying**

Pupils have to learn that bullying is unacceptable. Those who engage in bullying and fail to show through their actions that they have learnt that bullying is unacceptable, risk forfeiting their right to be at Highgate Pre-Prep and can face permanent exclusion.

Pupils who are guilty of bullying will be given sanctions (see Foundation Behaviour Policy for an explanation of the different kinds of sanctions, which can include warnings) according to the severity of the offence. (para 58 (vii), p17) Pupils will be given opportunities to:

- Face up to the harm they have done
- Learn to behave in ways which will not cause harm in future
- Develop their understanding of how others think and feel
- Learn how to take steps to repair the harm they have caused
- Pay a penalty for the harm they have done and thus be held accountable for their actions.

## **4.2 Staff who engage in bullying**

It is expected that all staff employed by Highgate School will recognise and eschew any behaviour which is bullying. Bullying of pupils or colleagues will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

## **4.3 Parents who engage in bullying of staff**

All parents of Highgate pupils will be expected to recognise and eschew any behaviour towards staff, or any other members of the Highgate School community, that is bullying. Staff will inform the Head Master if they are subject to bullying behaviour that they regard as unacceptable and the matter will be dealt with appropriately, in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy.

## **5. The role of the school**

The responsibilities of staff, including teachers, are set out in section 3 and section 6. In addition the School will:

- Collate data about incidents of bullying and monitor trends, reporting termly to Governors and reviewing the anti-bullying procedures; this includes consulting children on their experience
- Provide training to new staff at induction and to all staff regularly, through Inset and staff meetings
- Promote awareness of where and when bullying is most likely to take place and ensure actions are taken to reduce the risk (para 58 (vi), p17)
- Promote the anti-bullying policy and stance on bullying in assemblies and other activities at least once per year
- Ensure that awareness of bullying is raised and anti-bullying measures are taught in PSHE lessons and assemblies (see PSHE scheme of work) (para 58 (vi), p17)
- Use assemblies, presentations, drama workshops and circle time to raise the awareness of bullying, the School's stance on it and develop pupils' understanding of the potential impact on peoples' lives of being bullied
- Ensure that pupils know about the roles they can take in preventing bullying
- Make this policy available to parents on request
- Ensure that parents will be confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously
- Inform parents if their child is being bullied or is bullying someone else
- Review its policy and procedures in the light of data and any complaints
- Celebrate the success of anti-bullying measures and a positive culture where everyone feels safe to be themselves and where no one fears to learn or work

## 6. Appendices

### 6.1 Procedure to follow

Whenever bullying is suspected the incident should be recorded and investigated.

The following procedure will be adopted in the circumstance of a child complaining of being bullied or a member of staff suspecting that bullying is taking place:

- a) The child's class teacher and the Principal will be informed, they will arrange a meeting with the parents of the child who they suspect is being bullied
- b) The child's class teacher will make a note of any incidents of bullying behaviour
- c) Other members of staff will be alerted to the situation
- d) The class teacher will speak to the child who is being bullied, reassure him/her and request that any bullying behaviour be reported immediately. The child will be reassured that he/she will not get into trouble for doing so and that 'telling' is an important part of making things better.
- e) A programme of careful observation will be initiated in both the classroom and the playground and the class teacher will make notes about the interaction between the children involved.
- f) If evidence of bullying is found, the parents of the child/children accused of bullying will be contacted and a meeting will be arranged with the Principal and class teacher. If no evidence is found this will not necessarily be taken to mean that bullying is not taking place since the behaviour can often be subversive and secretive.
- g) Strategies to help the child accused of bullying to improve and change his/her behaviour will be initiated, as well as strategies to enable the bullied child to deal effectively with the unwanted behaviour of the bully:
  - o Circle Time sessions will be used to discuss bullying issues with the whole class
  - o Close communication will be maintained between all parties involved
  - o If the situation does not resolve itself other measures will be considered. These may include moving one child to another class, if they are being taught together and seeking the advice of a professional third party such as a psychologist

### 6.2 Legal requirements

The law requires that the Head Master must:

- Determine the more detailed measures (rules, rewards, sanctions and behaviour management strategies) on behaviour and discipline that form the **School's Behaviour Policy**, acting in accordance with the governing body's statement of principles in so doing. The policy determined by the Head Master must include measures to be taken with a view to "encouraging good behaviour and respect for

others on the part of pupils and, in particular, **preventing all forms of bullying among pupils**”;

- **Publicise the measures** in the behaviour policy and draw them to the attention of pupils, parents and staff at least once a year;
- Determine and ensure the implementation of a **policy for the pastoral care of pupils**;
- Ensure the **maintenance of good order and discipline** at all times during the school day (including the midday break) when pupils are present on the school premises and whenever the pupils are engaged in authorised school activities, whether on the school premises or elsewhere.

The law requires that teachers must:

- Promote the general progress and well-being of individual pupils and of any class or group of pupils assigned to them, which includes ensuring as far as possible that pupils are free from bullying and harassment; and
- All staff must apply the school rewards and sanctions lawfully.

While bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

### **6.3 When and where bullying is most likely to happen in the Pre-Prep: guidance to staff**

Bullying can take place anywhere at any time; however, it is most likely to happen outside normal lesson time in communal areas such as:

- The playground
- Corridors and stairwells
- Changing rooms and toilets

To reduce the likelihood of bullying taking place in these areas, the following preventative measures have been put in place:

- Supervision – children are supervised by their teachers, early years practitioners and classroom assistants throughout the school day. A rota for playground duties and lunch duties is displayed in the staffroom.
- During staff meetings, staff are reminded about the importance of being vigilant during playground duties. ‘Pupil News’ is a standing item on all staff meeting agendas and staff are encouraged to raise any concerns about individuals or groups of children, including playground behaviour.
- Children ask permission before going to the toilet during lessons and playtimes. Staff are aware of which children are using the toilet and how long they have been in there.

- Children are only allowed out of class during lesson times for specific reasons, such as taking the register to the office or showing their work to another class.
- When children are changing for swimming they are supervised by their class teacher.
- Children do not have access to the internet unless it is part of an ICT lesson or classroom activity and they are supervised by a member of staff. '2email' software has been installed on all Pre-Prep computers so children can learn how to send and receive email without going online, this software allows communication to be monitored by staff. (See ICT Policy for guidance on the use of the internet with pupils.)

#### **6.4 Reference**

This document has been prepared with reference to the DCSF guidance documents Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools (Sep 2007), Guidance on preventing and responding to sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying (Dec 2009) and Cyberbullying: Supporting School Staff (Apr 2009).