Anti – bullying Policy

March 2023

Learning to Flourish

To provide Personalised learning experiences so that every child can communicate, interact, grow and develop to the best of their ability. Together with families, we can ensure that our children have the skills and knowledge to manage everyday life as independently as they can and to lead happy and successful lives, through our values of **S**ocialisation, **C**ommunication, **I**nteraction, and **P**lay

Anti-Bullying Policy

Background

This policy sets out the Hollies School procedures for dealing with bullying and is informed by Welsh Government Challenging Bullying, Rights, respect, equality statutory guidance 2019. This policy should also be read in conjunction with the Hollies School's Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

Rationale - Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

The nature of their disability means that pupils with ASD may not have sufficient understanding or awareness that certain behaviours directed towards others may be undesirable or that they might be construed as bullying. Similarly, children and young people with ASD who are the recipients of such behaviours may be unable to express or communicate their aversion to such behaviours or to tell adults. This means that all staff at our school have a duty to not only be aware of such behaviours and of any pupil involved, but also to respond appropriately to instances of bullying behaviours.

Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Our school aim is to promote a consistent approach and create an environment in which all types of bullying are considered unacceptable.

The Hollies School aims to:

• involve parents, carers, pupils and staff in the prevention of bullying

• regularly update our approach to take account of developments in technology

• intervene wherever needed

• create an inclusive and safe environment in which differences which could motivate

bullying are openly discussed

• use specialist organisations and resources for help whenever needed

• provide effective staff training involve the wider community such as the police and

children's services whenever needed

• make it easy for pupils to highlight if they are being bullied or feel uncomfortable with

the actions of others towards themselves.

What is Bullying?

Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally

Bullying is expressed through a range of hurtful behaviours: it can happen face-to-face or in the digital environment. It can be carried out by an individual or group but is generally executed in front

of an audience to assert power or popularity. It may involve an element of secrecy so that adults are not aware of it.

Bullying differs from an argument, a fight or friendship fallout in that it:

• is deliberate or intentional

• is generally repeated over time

• involves a perceived imbalance of power between perpetrator and target

• causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness, humiliation and powerlessness. It is recognised that a one-off incident can leave a learner traumatised and nervous of reprisals or future recurrence.

The distinctive elements of bullying behaviour

There are a number of distinctive elements associated with bullying. These include, but are not limited to:

• intention to harm – bullying is deliberate with the intention to cause harm. Those who bully others are often skilled at knowing exactly how to humiliate or hurt their target, picking on key aspects of their appearance, personality or identity that produces the effect wanted. They seek out the area in which they have power over their target

• harmful outcome – someone or a group is hurt physically or emotionally. They can be isolated, humiliated or made fearful. Their sense of self-worth is reduced

• direct or indirect acts – bullying can involve direct aggression such as hitting, as well as indirect acts such as spreading rumours, revealing private information about someone or sharing intimate images with people for whom the information/images were not intended

• repetition – bullying usually involves repeated acts of negative behaviour or acts of aggression. An isolated aggressive act, such as a fight, is not usually considered bullying9 . Yet any incident can be the start of a pattern of bullying behaviour which develops subsequently. That is why incident records are so valuable

• unequal power – bullying involves the abuse of power by one person or a group who are (perceived as) more powerful, often due to their age, physical strength, popularity or psychological resilience.

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber bullying via text messages, social media, gaming or the internet, which can include the use of videos and images), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual or perceived differences between children.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways - it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone) derive from an intellectual imbalance or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Cyber Bullying can be defined as:

The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), particularly

mobile phones and the Internet, deliberately to upset someone

Cyberbullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times in the day, with a

potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content with one

click. Cyber bullying is a more recent problem that has come about through the increased

use of mobile phones and the Internet. It can be an extension of face to face

bullying, with technology providing the person who bullies with another route to

harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of

bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling

electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; and the perceived

anonymity. It may also involve the misuse of associated technology such as

cameras and video facilities.

Why are children bullied?

Children and young people are bullied for a variety of reasons; vulnerable groups

are particularly at risk of bullying.

Specific types of bullying include bullying related to:

- Race, religion or culture.
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disabilities.
- Appearance or health conditions.
- Sexual orientation.
- Young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying.

The Behaviours of Children and Young People with ASD and the Characteristics of Bullying Behaviours

Pupils with ASD are likely to be unaware that certain behaviours have the characteristics of bullying and are socially unacceptable. It is possible that one pupil may develop an obsession with another which may cause distress or anxiety. Such behaviours might include wanting to be near the 'target' pupil or having an interest in making physical contact with him/her, such as touching a particular

part of his or her body or potentially harmful behaviours such as kicking, pinching or throwing objects. Staff have a duty to be vigilant and alert to these behaviours. For example, the pupil who is the target may show fear or anxiety when he/she sees the child/young person who targets him/her. This information must be shared amongst all members of the class team, and also shared with other members of staff as soon as possible, particularly with those on duty during playtimes and lunchtime.

Record keeping and reports

A report detailing pupil to pupil incidents is produced to monitor and track occurrences and to determine whether they are incidences of bullying. Appropriate actions come from these reports. All incidents of behaviours that challenge, including behaviour that involves pupil to pupil incidents are tracked on Behaviour Watch.

The Targeted Child

It is important to support the target of bullying behaviour, particularly as he or she may have difficulty communicating their experiences. The pupil should be able to communicate in their preferred mode, e.g. PECS, Makaton, signing, speech or an AAC. Social skills training may help him or her to become more assertive, to show less anxiety, and say or sign, "No".

Attention seeking behaviours

Some pupils with ASD may seek attention. For them, to use a behaviour directed against another pupil is a way of achieving this attention. Adult intervention could potentially reinforce this potential bullying behaviour. In these circumstances, the strategy should be to break this cycle to eliminate the reinforcement of the behaviour.

• Redirection: adults deliberately diverting the pupil's attention away from one behaviour to a new activity;

• Time away: giving the pupil time away from the classroom or playground. This can be an effective way of withdrawing adult attention. It is important that the pupil is helped to develop understanding that the reason for being given "time away" is his or her behaviour.

• Assigning a one-to-one adult to monitor the perpetrator of bullying at playtimes.

Intrinsic Reinforcement from behaviours

Some pupils with ASD emit behaviours in order to receive sensory input. For example, a pupil may bite another because they are reinforced by the sensation of biting. A tactic to decrease this behaviour could involve: Introducing the pupil to an activity that provides him/her with the same sensory input, e.g. biting into a stress ball, or the use of a chewy. Conditioning playground equipment: pairing positive reinforcement with using playground equipment so that the pupil learns to gain reinforcement from other activities.

Prevention

In all work with children/young people, staff emphasise the importance of developing social skills, including good behaviour and respect for the feelings of others. Where children/young people have difficulties interacting appropriately with their peers or with adults, then staff aim to help them develop an awareness of why particular behaviours are valued socially and what is inappropriate. The Hollies school curriculum builds on this through activities which include health and wellbeing,

PE, break time, Language and Communication sessions and group work to develop an ethos of co-operation and respect for everyone.

Preventing bullying

The most effective way of preventing bullying is to create effective environments in

which:

- the contribution of all children and young people are valued
- all children and young people can feel secure and are able to contribute
- appropriately
- stereotypical views are always challenged, and children and young people
- learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others whether arising from race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability or disability
- all forms of bullying and harassment are challenged
- children and young people are supported to develop their social and emotional skills

Staff are important role models for the pupils. The behaviour of adults towards each other and towards the pupils is a potentially highly effective tool for preventing and decreasing bullying behaviours in pupils with ASD. Staff will also be trained on the importance of antibullying strategies and reminded where they can seek support if they require it. Staff will gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This might involve direct teaching on issues of difference, in lessons, through dedicated events, projects or assemblies. Where necessary we will call on the expertise of specific organisations to draw on their expertise, for example, Childnet for Online safety.

The school will also involve parents in discussions about the prevention of bullying. Parents should feel confident in raising any concerns about bullying, as it will be taken seriously and will be resolved in a way that protects their child.

Intervention

The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. School staff will support all pupils who are being bullied. As children with ASD can lack the social or communication skills to report such incidents, staff will remain alert to the potential bullying the pupils could face. The schools should apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that this behaviour is not appropriate. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently and take into account the ALN of the pupil. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator.

Reporting

Clear and well publicised systems for reporting bullying are in place for all, this includes those who are the target of bullying or who have witnessed bullying behaviour (bystanders). Reporting includes the type of bullying and the reason for it to allow for effective monitoring.

Children and young people: Are encouraged to talk to any adult within school who will then act on the concerns raised. It is recognised that some pupils will have a preferred or more familiar adult that they are more comfortable talking to. Some non-verbal pupils are supported to make their

concerns known via signing, symbols or changes in behaviour. Adults within the Hollies are experienced in recognising these potential changes in behaviour.

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the class teacher or Senior teacher in school via telephone, letter, email or home/school communication book to express any concerns they have relating to bullying.

All staff and visitors are encouraged to report any concerns regarding observed or reported bullying to the Hollies staff member they are with or to a member of the senior leadership team.

Last review: March 2021

Next review: March 2024

Review group: Full Governing Body