



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Committee Responsible:

Reviewed by:

Review Date:

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Curriculum and Achievement

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BENTLEY WOOD HIGH SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

Following the development of the Behaviour Policy for Bentley Wood which defines the basic entitlement and expectations of students and staff, work has been done to tackle the specific issue of bullying. This policy demonstrates our commitment to involve all parties in creating a safe and supportive environment at Bentley Wood High School.

1.2 Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 89)
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" (2017)
- DfE guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (2023)
- Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988

2. Understanding Bullying

2.1 Definition

There is no legally agreed definition for bullying. However, it is usually defined as **behaviour that is a wilful, repeated, conscious attempt to hurt someone either physically or emotionally**. Bullying may be overt by verbal or physical means, or covert by use of body language.

Bullying invariably undermines self-confidence and can create a cycle of poor performance, potentially causing depression, stress, mental or physical ill-health, with consequent absence from school.

Bullying should not be confused with the usual childhood/teenage squabbles, arguments, or 'friendship issues' where individuals fall out with one another.

2.2 Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms including:

- Physical bullying (hitting, pushing, taking belongings)
- Verbal bullying (name-calling, insults, discriminatory remarks)
- Emotional/psychological bullying (excluding, tormenting, threatening gestures)
- Cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (e.g., email, social networks, instant messenger, WhatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat)
- Prejudice-based bullying relating to protected characteristics
- AI-enabled bullying including the creation of 'deepfakes' or manipulated content

2.3 Potentially Criminal Aspects of Bullying

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include:

- Violence or assault
- Theft
- Repeated harassment or intimidation
- Hate crimes - any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their protected characteristics

3. Policy Aims and Objectives

3.1 Core Aims

- To work towards the elimination of bullying at Bentley Wood
- To enhance the Behaviour Policy which confirms the school expectations
- To involve all members of the school community in countering bullying
- To enable students, staff, parents and governors to understand what constitutes bullying
- To ensure that there are strategies to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse
- To enable parents to feel confident that bullying will be firmly dealt with by the school

- To inform all members of the school community that bullying behaviour will not be tolerated

3.2 Specific Objectives

- To remind students regularly via the Pastoral Programme and assemblies that bullying will not be tolerated
- To continue to cover bullying via established parts of the PSHE Programme
- To ensure effective supervision of school areas
- To reinforce reporting procedures
- To support vulnerable students
- To work with and educate those who bully to change their behaviour
- To promote equality and British Values through a number of mechanisms, including our curriculum, Wise Thoughts, Head of Year Assemblies, SLG Assemblies, Student Enrichment channel on Teams, and so forth.
- To maintain peer support systems including Human Rights Ambassadors and Wellbeing Ambassadors
- To train staff and students in elements of the Equality Act 2010 and the nine 'protected characteristics' and how they are salient to bullying
- To consult School Council Representatives as representatives of their tutor group, on their views on bullying and any further procedures which may help in its elimination and get members to support students who may have been bullied.

4. Prevention Strategies

As a school we take bullying seriously. We use a range of active strategies including:

4.1 Whole School Approach

- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos
- Our 'CARE' values promoted regularly
- Strong pastoral teams which monitor behaviours and relationships

- Anti-bullying week is dedicated to raising awareness of bullying and reminding staff and students of their responsibilities to report it.
- Student focus groups
- Poster campaigns.

4.2 Curriculum Integration

- Use of curriculum opportunities, particularly Tutor time and PSHE
- Integration of anti-bullying messages across subjects
- Form Time and Assembly programmes (HoY and SLG+) to reinforce British Values and the ethos of the school

4.3 Environmental Measures

- Strategic deployment of duty staff and careful consideration of duty points to eliminate 'dead spaces' where bullying could take place undisturbed.
- Thoughtful seating plans in lessons
- Mobile phone restrictions to prevent cyberbullying

4.4 Celebration of Diversity

- 'Wise Thoughts' programme which is our SMSC co-curriculum running alongside our academic curriculum
- Event weeks (Black History Month, International Women's Month, LGBT History Month)
- Events and news-stories shared via the Student Enrichment and Extension channel on Teams

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 All Staff

It is everyone's responsibility to:

- Provide a secure environment for reporting incidents

- Take all reports seriously
- Protect and support all parties during investigation and resolution

5.2 Staff Training and Development

All staff will receive training and updates on:

- The school's duties regarding bullying
- Changes to relevant legislation and guidance
- Identifying and reporting allegations of bullying
- Supporting vulnerable pupils
- Current research and evidence-based interventions where relevant
- Online safety and cyberbullying
- Equality and diversity awareness

6. Response Procedures

6.1 Reporting Mechanisms

Students can report bullying of themselves or others by:

- Speaking to their Tutor
- Speaking to their Head of Year
- Speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DF)
- Speaking to the Assistant Headteacher who oversees anti-bullying (FOS)
- Speaking to any trusted member of staff (a 'trusted adult')
- Speaking to their parents who can then inform the school

Our system for reporting is outlined below in [Appendix 2](#).

6.2 Investigation Process

6.2.1 Initial Response

When bullying is reported to a member of staff, they should:

- Listen to the student without judgment
- Take the report seriously
- Refer to Head of Year for investigation

Our system for reporting is outlined below in [Appendix 2](#).

6.2.2 Investigation Steps

1. Interview

- Individual interviews with all parties
- Develop a clear understanding of events

2. Record Statements

- Written accounts from all involved
- Clear documentation of incidents
- Secure file storage

3. Respond

- Inform victim of planned actions
- Address alleged perpetrators
- Avoid prejudgment before the investigation is complete
- Initial conversations and education may be sufficient to stop the bullying at this stage. Sometimes a student can be genuinely surprised that a behaviour or set of interactions has been interpreted by another student as 'bullying'.
- Ensure safety agreements
- Communicate with parents

4. Follow Up

- Check-ins with victim

- Monitor perpetrator behaviour and ensure no more problematic interactions
- Arrange restorative justice meetings between students where appropriate – noting that some students do not want this to take place

6.3 Record Keeping

All incidents must be recorded including:

- Details of victim and perpetrator/s
- Relevant protected characteristic if targeted
- Clear description of incidents
- Actions taken and support provided
- Parent/carer involvement
- Follow-up actions and outcomes

7. Specific Types of Bullying

7.1 Online Safety and Cyberbullying

The school recognises the 24/7 nature of cyberbullying and implements:

Prevention

- Regular online safety education
- Parent/carer guidance
- Clear technology use policies
- Updates on new risks and platforms

Response

- Clear reporting procedures
- Evidence preservation guidance

- Service provider liaison
- Police involvement when necessary
- Victim support and counselling
- Perpetrator education

7.2 Prejudice-based Bullying

Bullying related to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and civil partnership
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race
7. Religion or belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual orientation

7.3 AI-Enabled Bullying

The school recognizes emerging risks from AI tools including:

- Creation of deepfake content
- Manipulated images, videos, and audio
- AI-generated harassment

All AI-enabled bullying will be treated with the same seriousness as other forms of bullying.

8. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality Objectives statement
- SEND Policy

Appendix 1: Protected Characteristics, Discrimination, and example of racism

"Management of a bullying incident is of necessity crisis management and therefore subject to limitations of time and planning for the most appropriate intervention to take place.

Hence...prevention is better than cure."

C.M.J. Arora 'Bullying - Action and Intervention', Pastoral Care in Education, 7:3 (1989)

"Providing a provisional time-frame is helpful but an investigator should not be restricted by a set completion date. An investigator may find that the time-frame needs to be modified to enable them to investigate the matter properly. While an investigation should be completed as quickly as is practical, it also needs to be sufficiently thorough to be fair and reasonable."

ACAS, Guidance on Conducting Workplace Investigations, 2019

Discrimination and Racism

Racism is treating someone differently or unfairly, simply because of their colour, nationality, ethnicity, or national origins. (Equality Act 2010)

Reporting Racist Incidents

Under the Equality Act 2010, all state schools should deal with all types of prejudice-related incidents, including racist incidents. The school must log all reported racist incidents.

What is a racist incident?

Racist incidents in school (or on the way to and from school) may involve pupils, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, governors, visitors or others.

Racist incidents include:

- physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity or nationality;
- use of derogatory names, insults and racist jokes;
- racist graffiti.
- provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges or insignia;
- bringing racist material into school;
- verbal abuse and threats;
- incitement of others to behave in a racist way;
- racist comments in the course of discussion;
- attempts to recruit others to racist organisations and groups;
- ridicule of an individual for cultural difference eg. food, music, religion, dress etc.;

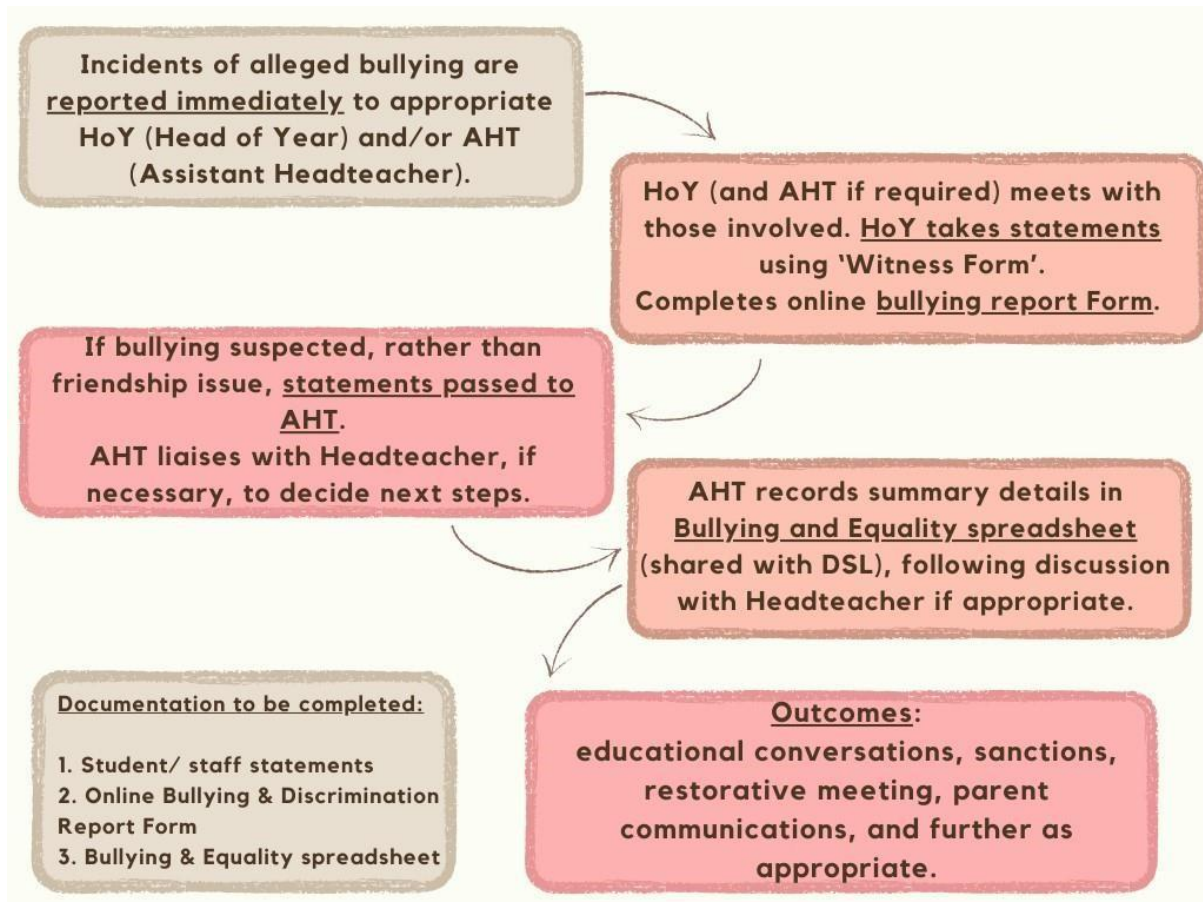
- refusal to co-operate with other people because of their colour, ethnic origin or nationality;
- written derogatory remarks.

Discrimination and Other Protected Characteristics:

Incidents of discrimination may include protected characteristics other than race, such as, sex, disability, sexual orientation, and more. These incidents may include:

- physical assault against a person or group because of their sex / sexuality/ disability
- use of derogatory names, insults and jokes that target the person because of their sex/ sexuality / disability
- discriminatory graffiti
- bringing discriminatory material into school;
- verbal abuse and threats
- incitement of others to behave in a discriminatory way;
- discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- ridicule of an individual because of their sexual orientation / sex / disability;
- refusal to co-operate with other people because of their sexual orientation/ sex / disability;
- written derogatory remarks.

Appendix 2: Reporting Process for Allegations of Bullying



Appendix 3: Supporting Organisations and Guidance

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Beat Bullying: www.beatbullying.org
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- DfE: “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies”, and
“Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools” March 2014:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- DfE: “No health without mental health”:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

- Pace: www.pacehealth.org.uk
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- DfE: SEND code of practice:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

Racism and Hate

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srrc.org/educational