



HEREFORD CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Hereford Cathedral School is committed to fostering a spirit of mutual trust between all pupils (including boarders) and staff, and to creating and sustaining a friendly, supportive, safe and structured environment in which pupils develop confidence and self-esteem and in which they show consideration for the dignity of others. Indeed, this is a commitment that also extends to all adults and people within our school community.

Bullying behaviour can take a variety of forms, but in all cases, it is deliberately hurtful behaviour designed to frighten, intimidate, humiliate, embarrass or injure an individual or group. Such is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on the grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer.

Whilst one incident alone would not necessarily constitute bullying, a pattern of such behaviour over a period of time undoubtedly would. Bullying is defined by the Department of Education (Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2017) as:

“behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences”.

Bullying can be:

- a) physical – kicking, punching, spitting etc.
- b) verbal – name calling, unkind remarks including references to the special educational needs or disabilities of others, or references of a racist, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic nature, insults
- c) psychological – exclusion, spreading of rumours, threats, practical jokes, forcing the victim into an act which he/she does not want to commit
- d) bullying may also involve extortion, stealing or misappropriation of another pupil's belongings
- e) cyber bullying (or 'virtual') – the use of any mobile device (including mobile phones and tablets), using social media websites or gaming sites, text messages, (including the use of photographs) or email

If anyone sees or is aware of any incident of bullying, of any kind, they are involved in it; ignoring the problem amounts to condoning it. There is no such thing as an innocent bystander. It is the duty of anyone in the school community who knows or suspects that bullying is taking place to tell a member of staff as soon as possible – and to be an upstander. An Upstander Form is available to pupils on SharePoint or at Reception, on which reports of bullying (or any unkind behaviour) can be reported to staff.

The School recognises the seriousness of bullying on the basis of protected characteristics and in causing long-term psychological damage. It aims to:

- demonstrate that bullying will not be tolerated
- take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the School and on off-site activities, including 'cyber bullying'
- support everyone in identifying and protecting those who might be bullied
- demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying.
- encourage pupils to tell someone (be an upstander) if they or others are being bullied.

To achieve these aims all members of staff are provided with information about the procedures to deal with bullying. Staff also receive training to raise awareness of the symptoms of bullying, how to identify bullying and identify times and places where it is most likely to occur, as well as training to help staff understand the needs of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, and the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils. All new staff will receive this training during their Induction Programme.

The School Code contains information about bullying being unacceptable, and clear rules about the use of mobile devices in school are aimed at protecting every pupil. An *Anti-Bullying Statement* for pupils is available on SharePoint and on notice boards in the boarding house, which includes reference to the role bystanders have in reporting bullying. Parents are also provided periodically with links to helpful advice with respect to the topic of bullying and, in particular, cyber-safety and responsible use of technology. The School's Anti-Bullying Policy is based upon the following principles:

- Bullying is unacceptable.
- Every member of the School can expect to be treated with respect, dignity and tolerance irrespective of their gender, religious beliefs, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, aptitude or disability.
- Pupils are expected to treat others as they would wish to be treated themselves.
- Members of the School community have both an individual and collective obligation to report any incident of bullying whenever or wherever it might occur, and have a right to expect that appropriate action will be taken to prevent its repetition.
- Those who bully should be aware that action will always be taken, though this may include help and guidance. A "no-blame" approach is strongly to be preferred over a punitive approach as long as it has any chance of success. A punitive approach in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy will, however, be adopted if the "no-blame" approach fails to resolve the situation. Pupils who severely and/or persistently bully others may be suspended or excluded.

- Both the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s) will be entitled to appropriate counselling and support.

Parents, as well as all staff and pupils, are informed that the School will not tolerate bullying, and takes a positive approach to educating pupils to combat it.

All staff are expected to know the policy and procedures: be observant and, if need be, ask pupils what is happening to them; deal with incidents according to the policy; never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity; and be supportive of any component of the PSHE & RSE course or other school-based activities relating to anti-bullying.

Primary responsibility for handling alleged cases lies with the Form Tutor of the victim (or the Houseparent if any case takes place at the boarding house) and the Head of Year and Senior Deputy Head will always be informed. All incidents of bullying will be logged both on the pupils' file and in a central record, which provides an overview of incidents and therefore any patterns of bullying can be more easily identified.

Bullying behaviour can raise safeguarding concerns: under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a safeguarding concern when there is "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm". Staff should then discuss the matter with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the School's Safeguarding Policy should then be followed.

When reported, the School and its teachers also have the power to investigate and sanction alleged cases of bullying (and misbehaviour) which take place outside of 'school' to such an extent that is reasonable. In all cases, a teacher can only sanction a pupil when on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff.

Although bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, harassment and threatening behaviour or communications are criminal offences (for example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 or the Protection from Harassment Act 1997). There will be a threshold at which the School will make a decision about whether a bullying issue should be passed on to the Police, social services or Herefordshire Children's Safeguarding Board.

The principles of the Anti-Bullying Policy will be discussed formally in all tutor groups in the first term of each academic year. This is in addition to the awareness-raising exercises carried out routinely in the PSHE & RSE programme, and during national awareness events.

PROCEDURES TO IMPLEMENT ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

What are some of the possible signs of bullying?

Bullying is not always obvious; it can often occur in breaks and between lessons. Younger pupils are more prone to bully and to be bullied. Victims tend to be "different" in some way, e.g. new to the school, race, stature, social background, etc. Colleagues should be aware that possible clusters of signs or patterns of behaviour may indicate that bullying is occurring:

- Patterns of absenteeism, from school or from particular lessons
- Changes in behaviour patterns, e.g. avoiding certain areas of the School, reluctance to work in class with particular pupils, an expressed desire to change options
- Withdrawal from social activities
- Isolation in class or exclusion in sports
- Moodiness, depression, unusual withdrawal
- Nervous tension
- Psychosomatic illnesses, e.g. non-specific pains
- Damaged or missing clothing, books or equipment
- Unexpected decline in standards of work.

Procedures (including for boarders)

- a) Staff witnessing bullying should intervene but avoid physical confrontation. It is vital to make the situation safe, control the perpetrator(s) and support the victim(s). If the situation warrants it, an immediate verbal reprimand to the perpetrator(s) is entirely appropriate (while keeping calm) but no other punitive action should be taken without consultation with the Tutor of the victim. Inform the victim(s), perpetrator(s) and any bystanders that the incident will be recorded.
- b) Staff should immediately communicate the details of any incident in writing to the appropriate Form Tutors and Heads of Year. The Senior Deputy Head should also be informed. It is the responsibility of the victim's tutor to follow up the written account.
- c) Allegations of bullying which may be a safeguarding matter should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (also refer to Safeguarding Policy)
- d) Action by Form Tutors:
 - i) Reports received in writing from another member of staff - the principal responsibility of any further investigation and action lies with the Form Tutor, in conjunction with the Head of Year, and not with the member of staff who made the initial report.
 - ii) Reports received from a parent will be treated sympathetically and sensitively and the allegation must be taken seriously and addressed as swiftly as possible. As in all other cases, it is the responsibility of the Form Tutor to log the report and to take appropriate follow-up action.
 - iii) Reports from a tutee - it is essential to treat all complaints sympathetically and sensitively but unemotionally. It may have taken considerable courage on the part of the pupil concerned to come forward and the child must not be made to feel foolish, weak or inadequate in any way. If possible, listen to the child

immediately. However, make sure you have time to listen; do not try to sort things out when time is limited (just before the start of a lesson for example). Arrange to see the pupil at a mutually convenient time, preferably within 24 hours, and in a location with which the pupil feels happy, well away from possible pupil "onlookers".

Continue to record all evidence provided in writing in order to ascertain the precise nature of any complaint. Record all matters factually and as far as possible in the alleged victim's own words: do not leap to conclusions or ask leading questions in interviewing the pupil. Do not use the term "bullying" yourself unless the pupil uses it first. Ultimately, if punishment regrettably proves to be necessary, there will need to be unemotional evidence used to substantiate the victim's allegations.

Reassure the victim that his/her decision to report the situation was the right thing to do and that it will not lead to an exacerbation of the difficulties he/she is facing. Discuss possible strategies with him/her: whatever course of action is decided must have the support and confidence of the pupil concerned. He/she must feel suitably protected against any possible retribution, and believe that any action taken will be effective.

Inform all staff who teach the affected pupils.

e) Dealing with an alleged perpetrator

It may be sufficient to see the alleged perpetrator individually. The interview should be conducted in a non-confrontational, non-judgmental, non-punitive manner. They may have been provoked and is entitled to present their own version of what has occurred or there may be other underlying causes. In addition, explaining to the alleged perpetrator the effects of what they have done, whilst giving them the benefit of the doubt over their motive or intention may, in minor cases, be sufficient to ensure that the behaviour is not repeated. However, any of the School's formal sanctions can be used for perpetrators as appropriate. For persistent offenders or incidents considered as gross acts of aggression a pupil could be temporarily or permanently excluded.

Parents of pupils who are being bullied and parents of the perpetrators will be involved in the solution to the problem as deemed appropriate by the Senior Deputy Head.

Parents will be informed of the policy and procedures and the possibility of temporary or permanent exclusion following gross acts of bullying.

f) Further help for the victim

The victim may themselves benefit from counselling (the School has visiting Counsellors) as to how to avoid similar incidents in future, how to develop coping strategies, or how to modify their own behaviour so as not to provoke such incidents. The victim might also be provided with the telephone number of a support organisation or of other confidential counselling agencies. A face-to-face meeting between the victim and the alleged perpetrator may bring about reconciliation if conducted calmly. Staff must also consider the challenges of cases of

offline bullying within the boarding house, where the victim is unable to escape the perpetrator for long periods of time.

g) Dealing with parents of the perpetrator(s)

The parents of the perpetrator(s) should be notified, informed of attempts to date to encourage the perpetrator(s) to modify their behaviour concerned, and warned of sanction if the behaviour continues, including the possibility of temporary or permanent exclusion. Ultimately the decision as to the appropriateness of sanction must be determined by the Headmaster, in conjunction with the Senior Deputy Head, Form Tutor(s) and the Head(s) of Year concerned.

Discussion of bullying with the Tutor Group might be an appropriate course of action. The Form Tutor should discuss with the Head of Year, the Head of PSHE and/or the Senior Deputy Head before embarking on this.

This is a time-consuming process but it is important that action is taken as soon as possible and consequently Form Tutors may need to withdraw themselves and the pupil(s) concerned from morning commitments (Chapel, music) in order to provide appropriate advice and guidance. Tutors may also, if necessary, use normal tutorial time for this purpose, requesting their Head of Year to step in and supervise the remainder of the tutor group when this is feasible depending upon general "cover" requirements on any given day.

When the process has been undertaken the Form Tutor should complete the remainder of the written report, and send a copy to the Senior Deputy Head who will save a copy in the pastoral files. It will be essential to continue to be vigilant for any signs of reoccurrence.

The above procedures should be followed in the same way with respect to alleged cases of cyber-bullying. Where possible, any evidence of cyber-bullying (inappropriate comments on social media) should be retained and printed. The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 gives teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, retain and/or delete inappropriate material on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum

The School will raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through a PSHE & RSE programme, School Chapels, the School Council, and use of Tutor Time – as well as through the academic curriculum.

The Senior Deputy Head and PHSE Co-ordinator are responsible for initiating and developing with appropriate colleagues an anti-bullying programme as part of the PHSE & RSE course. This includes the development of strategies to keep pupils safe from cyber-bullying and other risks of online activity. Heads of Department are responsible for introducing anti-bullying material in their programmes of study as appropriate.

Cyber-Bullying (or 'virtual' bullying)

A. Introduction

Hereford Cathedral School recognises that electronic communication plays a central part in the lives of all young people. Many of our pupils experience the internet and mobile devices as a positive, productive and creative part of their activities and development of their identities, and all pupils use devices for learning in the classroom. Above all, information communication technologies support social activity that allows young people to feel connected to their peers.

Unfortunately, we also recognise that these technologies are occasionally negatively used. When children are the target of bullying via mobile devices or the internet, they can feel alone and very misunderstood. They may not be able to identify that what is happening to them is a form of bullying, or be confident that the adults around them will understand it that way either. Previously safe and enjoyable environments and activities can become threatening and a source of anxiety.

The School takes the approach that cyber-bullying is an issue that should be dealt with proactively via the raising of awareness through the School's PSHE & RSE programme and other curriculum subjects where appropriate. Pupils often fail to recognise the implication of the misuse of ICT and, given that this form of bullying occurs in no fixed location, many pupils see it as an issue occurring separately from their school life.

The document *Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014)* is a useful reference.

B. Definition of Cyber-bullying

Cyberbullying is bullying with the use of digital technologies. It can take place on social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms and mobile phones. It is repeated behaviour, aimed at scaring, angering or shaming those who are targeted. Examples include:

- *spreading lies about or posting embarrassing photos of someone on social media*
- *sending hurtful messages or threats via messaging platforms*
- *impersonating someone and sending mean messages to others on their behalf.*

www.unicef.org.uk

MOBILE PHONES: making unpleasant calls or sending unpleasant text messages, including threats, intimidation, and harassment; taking and sharing humiliating images; videoing other people being harassed and sending these to others or uploading to internet sites.

EMAIL: sending unpleasant, inappropriate or threatening messages; forwarding unsuitable content including images and video clips, or sending computer viruses; accessing someone else's account, e.g. to forward personal emails or delete emails.

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES: posting unpleasant comments, humiliating images / video; accessing another person's account details and sending unpleasant messages, deleting information or making private information public; groups of people picking on individuals by excluding them; creating fake profiles to pretend to be someone else, e.g. to bully, harass or get the person into trouble.

GAMES SITES, CONSOLES AND VIRTUAL WORLDS: name-calling, making abusive / derogatory remarks; players may pick on weaker or less experienced users, repeatedly killing their characters; forwarding unwanted messages to other devices in the immediate vicinity.

INSTANT MESSAGING: the sending of unpleasant messages or content; using someone else's account to forward rude or mean messages via their contacts list.

CHATROOMS AND MESSAGE BOARDS: sending unpleasant or threatening anonymous messages; groups of people deciding to pick on or ignore individuals; making friends under false pretences – people pretending to be someone they're not in order to get personal information that they can misuse in a range of ways – e.g. by spreading secrets or blackmailing.

WEBCAMS: making and sending inappropriate content; persuading or threatening young people to act in inappropriate ways; using inappropriate recordings to manipulate young people.

VIDEO HOSTING SITES: posting embarrassing, humiliating film of someone.

C. Why cyber-bullying is different from conventional bullying

24/7 and the invasion of home / personal space

Cyber-bullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal.

The audience can be very large and reached rapidly

The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyber-bullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying. Electronically-forwarded content is hard to control, and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for targets to move on.

People who cyber-bully may attempt to remain anonymous

This can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person who is cyber-bullying may never be in the same physical space as their target.

The profile of the bully and target

Cyber-bullying can take place both between peers and across generations; teachers have also been targets. Age or size is not important. Bystanders can also become accessories to the bullying; for example, by passing on a humiliating image.

Some instances of cyber-bullying are known to be unintentional

It can be the result of not thinking (something sent as a joke may be deeply upsetting or offensive to the recipient) or a lack of awareness of the consequences – for example saying something negative online about another pupil, or friend that they don't expect to be forwarded or viewed outside their immediate group.

Many cyber-bullying incidents can themselves act as evidence

This is one of the reasons why it is important to know how to respond.

D. Strategies in place to tackle cyber-bullying

The School takes a proactive view and believes that there is no simple cure to cyber-bullying. Therefore, prevention through education is seen as the most effective approach to this problem.

Understanding and talking about cyber-bullying

The whole school community has a shared definition of cyber-bullying. Everyone is made aware of the impact of cyber-bullying and the ways in which it differs from other forms of bullying. This occurs at different stages of the PSHE & RSE curriculum to ensure repetition and understanding, and this helps to build the pupils' resilience. Young people and their parents are made aware of pupils' responsibilities in their use of ICT, and what the sanctions are for misuse. Students and parents know that the School can provide them with support if cyber-bullying takes place out of school.

This is achieved using the following strategies:

- a. The inclusion of cyber-bullying as a topic in the PSHE & RSE programme of study
- b. It forms an integral part of the school ICT induction programme
- c. Awareness is raised through the prominent positioning of information in the public areas of the School and on the SharePoint Pupil Noticeboard (***Being Safe, Being Secure, Being Responsible***)
- d. The positive use of technology is promoted.

Responding to a reported incident of cyber-bullying should follow the same procedures as for those for any other type of bullying. It may also require safeguarding processes to be followed.

Summary of key staff roles

All STAFF (Teaching and Support)

- Responsible for the education of pupils about the topic of bullying through the curriculum, PSHE & RSE and Tutor Time
- Responsible for the close monitoring of pupils' use of their mobile devices in school.
- Responsible for reporting any alleged bullying incident to the Form Tutor of the alleged victim
- Responsible for recording of any alleged bullying incident using the method outlined in the school policy.

PSHE COORDINATOR / SUBJECT LEADER FOR ICT / SENIOR DEPUTY HEAD

- To raise the issue of cyber-bullying in school
- To prepare / deliver sessions on the topic of bullying and the acceptable use of ICT
- To inform / advise parents about anti-bullying policies and the safe use of ICT at home

FORM TUTORS, HEADS OF YEAR AND SENIOR DEPUTY HEAD

- As above in **Procedures**

NETWORK MANAGER

- To ensure that all ICT security systems are in place and current
- To ensure that the management of sensitive information and personal data is effective
- To provide any required evidence that an act of cyber-bullying has taken place through the School Network

THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD AND THE DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS

- To act on any staff concerns relating to where a case of bullying is considered to be peer-on-peer abuse

Reviewed by BGB
March 2024