

## Hereford Cathedral Junior School

### Anti-Bullying Policy

**This policy applies to all pupils at Hereford Cathedral Junior School including those in our EYFS settings**

#### Introduction

Hereford Cathedral Junior School is committed to fostering a spirit of mutual trust between pupils 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.

The School recognises that it must take bullying seriously and aims to:

- Demonstrate that bullying will not be tolerated.
- Take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and for all organised off-site activities. This includes 'cyber bullying' (see below).
- Encourage pupils to tell someone if they or others are being bullied.
- 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.

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 necessary, 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 organised off-site activity; and be supportive of any component of the PSHE course relating to bullying.

Hereford Cathedral Junior School aims to create a culture where bullying will not thrive; to respond to all complaints of bullying; to investigate reasons for bullying incidents in order to help all those concerned and to improve our own responses and strategies. We want our school to be a safe and secure environment where children can learn freely and without fear of bullying. This policy reflects and supports the principles of the Every Child Matters initiative, and includes EYFS.

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## **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying involves the wilful abuse of power, it is persistent and it is personal to the individual child and it is done on purpose. It may take several different forms; physical attack, verbal abuse, psychological abuse (e.g. spreading rumours, isolation, etc.), cyber bullying (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, picture messages, photographs, e-mails). Bullying can also exist in racial, religious, cultural, sexual and homophobic forms. Bullying happens at all levels of society, to adults and children.

Bullying is not a one-off act of random unkindness or violence against a child who happens to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group.

Bullying can have extremely serious consequences if it is not dealt with, causing potential short and long term psychological damage and even suicide.

In summary, when is it bullying? When it is Several Times On Purpose (STOP)

## **Nature and Extent of Bullying**

Victims are often chosen because they are in some way different and/or vulnerable. Children more at risk include those who: lack close friends, read social cues less well, are shy, come from over-protective families, are in a minority racial or religious group, have special educational needs, have a physical impairment (e.g. squint) or disability, are transgender, are adopted or are carers.

Children are often loathe to 'tell' if they know that the 'bully' will automatically be punished. They want the situation resolved permanently. Just punishing a bully could make the situation worse.

In dealing with incidents of bullying the children should be enlisted to help devise solutions, not just making the allegations. They need to have a sense that they are part of the answer, not that everything is off-loaded onto the staff for them to 'do something'.

It is common to speak of 'victim' and 'bully' but it is very important for family and school to remember that experience shows that very often the allocation of blame that these terms presume is far from simple. It is especially important in such an emotive matter as bullying to keep an open mind as the investigation begins, to rely on facts not rumours and to be mindful of the fact that it may never be possible actually to 'prove' every last detail about what did or did not happen.

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## **Aims and Objectives**

In line with the 'Every Child Matters' framework, the School Mission Statement and the School Code of Conduct, we aim through this policy to produce a safe and secure environment where all children can flourish, where bullying is unacceptable and measures are in place to reduce its likelihood.

Hereford Cathedral Junior School stands against bullying in two ways:

By sustaining a general ethos that discourages bullying by providing positive alternatives and encouraging the children to discuss the issues concerned in an open manner.

By having clear procedures, understood by children, staff and parents that are followed when bullying is reported.

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## **CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE BULLYING DOES NOT THRIVE**

- Throughout the school we use the acronym STOP (Several Times On Purpose)
- Teachers should use a range of methods to help prevent bullying, and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They should use drama, role play and stories within the formal curriculum to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children and to realise the restraint required to prevent them falling into bullying behaviour.
- The School takes part in national initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week to promote tolerance and mutual respect during assemblies, and in displays around the School.
- Anti-bullying information is displayed in Junior School classrooms.
- In the Pre-Prep, circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children and to create a positive atmosphere.
- In Juniors timetabled PSHE lessons are used to tackle directly bullying and the issues it raises, as well as to promote considerate and tolerant behaviour in general.
- Victims of bullying are encouraged to report any problems immediately to a member of staff.
- All children will be actively encouraged to report incidents of potential bullying that they witness happening to another child.
- When a report of bullying is made children should be assured that the member of staff will undertake a full and fair investigation into the allegations. It should be made clear that whilst it might be necessary to pass on the information that is disclosed to another member of staff, the child's wishes will be respected as far as good practice will allow, and according to School policies and procedures on confidentiality and child protection.
- Staff should at all times, but particularly outside the classroom, watch out for children who are potential or known victims of bullying and try to ensure that they are protected from further distress.
- Friends of the victims of bullying will be encouraged, as appropriate, to offer support and to ensure that the victim is included in group activities
- The school identifies behaviour trends in pastoral log entries, identifying both potential bullies and potential victims
- Internet access within school must be closely monitored to reduce the likelihood of cyber bullying. Guidance is also offered to children to avoid risk of this kind of bullying outside of school, including advice on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe and secure.
- Annual internet safety sessions (child's age appropriate) are organised for parents. Throughout the year, internet safety is delivered to pupils through assemblies and ICT lessons.

## **SIGNS OF BULLYING**

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It is important to be aware that children who are being bullied will potentially exhibit symptoms in many different ways. Staff and teachers should always be vigilant and look out for the following:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the School Nurse with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

## **Procedure**

It is essential that those children who feel they are being bullied tell an adult, a teacher or their parents. It is essential that concerned parents contact the school **immediately**. It is immeasurably more difficult for staff and parents to address bullying if, "it has been going on for months but I/we didn't want to say anything". Though the matter will clearly be emotive, it is very helpful to staff if right from the start the discussions with parents are not. Equally it is very important that no presumption of blame is made.

## **PROCEDURES FOR STAFF DEALING WITH AN INCIDENT OR ACCUSATION OF BULLYING**

In some cases potentially bullying behaviour is witnessed at first hand by a member of staff. In this case the background to the bullying should be looked into at the time by the member of staff concerned and appropriate action taken. It may be that the incident witnessed is an example of something more systematic going on, and a close eye should be kept on the children concerned.

If a member of staff receives a complaint of bullying from a child or child's parent/carer, the member of staff should investigate the accusation carefully before taking any action. If appropriate, following discussion with a member of the Senior Leadership team, it may be referred directly to a member of the Senior Management Team.

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Things are not always as simple as they might first appear. This investigation might involve talking informally with the victim, as well as any possible independent witnesses. It might be appropriate to interview the accused as well, but being sure to say that you are in the middle of your enquiries and will need to speak about it again soon.

When making these initial enquiries it is important to allow the children to talk openly and without prompting. It is too easy to jump to conclusions and put your own pre-judgments into the minds of the children you are talking to. The children are often confused when this happens and subsequently find it difficult to separate fact from fiction. At this stage staff should do all that they can to support the victim of bullying.

When a child makes an accusation of bullying it is important that the child is informed that it might be necessary to pass the information on to other members of staff in accordance with school policies on confidentiality and child protection. It is not appropriate to offer unconditional confidentiality at any stage.

In all cases, an initial 'Possible Bullying Report' is to be completed by the person who has witnessed the situation or had the situation reported to them and handed to the Deputy Head (Y3-6) or Head of Pre-Prep (EYFS, Y1 & 2)

- After an initial investigation, one of three conclusions will be reached: **Bullying not proved**

An argument or disagreement, or even a physical fight, is not always bullying. If bullying is not proved, all pupils concerned should be reminded of our attitudes to bullying and should be reassured that complaints will always be followed up.

- **Bullying is suspected**

If, after allowing all parties to put forward their views, you suspect there is substance to the allegation although you do not have definitive proof, you should endeavour to identify the reasons for the bullying and to help the children (both suspected bully and victims) deal with the underlying problems causing the bullying behaviour.

At this stage the matter should be reported to the appropriate members of staff, in particular the child's form teacher and Deputy Head or Head of Pre-Prep. Depending on the nature of the particular case and its severity the senior member of staff may become directly involved and talk to the children concerned. A written report should be made, and this will be kept in the children's files and in the Anti- Bullying File.

In the Juniors, the child accused of bullying can be put onto the Warning Stage of Bullying Procedure if the Deputy Head feels that to be an appropriate measure. They need to take into account the exact nature of the allegation and their own judgment as to its probable veracity.

- **Bullying proved**

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If bullying is proved, the culprit should be told clearly of our attitudes to bullying and that bullying is totally unacceptable. He/she should be told that they must stop offending and that a final warning is being given. The School's policies on bullying should be explained clearly, and that repeated offences could ultimately result in suspension or expulsion. The culprit should also be warned to stay away from his/her victims. The Headmaster and the parents of both the bully and the victim should be informed.

Every effort should be made to find out why a child is bullying and to seek ways of helping with any problems that might lie behind the behaviour. Children who bully should understand that whilst we cannot tolerate bullying in school, we will do everything we can to support the child in his/her efforts to reform and to involve the families in this process. A written record should be kept of what has occurred and of any meetings with parents.

All staff as well as the parents of 'bully' and 'bullied', should be notified that there has been a problem that may recur, and should be asked to keep a close watch on the children concerned.

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## FURTHER ACTION

### **Warning Stage**

When bullying is suspected but not proved the child suspected should be told clearly about the accusation and its seriousness. They should be reminded about the School's policy on bullying and warned not to put themselves at risk of further accusations by unkind or inconsiderate behaviour. At this stage parents may or may not be consulted depending on the discretion of the staff involved. A record of the warning will be kept in the School's Anti-Bullying Files.

### **Stage One:**

The culprit is given a formal warning that if he/she continues to bully, further steps will be taken. At this stage it should be made clear that repeated bullying could result in suspension or expulsion. Again all efforts should be made to find the causes of the bullying behaviour and to address these in cooperation with parents. Parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss the problem and seek solutions.

### **Stage Two**

If there is a further incident involving that pupil, the Headmaster must be informed. He, or the Deputy Head, will ask the parents to come into School again and the problem and solutions will be discussed. If necessary, and with the parents' agreement, professional help may be sought for the bully. At this meeting, parents and pupil will be informed clearly of the next stage of our bullying procedure.

### **Stage Three**

If the problem continues, then the Headmaster will decide what further action to take. That may be exclusion, suspension or permanent exclusion (expulsion).

### Further Notes

- In the event of a particularly serious case of bullying being discovered it is possible that a child might go straight to Stage One or Two of the Procedure.
- Written records of all meetings will be placed in the Anti-Bullying File. .

The Deputy Head and Head of Pre-Prep will alert all staff to bullying issues at the weekly staff meeting, as appropriate.

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## **Raising Staff Awareness**

Staff, to include lunch/break time supervisors and gap students, will receive training which aims to reduce the occurrence of bullying by highlighting typical areas around the school where it can happen and by making them aware of the signs of bullying. The training will also ensure that staff are fully aware of our procedures in the event of bullying. This training will be a part of Induction and will also be a part of ongoing INSET. Some of this training will comprise of an online Educare module to be completed regularly by staff.

## **Raising Pupil Awareness**

Pupils in Years 3 to 6 cover a topic on bullying in each year group in their PSHE lessons. Other relevant topics will include conflict resolution and negotiating skills, rights and responsibilities, respect for others and courtesy to others. These topics are also covered regularly in Assemblies. The prefects in Yr.6 can play a vital role in counteracting bullying. The Head and Deputy Head will encourage them to be observant and report bullying, to seek advice and help from staff when encountering bullying and to act as effective role models against bullying.

## **Bullying and the Behaviour Policy**

The anti-bullying policy dovetails with the school's Behaviour Policy and the Child Protection Policy. Verbal bullying (or banter) or any other issue of pupil behaviour or bullying should be treated as a child protection issue if there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

## **PROCEDURES FOR STAFF**

In the School situation, bullying is most likely to affect pupils. However, we are also aware that adults themselves can be bullied in the work place. In alleged cases of bullying, the member of staff should refer to the appropriate Grievance Procedure.

Suspected incidents of bullying of employees should be reported to the Headmaster or to a member of the Senior Leadership Team so that appropriate investigations can be made and appropriate procedures employed. (*Refer to Contract of Employment for procedures*)

Last review date: 31.8.17

Reviewed by: JD & CW

Reviewed by CW Jan 18 in response to ISI RI advice during RCI Jan18

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