

# Anti-Bullying

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High Elms Manor School is committed to providing an environment for children that is safe, welcoming and free from bullying. Bullying of any form is unacceptable in our school, whether the offender is a child or an adult. The victim is never responsible for being the target of bullying. Everyone involved in High Elms Manor School, staff, children and parent/carers, will be made aware of High Elms Manor School's stance towards bullying. Such behaviour will not be tolerated or excused under any circumstances.

## Definition

Bullying is actions that are meant to be hurtful and which happen on a regular basis. High Elms Manor School defines bullying as the repeated harassment of others through emotional, physical, verbal or psychological abuse. All are treated extremely seriously at High Elms Manor School. Examples of such behaviour are as follows:

**Emotional:** Being deliberately unkind, shunning or excluding another person from a group or tormenting them. For example, forcing another person to be 'left out' of a game or activity, passing notes about others or making fun of another person.

**Physical:** Pushing, scratching, spitting, kicking, hitting, biting, taking or damaging belongings, tripping up, punching or using any other sort of violence against another person.

**Verbal:** Name-calling, put-downs, ridiculing or using words to attack, threaten or insult. For example, spreading rumours or making fun of another person's appearance.

**Psychological:** Behaviour likely to instil a sense of fear or anxiety in another person.

**Cyber bullying:** threats and intimidation; harassment or 'cyber-stalking'; vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images ('happy-slapping'); and manipulation.

## Aims and objectives

Our school is a safe and secure environment where everyone can learn without anxiety. Bullying is wrong and damages children's social and / or emotional health. We therefore do all we can to prevent it by sustaining a positive, happy and healthy whole school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

## The role of teachers and other staff in school

All staff take all forms of bullying seriously; they aim to ensure bullying is not acceptable at High Elms Manor School. Teachers and teaching assistants should communicate to children the message that hurting someone (physically or emotionally) is wrong and that bullying is wrong and unacceptable. Staff will make every effort to create a tolerant and caring

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environment in High Elms Manor School, where bullying behaviour is not acceptable. Staff will discuss the issues surrounding bullying openly, including why bullying behaviour will not be tolerated and what the consequences of bullying behaviour will be.

All incidents of bullying will be addressed thoroughly and sensitively.

Children will be encouraged to immediately report any incident of bullying that they witness. They will be reassured that what they say will be taken seriously and handled carefully. If a child or a member of staff tells someone that they are being bullied, they will be given the time to explain what has happened and reassured that they were right to tell.

Staff have a duty to inform the class teacher or the Headteacher if they witness an incident of bullying involving children or adults at High Elms Manor School.

The individual who has been the victim of bullying will be helped and supported by the staff team. They will be kept under close supervision and staff will check on their welfare regularly.

In most cases, bullying behaviour can be addressed according to the strategies set out in the Behaviour Management policy. The bully will be encouraged to discuss their behaviour and think through the consequences of their actions. Where appropriate, they will be encouraged to talk through the incident with the other person concerned.

A member of staff will inform the parents/carers of all the children involved in a bullying incident at the earliest possible opportunity. If appropriate, staff will facilitate a meeting between the relevant parents/carers. At all times, staff will handle such incidents with care and sensitivity.

Where bullying behaviour persists, more serious actions may have to be taken, as laid out in the Suspensions and Exclusions policy.

All incidents of bullying will be reported to the Headteacher and will be recorded in the Incident Record Book. In the light of reported incidents, the Headteacher and other relevant staff will review High Elms Manor School's procedures in respect of bullying.

All teachers and support staff should equip themselves with skills and awareness e.g. through available CPD, policy reviews.

All teachers and teaching assistants should follow PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Educations), SEAL and Circle Time activities on a weekly basis; sessions should centre around bullying and how people can stop bullying if there are any signs of someone being bullied in school. On

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an annual basis, they should participate with their class in national Anti-Bullying Week.

They should follow the principles set out in this policy and Mission Statement in order to continue our school climate of mutual support and praise, so making bullying less likely: when children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to exist.

## **The role of the Headteacher**

The DSP and Headteacher are responsible for overseeing the practices and procedures outlined in this policy and for monitoring its effectiveness. The Headteacher will ensure all principles and roles set out are implemented and followed by teachers and other staff. In particular, this includes ensuring that all children in school know that hurting someone (physically or emotionally) is wrong and that bullying is wrong and unacceptable at High Elms Manor School. This is on a regular basis and may also stem from any signs of bullying. Assemblies are used to communicate this to the whole school.

The Headteacher keeps a record of bullying, including any homophobic bullying.

## **The role of parents / carers**

Parents / carers have the responsibility of supporting this entire policy on positive relationships, behaviour and its appendices, including this one.

Parents/carers concerned about bullying should contact their child's class teacher or the Headteacher straight away. They might be worried that their child is being bullied, but they should also contact the school if they suspect their child may be bullying someone else. If they are dissatisfied with the response, they should follow our complaints procedure.

## **The role of children**

- All pupils should know that hurting someone (physically or emotionally) is wrong and that bullying is wrong.
- Pupils should tell any adult (school staff or parent / carer) if they are being bullied, or if they think they might be. If bullying persists, they must keep on letting people know
- Pupils should tell us their honest views about school in regular feedback e.g. weekly Circle Time or SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) sessions and termly Feedback Forms
- These views can be specifically about bullying but may also be about how safe they feel at school.

## **Dealing with Bullying Behaviour**

Despite all efforts to prevent it, bullying behaviour is likely to occur on occasion and High Elms Manor School recognises this fact. In the event of

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such incidents, the following principles will govern High Elms Manor School's response:

- All incidents of bullying will be addressed thoroughly and sensitively.
- Children will be encouraged to immediately report any incident of bullying that they witness. They will be reassured that what they say will be taken seriously and handled carefully
- Staff have a duty to inform the Manager if they witness an incident of bullying involving children or adults at High Elms Manor School
- If a child or a member of staff tells someone that they are being bullied, they will be given the time to explain what has happened and reassured that they were right to tell
- The individual who has been the victim of bullying will be helped and supported by the staff team. They will be kept under close supervision and staff will check on their welfare regularly

In most cases, bullying behaviour can be addressed according to the strategies set out in the Behaviour Management policy. The bully will be encouraged to discuss their behaviour and think through the consequences of their actions. Where appropriate, they will be encouraged to talk through the incident with the other person concerned

Where bullying behaviour persists, more serious actions may have to be taken, as laid out in the Suspensions and Exclusions policy

A member of staff will inform the parents/carers of all the children involved in a bullying incident at the earliest possible opportunity. If appropriate, staff will facilitate a meeting between the relevant parents/carers. At all times, staff will handle such incidents with care and sensitivity

All incidents of bullying will be reported to the Headteacher and will be recorded in the Incident Record Book. In the light of reported incidents, the Headteacher and other relevant staff will review High Elms Manor School's procedures in respect of bullying.

## **Cyber bullying**

The school recognises that technology plays an important and positive role in children's lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the school community to understand both the benefits and the risks, and to equip children with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly.

What is cyber bullying?

It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying; an extension of face-to-face bullying;

It can also go further in that it can invade home/personal space and can involve a greater number of people;

It can take place across age groups and school staff and other adults can be targeted

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Pupils, staff and parents are educated to understand what cyber bullying is and what its consequences can be;

- We have effective measures to deal effectively with cases of cyber bullying
- We monitor the effectiveness of prevention measures.

## Definition

"Cyberbullying is the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, to deliberately upset someone" DCSF 2007. There are many types of cyberbullying. Although there may be some of which we are unaware, here are the more common:

1. Text messages that are threatening or cause discomfort
2. Picture / video-clips via mobile phone cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed
3. Mobile phone calls: silent calls or abusive messages or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible
4. Emails: threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name
5. Chatroom bullying: menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chatroom
6. Instant messaging (IM): unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger) or Yahoo Chat (although there are others)
7. Bullying via websites: use of defamatory blogs, personal websites and social networking sites e.g. Bebo, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter

## How is cyberbullying different?

Bullying is bullying wherever and however it takes place. Cyberbullying is a method of bullying that uses ICT to upset, threaten or humiliate someone and has the following key characteristics:

- Cyberbullying can take place at any time, in any location; technology allows the user to bully anonymously
- Cyberbullying can occur on vast and rapid scale
- Electronic content is very hard to control; it can never be guaranteed to be removed totally from circulation
- Bullies can take actions to attempt to be anonymous and can feel 'distanced' from the incident
- 'Bystanders' can easily become perpetrators
- The 'profile' of a cyberbully or a target varies – age / size is not an issue
- Cyberbullying incidents can be used as evidence
- Cyberbullying can occur unintentionally often due to a lack of awareness / empathy – 'It was only a joke'

Cyberbullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe. Young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology, an area that can seem a closed world to adults (e.g. the numerous acronyms used by young people - POS - Parents Over Shoulder, TUL – Tell You Later); this makes it difficult for adults to recognise potential threats.

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## **Role of Staff and Headteacher**

At High Elms Manor School, we take this bullying as seriously as all other types of bullying and, therefore, will deal with each situation individually. An episode may result in a simple verbal warning. It might result in a parental discussion. Clearly, more serious cases will result in further sanctions.

The pupils will be involved in developing and communicating a code of advice on protecting themselves from getting caught up in cyber bullying and on reporting cases they experience.

Pupils will be educated about cyber bullying through a variety of means: in assemblies and Anti-bullying Week, projects.

Staff will receive training in identifying cyber bullying and understanding their responsibilities. All staff will be helped to keep up to date with the technologies that children are using.

The Headteacher and staff will ensure regular review and update of existing policies to include cyber bullying where appropriate;

Publicise to all members of the school community the ways in which cyberbullying can be reported;

Provide information on external reporting routes e.g. mobile phone companies, internet service providers, Childline.

Most cases of cyberbullying will be dealt with through the schools existing Anti Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy, it is possible that a member of staff may be a victim and these responses apply to them too.

## **Key advice to pupils**

Adapted from DCSF guidance (no longer available), the following points are taught to pupils on a regular basis, especially when teaching about internet use:

- Always respect others – think about what you say online and what images you send / post.
- Remember that anything you publish online can be made public very quickly and you will never be sure who may have seen it; once something is posted you lose control.
- Treat your password like a toothbrush: never share it with anyone and only give your personal information like mobile phone number or email address to trusted friends.
- Learn how to block or report online bullies or anyone behaving badly!
- Don't retaliate or reply.
- Save the evidence – text messages, online conversation, pictures etc.

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- If you're worried, always make sure you tell an adult you trust or contact someone like Childline, the service provider e.g. website, mobile phone company, school or police.
- If you see cyberbullying take place then support the victim and report the bullying.
- There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyber bullying. For example, [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) has some useful tips.

## **Key advice for parents / carers**

Adapted from DCSF guidance (no longer available), the following points are communicated to parents / carers in newsletters:

- Be alert to your child being upset after using the internet / phones – they may be secretive, change relationships with friends.
- Your child is just as likely to be a bully as to be a target.
- Talk to your child and understand how they are using the internet and their phone.
- Use safety tools and parental controls – if you're not sure how, contact your service provider. Please note tools are not always 100% effective
- Remind your child not to retaliate.
- Keep any evidence of cyberbullying – emails, online conversations, texts etc.
- Report the cyberbullying.
- Contact the school so they can take action if it involves other pupils.
- Contact the service provider e.g. website, phone company etc.
- If the cyberbullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed then consider contacting the police.