

WHOLE SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

See also Anti-Cyberbullying Policy. The Anti-Bullying Policy and the Anti-Cyberbullying Policy should both be understood in the context of the Code of Conduct and the Behaviour Policy, which are available on the school website.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all students are able to learn in an environment where they feel safe, secure and happy.

We understand bullying to be behaviour by an individual or group, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

In bullying there is a conscious desire to frighten, hurt or threaten. Bullying is deliberately harmful behaviour which may be persistently repeated over a period of time; however it may also be a one-off incident. It can take many forms, including:

- teasing or name calling
- verbal intimidation
- malicious gossip
- racial, homophobic, religious, cultural or sexual/sexist harassment, SEN/learning difficulties or disabilities
- extortion
- emotional abuse
- ostracism - isolation of a student from a friendship or peer group
- damaging or stealing the property of the victim
- physical or sexual abuse
- inappropriate text messaging and emailing
- sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet

Bullying can seriously damage a person's confidence and sense of self-worth, and they will often feel that they are at fault in some way. It can lead to serious and prolonged emotional damage for an individual. Those who conduct the bullying or witness the bullying can also experience emotional harm, and the impact on parents and school staff can be significant.

Bullying can take place between students, between students and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyberbullying methods. This policy provides an overall framework for managing all types of bullying behaviour. There is no 'hierarchy' of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

We recognise that signs and effects of bullying may be:

- Anxiety about going to school/truancy from lessons
- Changes in behaviour, including eating habits and interactions with peers or staff
- Loss of concentration or deteriorating school work
- Depression
- In the worst cases, attempted or completed suicide
- Unwillingness to discuss and share aspects of home life

What the school does to prevent bullying:

- Acts quickly when incidents are reported
- Supports all those involved
- Trains all students to act when they see situations that are a cause for concern
- Trains staff to raise awareness of bullying
- Staff are expected to act as role models and to avoid using sarcasm, making derogatory or humiliating comments to students
- Monitors incidents to look for trends about when and where bullying takes place
- Supervises areas of the school at critical times
- Reminds students of their right (and responsibility) to tell
- Willow and Cyber-mentors
- Buddies are allocated at times of transition eg all new students in any year group or when students are experiencing difficulties
- Encourages students to discuss their views on school life at the Student Council
- Raises awareness of bullying, for example, during anti-bullying week in November
- Bullying issues are addressed throughout the school; particularly in English, Drama, PSHE, History and RE lessons
- Assemblies

All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and will normally be dealt with in accordance with the below procedure.

Reporting Bullying

- We want everyone to feel safe to report bullying incidents. A student who is encountering problems, either a bully or a victim is encouraged to talk about any such problems with those who can help, e.g.: in the Preparatory School, the class teacher or any other member of staff that a child feels comfortable talking to, in the Senior School, Sixth Form Prefects (Willow); tutor; Housemistress/Housemaster (HM); Head of Year (HoY); any other staff member s/he chooses.
- They should be given honest advice on how to deal with it. Everyone can be sure of a supportive and sympathetic hearing if they have any problems.
- The person who first receives the report from a student is required to inform the tutor or class teacher as soon as possible. S/he will then speak to the student and inform their HoY or Head of Key Stage. In serious cases, where the child is deemed to be at risk, then information should be passed to the CPO (see CP procedures).
- The class teacher, tutor/HoY/Head of Key Stage/HM will calmly and gently question the student being bullied. Throughout the incident the student being bullied must feel supported by staff and must feel that s/he was right to report the bullying
- The student should be encouraged to speak to her/his parents; in the Preparatory School, due to the young age of the children, parents will be contacted so that the school and home can work in partnership to resolve the issue

- Teaching staff will be informed of the incident if it is deemed appropriate on a 'need to know basis'
- The student or students allegedly doing the bullying will then be questioned individually and then jointly by the appropriate member of staff
- A meeting, if appropriate, will be arranged between the student being bullied and the students doing the bullying in the presence of the investigating member of staff in order to bring the bullying out into the open. The student or students who are bullying will be expected to make a full apology to the person they have bullied.
- The student being bullied is able to find support through, their class teacher, tutor or other member of staff and if appropriate the school counsellor. In addition, Senior School students are able to make use of Willow and the trained Cyber-mentors. In the same way, each student doing the bullying will also be given help and encouragement to change his/her behaviour and attitude by their tutor or class teacher.
- Parents of all concerned will be contacted, given the facts and invited to a meeting in school.
- A written report of the bullying will be kept by the HoY or Head of Key Stage. All reports of alleged bullying should be noted on the Cause for Concern form, available on the K: drive. These should be passed to the Vice Principal (pastoral)/CPO to enable patterns to be identified.
- Sanctions will be given according to the Code of Conduct and in serious incidents or persistent bullying the sanction may be exclusion from school.

"Willow" (Peer Support and Counselling - Senior School only)

The school aims to educate students in assertiveness in order to prevent them becoming victims and so that they do not become bullies. Our emphasis on community also encourages a sense of group responsibility for the happiness of an individual. Willow encompasses all these principles and is a practical application of them.

Willow works under the umbrella of the Chaplaincy team. It consists of a group of Senior Prefects and other Sixth Form students. The Chaplaincy Co-ordinator (the Vice Principal) and the Head of RE (and also a member of extended SMT) assist students in this role. They advise, organise training and induction and meet with them regularly.

Aims of Willow

- To improve communication, understanding and relationships within the school. To encourage self-confidence, compassion and tolerance in all.
- To train New Hall students to be independent and assertive.
- To put into practice New Hall's Anti-Bullying Policy.

- To make all students understand the range of forms that bullying takes, to recognise when it is happening, and to take action to stop it.

Willow has weekly meetings at which issues related to bullying are discussed, problems explored and strategies suggested in an atmosphere of confidentiality.

Willow welcomes suggestions from the whole school for strategies to improve integration eg:

- A 'buddy' network. Each new student joining the school has a buddy/friend/minder appointed to look after her/him. The staff already operate this system.
- Family networks. Vertical grouping on a much smaller scale, these families might be together at special functions, Chapel, suppers etc.

Anti-Bullying Advice for Parents

New Hall School has an Anti-Bullying Policy and several methods of dealing with bullying in school if it arises. A child is being bullied when s/he is exposed to negative actions on the part of one or more other pupils.

Bullying can take many forms and can include the following:

- Name calling and teasing
- Threats and extortion
- Physical violence
- Damage to someone's belongings
- Leaving pupils out of social activities deliberately and frequently
- Spreading malicious rumours
- Bullying by mobile phone text messages or email

Parents and families have an important part to play in helping schools deal with bullying:

- Discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show them how to resolve the difficult situations without using violence or aggression.
- Watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents and friends are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Don't dismiss it. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

If your child has been bullied

- Calmly talk to your child about his/her experience
- Make a note of what s/he says, particularly who was said to be involved: how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened.
- Reassure your child that s/he has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying
- Explain to your child that should further incidents occur s/he should report them to a teacher immediately
- Make an appointment to see your child's tutor or class teacher

When talking to teachers:

- Try to stay calm and understand that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- Be as specific as possible about what your child has said
- Ask how you can help
- Stay in touch with the school and let us know if things improve as well as if the problems continue

If your child is bullying other children

Many children may be involved with bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

Children sometimes bully because:

- They don't know it is wrong
- They are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family whom they admire
- Their friends encourage them to bully
- They are going through a difficult time and are acting out their aggressive feelings

To stop your child bullying:

- Talk with your child; explain that what s/he is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- Make an appointment to see your child's tutor and discuss how you and the school can stop him/her bullying others
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when s/he is co-operative or kind