Anti-Bullying Policy

1 Context

1.1 Our School Values

Our school is one in which we want students to flourish both academically and socially. We aim to foster a healthy and safe community where individuals take responsibility for their own behaviour and show respect for others emphasising the importance of positive relationships amongst all members of our school community

1.2 Purpose of the anti-bullying policy:

This policy seeks to:

- Ensure the whole school community has a shared understanding of what bullying is and the detrimental impact it can have on wellbeing and achievement
- Ensure staff, parents, carers, and students work together to ensure a safe learning environment for all and to safeguard students who experience bullying
- Prevent, de-escalate and or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour
- Ensure all bullying behaviours and prejudiced based incidents are taken seriously, recorded and responded to in a proportionate and consistent way
- Encourage shared solutions so that those reporting bullying have an appropriate say in what happens next
- Ensure those using bullying behaviour are supported to change their behaviour
- Outline the consequences including sanctions for those who are bullying
- Ensure everyone is mutually valued and respected and that in line with the Equality Act 2010 we aim to eliminate discrimination based on sex, gender identity, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and belief
- Encourage students to adopt agreed standards of behaviour and values in order to develop a sense of right and wrong and the ability to take responsibility for their own actions.

Our school's commitment is that when a student or parent or carer speaks out about bullying:

- they will be listened to
- their concerns will be taken seriously
- the matters will be investigated
- together we will find a way to tackle it
- someone will be there to help and support them.

1.3 Links with other school policies and practices

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour policy
- Complaints policy
- Child protection policy
- Online safety and Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)
- Curriculum policies, such as: PSHE, citizenship and computing

1.4   Consultation Process

This policy was developed in consultation with relevant staff, school council and the pupil of colour working group.

2   Definitions

2.1   Bullying

In our school we use the definition of bullying outlined in the *Bullying and prejudice – based incident recording and reporting guidance for Brighton & Hove Schools, 2015:*

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying is recognised by our school as being a form of child-on-child abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development

Our school defines cyber bullying as *the use of information and communications technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones, the internet and social media to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.*

As a school we recognise cyberbullying as an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. We recognise that cyberbullying can have a particularly negative impact because it can invade home and personal space. There are also challenges for example in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target. Ongoing changes to technology mean the methods used to bully keep evolving.

Bullying is not one-off acts of aggression or nastiness, such behaviours if repeated, however, may be viewed as bullying.

Our school recognises that adults can use bullying behaviour and that adults can be bullied by students. This policy covers all bullying involving students.

2.2   Friendship issues, relational conflict and bullying behaviour

Our school acknowledges that friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be upsetting for both students and parents and carers, but it is important to distinguish between the two, as the responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour.

Students will fall in and out with each other, have arguments, stop talking to each other and have disagreements. This relational conflict can be a normal part of growing up. During a relational conflict or friendship problem groups of students may disagree, be very upset and find it difficult to resolve the disagreement without adult help. It is unlikely however, to be repeated behaviour and may even be accidental, but students will make an effort to resolve the problem and will want to resolve the problem.

However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems or relational conflict can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour particularly when there is an imbalance of power when a group acts against an individual for example.

2.3   Forms of bullying

Bullying can take many forms:
- Physical bullying (hitting, punching, finger jabbing, any inappropriate touching, pinching, jostling, breaking, damaging or taking property)
- Verbal bullying (name calling, taunts put downs, threats, teasing, ridiculing, belittling, excessive criticism or sarcasm.)
- Emotional / psychological (rumours or stories, exclusion from a group, shunning, invading privacy, graffiti designed to embarrass)
- Cyber-bullying (sending nasty phone calls, text messages or in e-mails/chat rooms/social media.)

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another. This can relate to
- the size of the individual,
- the strength of the individual
- the numbers or group size involved
- being from a majority rather than a minority group
- Anonymity – through the use of cyberbullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc.

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and cyberspace. It can take place in group activities and between families in the local community.

2.4   Prejudice-based bullying

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, on the grounds of ethnicity, religion and belief, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. It might be motivated by actual differences, perceived differences or as a result of association with someone else.

Our school records these forms of prejudiced based bullying by their type and report on them to the local authority. This is in recognition that these groups are protected by the Equality Act 2010 because of the prejudice experienced by some groups in the wider society. We also recognise that there are other groups

of children and young people who may be vulnerable to bullying including children in care, young carers or those with mental health issues.

We recognise that the fact that a child or young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. We therefore ensure that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with trusted members of staff.

Biphobic incidents of bullying (prejudiced based incidents targeting a bisexual person) and transphobic incidents are recognised as distinct from homophobia because of who they target.

The school acknowledges that there can be a lack of trust in how schools respond to racism. Therefore, the school has set up a pupil of colour working group to build trust with the school by focussing on belief, acknowledgement, appropriate response and developing a common language.

2.5   Prejudiced based / hate incident

This is a one-off incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility, prejudice or ignorance, based on a person's perceived or actual ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation or gender identity or their association with someone from one of these groups. These can also include indirect prejudice driven behaviour that is not targeted at one individual. The impact of this expression of prejudice against an equality group whether intentional or not can be damaging and must therefore be responded to as a prejudice based or hate incident.

One-off incidents are not bullying. However, we separately record prejudiced based incidents identified using the above definition as we recognise the impact they can have and that they could be an indicator of bullying behaviour or contribute to an environment where bullying could happen.

2.6   Bullying outside of school

At our school we understand that bullying behaviour can take place on the way to and from school or in the wider community and can have a significant impact on a pupil's wellbeing and their ability to learn. We recognise that cyberbullying in particular can mean that a child or young person can experience bullying throughout their day and including when they are at home. Therefore we act to prevent and respond to bullying outside of school as far as we are able to. We will sometimes seek support from the Police and/or the Community Safety Case Work Team to help us to do this effectively.

2.7   Being proactive

Bullying can seriously damage a child's confidence, sense of self-worth and future mental health, and they will often feel that they are at fault in some way. Students may not realise they are being bullied because of their age or special educational need. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or taking unusual absences. There may be evidence in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. These signs and symptoms may indicate other problems, but bullying is considered a possibility and will be investigated. Therefore, like other safeguarding issues staff aim not wait to be told of bullying to raise their concerns. We are also aware that some groups of students may find it harder to report bullying than others. For example, black and minority ethnic students might feel that reporting racism will put their friendship groups at risk or *lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender pupils* might fear that reporting of bullying might cause staff to ask questions or make assumptions about their sexual orientation or gender identity. Wherever possible and appropriate we will involve those who are experiencing bullying in finding the solutions.

3   Prevention of bullying

3.1   We use a range of strategies at our school to prevent bullying behaviour:

- The school's core values of respect, creativity and resilience are promoted across the school day and the curriculum.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Recognises the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionally impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values.
- PSHE education and other curriculum subjects are used to promote social and emotional skills including those needed to work together, show empathy, build friendships, get support and help others.
- Small group work interventions are used to support those who need extra help to develop their social and emotional aspects of learning.
- PSHE education lessons are used to develop understanding of safety and how to stay safe.
- Online safety is taught across the curriculum and through assemblies.
- The Safer Schools App has been launched to the school community.

- PSHE education lessons are used to develop understanding of bullying, its impact and ways to respond to bullying situations. PSHE education is also used to develop understanding of similarity and differences and the unacceptability of all forms of prejudice and bullying.
- Regular whole school assemblies are also used to develop understanding of bullying, its impact and encourage reporting.
- The whole school participates in annual activities for anti-bullying week and a rolling programme of other events such as Black History Month, LGBT History Month, International Women's Day, Refugee Awareness Week, UK Disability History Month, Show Racism the Red Card (Wear Red day), etc.
- Tutor Time provides opportunities for dealing with issues that have arisen in the class and school and a time to reflect. Tutor Time resources are used to challenge prejudices and stereotypes.
- School council has provided a forum for discussing some bullying issues and for students to decide ways of preventing it and supporting those who are bullied.
- Year 7 Peer Mentors are used to enable pupils to resolve friendship problems and low level bullying behaviour without adult intervention.
- We regularly survey pupils through the *Safe and Well School Survey* and parents complete a school survey at their child's parents' evening.
- Local organisations such as Allsorts Youth Project and Safety Net support our anti-bullying work by for example talking about the impact of prejudiced based bullying.
- The values of the school are upheld at all times. All staff monitor behaviour and intervene when it becomes necessary to address friendship problems and prevent bullying from developing. The school's core values and British Values are promoted through assemblies.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

3.2   Staff training
All staff new to the school receive training about bullying behaviour and prejudice behaviour. During staff training for all school staff we take care to ensure all staff are trained to understand the different forms of bullying behaviour including cyber-bullying and are trained to identify, record and challenge prejudiced based incidents and bullying. We recognise that staff training is often needed to develop a full understanding of how bullying can affect specific groups of students and we access support from specialist services including for example Allsorts

4   Strategies for responding to bullying behaviour – a whole school approach

4.1   Reporting bullying
Early identification of bullying is the most effective way of minimising bullying behaviour and the effects on the person being bullied. We also acknowledge that

the student doing the bullying needs to understand that their behaviour is unacceptable and will need support to change their behaviour and explore the underlying reasons for bullying.

Students are encouraged to report any harmful or hurtful behaviour, even if they are not sure whether it is bullying. They are encouraged to report for themselves or for their friends. They can do this through:

- Speaking to their Form tutor / Pastoral manager / Head of Year / Head of School
- Speaking to another trusted adult in the school community
- Speaking to a parent/other adult who may then contact the school in any of the ways listed
- Reporting their concern through our online reporting tool within SLG. This reporting tool can be used for any concerns students may have both within and outside of school. Their report will be sent to Mr Ward if they are Year 7, Year 8 or Year 9, and to Mr Furini if they are Year 10 or Year 11.

Links to student and parent/carer support services across the school as follows:
- Counselling and Life coaching
- Support Agencies for students
- parent_carer_support (dorothy-stringer.co.uk)
- LGBTQIA+ club
- Wellbeing drop-in service
- Calling a confidential helpline such as ChildLine.

Parents and carers **must** inform us if they think or know there is a problem for their own child or for another child. They can do this by contacting their child's form tutor, Pastoral Manager or Head of Year.

Parents and carers who want more support in how to respond if their child is being bullied may find this leaflet helpful School bullying booklet (brighton-hove.gov.uk)

4.2   Recording bullying

All incidents of bullying must be recorded. The member of staff who was told about the incident will record it in CPOMS and assign to the child's Pastoral Manager or Head of Year. All incidents are recorded according to type and behaviour involved so that we can monitor the individual incidents, but also monitor incidents across the school to allow us to identify patterns. This monitoring will inform the PSHE education curriculum and assemblies.

4.3   Responding to bullying

All students have a role to play to intervene to support their peers (if it is safe to do so) and to report bullying:
- Alert an adult in school to any concerns

- Talk to your friends about the situation
- Above all always tell someone. Adults will usually need to intervene to stop bullying
- All of us have a responsibility to avoid encouraging or inciting bullying and to not stand by and let someone else be harmed.

Students (if you have been bullied)
- If you feel able to and it is safe to do so, ask the bully to stop, ignore it, say no and walk away
- Try not to show you are upset or angry, but remember this is not your fault
- Tell a friend what is happening and ask for their support
- Tell a trusted adult in or out of school (ask a friend to go with you if it helps)
- Do not delete evidence of online bullying as it can be used as evidence
- Report anonymously through the school's online reporting tool.
- It is possible the situation will take time to resolve, but unless you tell someone we cannot help you.

Parents and carers
- Listen and talk to your child about the situation and discuss and agree next steps
- Contact a member of staff if you are worried or concerned
- Monitor social networks/computer use.
- Reinforce the value of good behaviour

For further advice, read this leaflet from Brighton and Hove: School bullying booklet (brighton-hove.gov.uk)

School Staff
- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- Take seriously any report of bullying.
- Record incident in CPOMS and assign to the child's pastoral manager or Head of Year.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- When we investigate the bullying case and we will follow the guidelines below:
  - Speak with the person targeted for bullying and involving them in what they would like to happen next
  - Speak to the student(s) carrying out the bullying behaviour and find out their perspectives
  - Find witnesses to explain what they saw
  - Contact and involve the parents and carers of those targeted and the parents and carers of those doing the bullying

- We will challenge the behaviour and ideas of the person doing the bullying and help them to understand that what they said or did was hurtful and not in line with the school's values, ethos or policies
- We will consider the intentions of the perpetrator before applying sanctions and consider carefully cases where the perpetrator was retaliating following ongoing bullying
- We will let other students that have witnessed the incident know that the behaviour was unacceptable and that it is being dealt with
- We will keep the target of bullying and their parents and carers informed about progress and any actions taken and a review date
- We will identify clear times to 'check in' with those involved (including parents and carers) to ensure issues have been resolved.

Where bullying behaviour is denied and evidence is hard to find, those involved will be closely observed and monitored. The student who is reporting they are being bullied will be asked to record and report any incidents which cause them concern.

Head teacher and governors
- Reports of bullying and prejudiced based incidents will be made by the Head teacher / SLT to the governing body
- The Head teacher / SLT will also report on the Safe and Well School Survey
- The Head teacher and the governing body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy in discussion with the School Council and the staff in school. They may involve any unresolved concerns raised by students or parents and carers about bullying in the school community.

4.4   Interventions to support responses to bullying
As a school we are committed to ensure that those who have used bullying behaviours understand the impact of this and the unacceptability of bullying inside school and wider. When appropriate and with the agreement of all parties, we also run restorative justice sessions to encourage those involved to take responsibility for and make amends for their actions. In some cases we refer the incident to The Community Safety Casework Team who can be contacted by calling 01273 292735 or by e-mail at communitysafety.casework@brighton-hove.gov.uk. A duty officer is available Mon to Fri 0900-1700 to provide advice and guidance regarding any prejudiced based/hate incident concern.

4.5   Sanctions
Sanctions by themselves are unlikely to change bullying behaviour but sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy will be used where appropriate and to send a clear message about the seriousness of the behaviour. These might include:
- Official warnings to cease offending or withdrawal of certain school privileges
- Detention

- Involvement of the Neighbourhood Schools Officer (the Police)
- Exclusion from certain areas of premises
- Internal suspension
- Seclusion
- Fixed term suspension
- Permanent suspension
- Parents and carers of those involved will be informed of any action taken.
- Records will be kept on student files.

Complaints

If a parent or carer thinks the school has not resolved a complaint effectively then they should follow the school's complaint procedure. This can be found on the school website: https://dorothy-stringer.co.uk/contact_us/

Monitoring and Evaluation

This document will be monitored and evaluated regularly and updated to take account of new Government and local guidance, and the views of the whole school community.