



Anti Bullying Policy

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This policy is intended to help and guide staff in their work with students in the school. It should be read in conjunction with the school's Child Protection, Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety Policies.

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1. SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT.

The aim of the Hardwick House School anti-bullying policy is to prevent bullying of any sort and to ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the community, including Directors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and be familiar with the School policy on bullying; therefore the aim of the policy is to help members of the school community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly, to prevent it. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in the community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policies on Equal Opportunities, Behaviour and exclusion our PSHE schemes of work and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of students.

2. SCHOOL VISION AND AIMS

VISION

Hardwick House is a school at the heart of its community.

We aspire for all our students to work in an environment that encourages lifelong learning, equipping students with the tools and skills to achieve.

We will work to encourage students to develop confidence, self-belief and be aware of the choices open to them.

We will encourage tolerance and inclusion, where all students are able to build effective relationships based on strength of community, friendship and respect. In short, we expect the students of Hardwick House to be both aspirational and inspirational

AIMS

Hardwick House School has 4 core aims for our young people;

- To develop a young person's ability to foster positive relationships.
- To develop a young person's independent life and living skills.
- To develop a young person's ability to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.
- To develop a young person's employment prospects.

The Ethos of the school sets out the characteristics, which we value and actively work to provide for our students. The aims of the school guide all our work; the ethos describes the "climate" in which our work takes place.

ETHOS

Hardwick House School will provide a personalised curriculum to inspire students to accomplish their short term and long term goals whilst still working on core areas of Communication &

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Language, Cognition & Learning and Social & Emotional Development. To support this the senior leadership and staff of Hardwick House School will promote an environment where;

- Students are happy, secure, and safe.
- Students learn, develop, and mature with dignity and respect.
- All students and staff are expected to respect each other and all people irrespective of race, gender, ethnic origin, ability, and social class.
- Progress and attainments are recognised and praised with the highest expectations of achievement and behaviour.
- There is clarity about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
- Students are encouraged to interact co-operatively and constructively.
- We encourage good relationships, self-reliance, and responsibility.

3. DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves, and is often motivated by prejudice. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include,

- Physical (including sexual) assault.
- Verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing or making offensive remarks.
- Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group in a way that is intended to upset others. Examples include using social websites, mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, video and e-mail.
- Indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours.

Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidation but is often hidden and subtle. It includes actions or comments that are racist, religious or cultural, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, sexual or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape) or any reference to Special Educational Needs.

The seriousness of bullying cannot be emphasised enough. Bullying is among the top concerns that parents have about their children's safety and well-being at and on the way to and from school. Bullying is also a top concern of children and young people themselves. Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem; and destroys their sense of security and can be psychologically damaging. Bullying impacts on its victims' attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives. At worst, bullying has been a factor in pupil suicide.

It is acknowledged that bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and may well need help. It should also be recognised that the consequences of being allowed to 'get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victim. All students deserve the opportunity to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is. Students are encouraged through PSHE lessons to discuss the differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment, assault and threatening behaviour. If staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

4. ANTI-BULLYING PROCEDURE

What to look for

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

Members of staff and all members of the community must be alert to the signs of bullying; legal responsibilities are known and community members should act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with School policy. Surveys have shown that in the vast majority of bullying incidents, **MOST** people knew that what was going on was wrong. Sometimes people, either through lethargy, peer group pressure, or tacit support for what is going on, fail to take action.

What to do

The way to stamp out bullying is for people to be aware of the issues involved, and to be clear in their own minds what action to take should cases arise:

If you are the victim

1. If you feel able to, confront the bully by verbally making him/her aware that you think that what he/she is doing is wrong.
2. Share your feelings with someone else.
3. If possible talk to a member of Staff, your Tutor or Teacher about the incident. If you would rather not go straight to a member of staff or talk to your friends; They may well be able to advise on an appropriate course of action, or will be able to involve other people who can. There are also people outside the School who would be willing to help.

Childline: 0800 1111

5. PROCEDURE IF A STUDENT SHOULD WITNESS BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

1. Support the victim by offering your friendship and make it clear that in your opinion what is happening to them is wrong.
2. Encourage them to speak out on their own behalf by confronting the bully, or with their permission, confront the bully yourself.
3. Accompany the victim to a trusted adult, or suggest that you see their Class Tutor on their behalf.

6. PROCEDURE FOR MEMBERS OF STAFF SHOULD YOU WITNESS AN INCIDENT OF BULLYING

1. Reassure and support the students involved.
2. Advise them that you are required to pass details on to the relevant member of the pastoral team.
3. Inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible. Staff must record all incidents of reported bullying and ensure that the Head of School knows. A central log of all complaints or incidences of bullying and record the way in which they were dealt.

7. WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

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The victim will be interviewed by their tutor, on their own, and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. The victim is also given the opportunity to discuss his own reactions and behaviour towards the bully. The victim is given support and advice and counselling is suggested if deemed appropriate.

Once the tutor is clear that a bullying offence has been committed, the bully and any others involved will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them.

Details of the incident will be recorded on all the students' files. The Head of School is copied in so that it can be recorded as a bullying incident and will decide on an appropriate course of action. In the first instance the tutor will interview the student or students whose behaviour has caused distress and give him/them a formal bullying warning; making it clear that any further incident (or discussion about the current incident) would be considered to be further bullying. It will be made clear why the behaviour was inappropriate and unacceptable. Support and counselling will be offered.

If the tutor decides it is appropriate, or it is a pupil's second offence, the Director of Behaviour will become involved and the parents of the perpetrator/s will be informed by letter or telephone. The following sanctions may be applied in accordance with the School behavioural policy.

Formal School Warning from the Head of School

The Head of School will speak to the students involved and will contact the parents or guardians giving details of the offence and inviting them in to School to discuss the matter and to be present when their child is given a Formal School Warning. Their support for the School's actions should be enlisted if possible.

Exclusion at the Head of School's discretion (see the School's Discipline and Exclusion Policy).

These are minimum sanctions. In very serious cases it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or Social Services. However, it is the policy of the School to attempt to resolve such issues internally using our own disciplinary sanctions, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

The School will raise awareness of the staff through training and take action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur. The key points from this policy will be prominently displayed on School notice boards and will be discussed with students during Tutor led sessions. Anti-bullying will feature as a discussion point for the School Council.

Annual pupil surveys will be used to facilitate an understanding of the level and type of bullying that students might have experienced.

Incidents of reported bullying will be followed up by Tutors, to monitor that the problem has been resolved. The record of bullying offences will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership team regularly at SLT meetings to watch for patterns and check that the policy is effective.

We are absolutely confident that the vast majority of Hardwick Houses School will agree with our sentiments on Bullying. It is our intention to identify and take action against those who do not.

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