

# HBJ PREVENTION OF BULLYING POLICY

<b>APPLIES TO:</b>	All staff and all students.
<b>LAST UPDATED:</b>	<b>January 2025</b>
<b>REVISIONS:</b>	<b>Feb 2025</b>

## **1. SCOPE & PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This policy relates to students. *For any bullying incidents relating to staff refer to the Internal Grievance Policy (Inc Workplace Bullying) (HS45).*
- 1.2 HBJ is committed to providing a caring and safe environment for all students and staff. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all students or staff should be able to report the incident and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We recognise that bullying, both physical and emotional, is not tolerated in AISL Harrow schools.
- 1.3 The highest level of sanctions may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying.
- 1.4 All staff, students and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on individuals and the school community and should ensure that students can work in an environment without fear.
- 1.5 The school considers all forms of bullying to not be in line with the Harrow Values and code of conduct. Furthermore, the school is responsible for acting upon disclosures, and incidents of alleged bullying that take place between students outside of the school day and campus (e.g. online bullying). The school endeavours to deal with cases of bullying through its internal procedures. However, in the event of harassment and/or threatening behaviour which is persistent the school may regard this to be a criminal offence.
- 1.6 Definition of Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal or physical actions over time which intentionally hurt another student or group of students physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability. It may occur directly or remotely through the likes of cyber-technology (social media, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email). See Appendix 1 for further details on types of bullying.

## **2. AIMS**

- 2.1 This policy aims:
  - a) establish that the school takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated;
  - b) present measures to be undertaken to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and during off-site activities;
  - c) to support everyone in their actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied;
  - d) to demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of students is enhanced by dealing proactively and positively with bullying;
  - e) to promote an environment where it is seen as positive to tell someone about bullying;
  - f) to promote an environment where students treat one another with respect and care.

## **3. IDENTIFYING BULLYING**

- 3.1 Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour e.g. becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, a lack of concentration, or truancy.
- 3.2 All staff need to be aware of these possibilities and report promptly any suspicions of bullying to

the appropriate pastoral leader.

- 3.3 In the upper school we have termly student surveys that should have items relating to bullying.
- 3.4 If a parent suspects or knows that their child is a victim of bullying, they are asked to:
- Listen carefully to the child, reassure and support them
  - Advise them how to cope in a non-violent manner (e.g. walk away)
  - Build up the child's self-esteem and learn how to be assertive
  - Communicate openly with the school
- 3.5 If a parent suspects or knows that their child is involved with bullying behavior they are asked to:
- Talk through the situation calmly.
  - Support the school in expecting this behaviour to stop (reminding child if necessary).
  - Accept that this may have happened due to peer group pressure and the child may be bullying to avoid being bullied themselves.
  - Acknowledge that this may or may not be an isolated incident.
  - Ease the situation by using a sensitive approach.
  - Explain to their child why this situation cannot continue and why it is important to you and your family.
- 3.6 Students are encouraged to discuss the issue of bullying within their pastoral teachers.

#### **4. REPORTING AND RECORDING**

- 4.1 The school promotes the idea that caring for each other is of prime concern. All situations are dealt with promptly and talked through thoroughly. We seek to gain a clear picture of the situation and clearly explain ideas about unfairness, cruel actions and the consequences of such actions.
- 4.2 If bullying is suspected by a teacher, or reported to a teacher, the incident should be dealt with immediately by the teacher approached:
- Explain to the person disclosing bullying that if you feel they may be at risk, you cannot promise confidentiality.
  - Explain to them that you will discuss with them how to proceed, so they can be as comfortable as possible with the actions to be taken, and you are able to sustain their confidence.
  - Initially establish the facts; ask open-ended questions; listen, believe and support students who say they have been bullied.
  - If possible, gain a written account of what happened, asking them to express their opinions; the written records should be dated and signed, by all parties present. Witness statements should be included as appropriate. Statements and interviews should be conducted in the presence of a responsible adult, whenever possible. Statements about possible consequences should not be made.
  - Inform the appropriate Teacher/Pastoral Leader who should ensure that a full record of the incident has been made, and that the truth of the incident has been established as far as possible.
  - The Pastoral Leader will then make a decision on how to proceed with the problem in consultation with the member of staff involved.
  - The Pastoral Leader will meet separately with the alleged bully and victim to discuss the specific incident(s) and the general situation in order to identify the cause of the bullying; depending on the seriousness of the incident(s) or general situation. Parents may be invited to this or a further meeting; appropriate sanctions will be imposed which will follow from the *Sanctions & Behaviour Policy*.



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- h) Cyber-bullying will be investigated using the same procedures, with support from the ICT technical team, where appropriate. Schools are expected to make appropriate use of internet monitoring software.
  - i) Counselling could be used to support both the victim and bully in order to help change attitudes and behaviours.
  - j) The situation will continue to be monitored by the relevant pastoral leader for an appropriate length of time after the incident has been resolved.
  - k) The teacher must record the details of the incident on the ISAMs, and/or safeguarding software (MyConcern) passing details to the relevant pastoral leaders for the student concerned.
- 4.3 All incidents must be recorded and reported, with subsequent action noted, on ISAMs and/or safeguarding software MyConcern.

## **5. FOLLOW-UP**

- 5.1 Any incident of bullying that has been dealt with should be followed up with both victim and bully to ensure that that it has not restarted. This should be done by the relevant pastoral lead as appropriate and needs to be ongoing regularly at first and then intermittently afterwards.
- 5.2 Involvement of Parents/Other adults

We aim to support parents of children who are either bullying or being bullied. We support parents by discussing the problems and offering help and advice as soon as the situation becomes evident.

Parents are invited to meetings at school so that the situation can be closely monitored. If the child is bullying, then sanctions may be discussed. The reasons why the child may have chosen to bully are also discussed. What kind of support can be given to the child to help them change their behaviour is explored. If the child is being bullied, problems and possible solutions are discussed, including ways to help the child deal with this problem, ways to help build self-esteem (often connected to those who are bullied) and ways to ensure all incidents are reported and explored.

## **6. ANTI-BULLYING EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM**

- 6.1 The School raises awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through the curriculum.
- 6.2 When a major problem is identified with bullying in a particular year group there may be a need to alter the proposed curriculum and Tutorial Programme so that the issue is specifically addressed at that time.

## **APPENDIX I: WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BULLYING?**

Bullying can take many forms, but it usually includes the following types of behaviour:

1. Physical: Hitting, kicking, pinching, punching, scratching, spitting or any other form of physical attack. Damage to or taking someone else's belongings may also constitute physical bullying.
2. Verbal: Name-calling, insulting, making racist, sexist or homophobic jokes, remarks or teasing, using sexually suggestive or abusive language, offensive remarks.
3. Indirect: Spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending abusive mail, and email and text messages (cyber bullying).
4. Cyber: Any type of bullying that is carried out by electronic means, including:
  - a) Text message bullying
  - b) Picture/video clip bullying via mobile phone cameras
  - c) Phone call bullying via mobile phones
  - b) Email bullying
  - c) Chatroom bullying
  - d) Bullying through instant messaging (IM)
  - e) Bullying via websites and social media

### **Further information about specific types of bullying**

Bullying related to race, religion or culture: A high proportion of bullied students have experienced racist or faith-based bullying. When black and ethnic minority children experience bullying it is more likely to be severe bullying.

Bullying related to SEND and disabilities: Children with SEN and disabilities are more at risk of bullying than their peers. Children with SEND do not always have the levels of social confidence and competence, and the robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying. Where children with SEN and disabilities are themselves found to be bullying, we apply the same standards of behaviour as we would to the rest of the school community.

Bullying related to appearance or health conditions: Those with health or visible medical conditions, such as eczema, may be more likely than their peers to become targets for bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight, and other body image issues, can result in bullying.

Bullying related to sexual orientation: Evidence of homophobic bullying suggests that children who are gay (or perceived to be) face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other types of bullying. A student may not want to report bullying if it means 'coming out' to teachers and parents before they are ready to.

Sexist or sexual bullying: Sexist and sexual bullying affects boys as well as girls. Boys may be the victims of their own sex. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name-calling, comments and overt 'looks' about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty. In addition, uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery or graffiti may be used.

Students identifying as transgender or experiencing gender dysphoria (feeling that they belong to another gender or who do not conform with the gender role prescribed to them) can also be targeted by bullies.

### **Possible signs and symptoms of bullying:**

- Reluctance to go to school (school phobic)
- A pattern of minor illnesses
- Damaged possessions or clothing
- Missing items of equipment
- Aggression to siblings
- Mood swings or character changes
- Changes in eating habits
- Difficulty sleeping
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Get into physical or verbal fights
- Have friends who bully others
- Blame others for their problems
- Don't accept responsibility for their actions
- Standards falling at school
- Unexplained injuries
- Asking for money or stealing money

Linked are the Upper School procedures including behaviour and sanctions and can be located in our [school guidelines 2024/25](#)