

## Anti-Bullying Policy

### Statement of intent

Gayhurst has regard to the DfE guidance (2013): 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies' and is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all its pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at the school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Gayhurst is a 'TELLING' school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff.

Gayhurst School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting us in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions. This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on request. It is also available and known to staff including recently appointed staff.

### What is bullying?

"Bullying may be defined as: Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally". Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and may cause psychological damage. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer.

### Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, offensive allusions to race or ethnicity
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours or teasing
- Cyber threats, taunts, name calling and the spreading of rumours via email, the internet, text messages, calls and associated technology such as camera and videos.

### **Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Gayhurst has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### **Objectives of this policy**

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying very seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

### **Signs and symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of or unwilling to go to school
- changes their usual routine
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries at night or has nightmares
- often feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work, or produces work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- comes home with torn clothes or damaged books and personal belongings
- has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile telephone

- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs or behaviours could indicate other problems which are referred to in the child protection policy but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## Procedures

### PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We take the following preventative measures in place in order to ensure that bullying does not become a problem:

- All new pupils (including and our youngest pupils) are briefed thoroughly on the school's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that whistle-blowers who act in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported.
- All new members of staff are given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and in how to react to allegations of bullying in their first week at school. They are required to read the school's policy as part of their induction. We use appropriate assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our PSCHE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school.
- Other lessons, particularly RS, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills.
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place in line with our policy on whistle-blowing.
- Parents are also responsible for noting and reporting any incidents of bullying that take place.
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are kept securely in order to evaluate the effectiveness of our approach to bullying and to enable any patterns to be identified and monitored.
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team who support the Headmaster and are trained and alert to possible signs of bullying.
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and monitor the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- We encourage close contact between the staff and parents/guardians, and would always make contact if we were worried about a pupil's well-being.

- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.
- Records are kept in order to evaluate the effectiveness of our approach to bullying and to enable any patterns to be identified.
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

#### CYBERBULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

In addition to the preventative measures described above, we:

- Expect all pupils to adhere to the school's charter for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use.
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- Offer guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHCE lessons which covers blocking, removing contacts from 'buddy lists' and sharing personal data.
- Offer guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- Mobile phones are not permitted in classrooms or public areas of the school. Should a child have good need of a mobile phone (a child who walks to and from school for instance) the phone must be handed in to the School Office at the beginning of the day and collected when the child is about to leave school.

#### PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

1. All bullying must be reported (incidents and suspicions) to a member of staff
2. The member of staff to whom it was reported, or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved.
3. The victim will be interviewed on his/her own. The bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually. The victim and the bully and all others involved may be asked to write an account of the incident. However the members of staff involved must ensure that the incident is recorded on a school incident form and signed and dated.
4. There may be times when the best way to stop bullying is to bring the matter to the attention of the whole class or group without identifying individuals.
5. In cases of serious bullying, the record will be placed on file and a copy given to the Headmaster. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
6. If necessary the governors will be informed and independent bodies consulted (police, social services) but it is the schools policy to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the school's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

7. An attempt will be made to help the bully (or bullies) change their behaviour (which may include sanctions, including exclusion for severe/persistent bullying and in the event that the support put in place for the bully does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level) and support the victim with developing strategies to help themselves.
8. A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our complaints procedure (which is published on our website) if they feel that their concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly.

### **Training and awareness**

To reduce the incidence of bullying the school operates a thorough and effective supervisory system. Awareness and effectiveness of dealing with bullying is part of staff training, discussed regularly at staff meetings, incorporated into the child protection policy and disseminated constantly through the school PSHCE policy. Such training will be repeated as required at maximum intervals of three years.