

Herne Hill School

for love, care and an excellent education

Independent Co-ed Pre-Prep & Nursery,
Founded 1978, Member ISA

www.hernehillschool.co.uk



HARASSMENT AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

At Herne Hill School, we firmly believe that all members of our community can only develop their full potential if they live in an environment where respect for each others is tangibly present in all situations and where no individual is isolated or marginalised by others. Therefore, we cannot accept any harassment or bullying as part of the *normal* pattern of School life. We cannot tolerate an environment in which some members of the community can be diminished by the physical, mental and emotional cruelty of others.

Each member of the School has the following rights:

- To be accepted for who they are, no matter how different they are to peers
- To come to School free from fear of mental, physical or emotional cruelty
- To cultivate to the full all of their talents, free from the envy of their peers
- To know that their worries and concerns are important and will be acted upon by those in a position to help them in a responsible manner, e.g. children are readily able to speak to teachers about behaviour which upsets them and know that this will not create any more problems for them
- To be protected when they are feeling vulnerable and supported by staff and peers if they experience difficulties

In turn, each member of the School has a responsibility to make sure that bullying is not tolerated at the School.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding Policy.

Definition and forms of bullying

Bullying can be defined as any words, actions or attitudes that cause distress to or undermine the dignity of an individual. It is important that all members of the School community, staff and pupils alike, are mindful of this and that each of us makes an effort to conduct all our dealings with one another in a spirit of considerations and courtesy.

As the definition above shows, bullying can take many forms, but the three main types are:

- Physical: Hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings including money
- Verbal: Name calling, teasing, insulting, writing unkind notes

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- Emotional: Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, spreading rumours

Possible signs of bullying

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour such as becoming shy and nervous, pretending to be ill or always wishing to be with older pupils or adults. They may show changes in their work patterns, lack concentration or even not want to come to school.

Adults who are being bullied may show similar changes in behaviour, e.g. change in their work patterns, lack of concentration, not meeting deadlines, etc. Harassment or bullying frequently also causes stress. Possible signs of stress can therefore also point to signs of harassment or bullying.

Procedures when bullying occurs

Introduction

Everyone at Herne Hill School (children and staff alike) should know that the School has zero tolerance for any form of harassment or bullying. Victims of bullying need to realise that they are not expected to, and must not, suffer in silence. Witnesses of bullying have a moral obligation to take action. Bullying will always flourish when a *conspiracy of silence* surrounds the actions of the bully.

Children should be told that if they are being bullied or they know that someone else is, they should tell an adult straightaway and it will be dealt with. Likewise, staff who feel they are being bullied or witness any form of bullying have a responsibility to speak up.

Actions to be taken by victims of bullying

Anyone who feels he or she is being bullied should approach someone with whom they feel they can discuss this matter. For pupils, this will likely be their Teacher or Classroom Assistant; for staff, this will likely be any other member of staff with whom they are comfortable raising the issue. Everyone should feel free to directly approach the Head or any other member of the Senior Management Team.

Actions to be taken by those who witness bullying

Children should be taught that if they witness an act of bullying, they should report it to a member of staff in the knowledge that they will not suffer any consequences for doing so. Not telling means that the victim will continue to suffer and the bully will carry on, probably upsetting others too.

If a member of staff witnesses an act of harassment or bullying by a child, he or she should, in the first instance, make clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate and to the bully that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress. Every effort

should be made to resolve the problem through talking to both parties. The bullying should be reported to the pupil's Teacher, who will in turn inform the Head depending on the severity and the frequency of the incident. The Head may request a written report of the incident(s) and may choose to inform the parents of one or both parties of what has happened and how it has been dealt with. If the bullying behaviour continues after talking with the pupils concerned and their parents, then sanctions follow.

If a member of staff witnesses an act of harassment, bullying abuse or neglect by another member of staff, he or she is to immediately inform a member of the Senior Management Team with whom he/she feels comfortable raising the matter. Anyone giving such information will be assured that he/she will not suffer any recrimination whatsoever from having "blown the whistle" and that his/her identify will be kept confidential if possible. The member of the Senior Management Team will treat the matter in a most serious manner, involving other members of the Senior Management Team as appropriate and ensuring that all concerns, complaints and related conversations be recorded in writing.