

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:
Behaviour Policy.
Safeguarding Policy

Hamilton School believes that all children and young people should learn and play in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied and that all adults and students should recognise that bullying is an antisocial behaviour which affects everyone, and will not be tolerated. To this end, the Anti-Bullying Policy sets out the school approach, roles and responsibilities with regard to all student-bullying matters.

The aims of the anti-bullying policy are to:

- To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- To safeguard the student who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the student.
- To work with the students involved to encourage a better understanding of social cues, friendships and play to prevent further incidents of bullying behaviour.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined as “Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can involve verbal taunts, name-calling, physical injury, shunning or ridicule. It can be manipulative and can be done through mobile phones, websites and email” (DfE ‘Safe to Learn’). This can be further defined as:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
- Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)

The students at Hamilton School have Autism and complex learning difficulties. As a school community we understand that bullying in this context can have additional subtleties and raise issues that are in themselves complicated to resolve. Not all students at Hamilton will recognise bullying behaviour if they experience it; equally not all students would recognise their own behaviour as bullying towards another individual. Cognitive understanding and

communication impairment are strong factors in how/what the students communicate. As such, the school uses the following strategies to support the students to understand what is meant by the definitions above and how to resolve any bullying situation.

- Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy, nervous, feigning sickness, refusing to come to school, clinging to adults, refusing to remain in class. It is important that all school staff are alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against any form of bullying in line with the roles and responsibilities listed below.

Roles and Responsibilities/strategies

The Governing Body

- Creating the right ethos for the school that ensures it is an inclusive environment.
- Ensure regular review of anti-bullying policy and practice including analysis of data via reports compiled from the behaviour database.
- Ensure the school is promoting equality for its whole community.

The Head Teacher

- To determine, publicise and ensure implementation of the school's measures on behaviour support and anti-bullying.
- To consider what adjustments may be needed to policy and practice in this area.
- Ensure the whole school is promoting equality and inclusion.
- To ensure the anti-bullying behaviour policy is kept up to date.

The Pastoral and Inclusion Team

- To deliver and organise any necessary training for staff to ensure they understand and implement the anti-bullying policy.
- Keep up to date on bullying related data from the behaviour database and plan appropriate interventions either at an individual or whole school level.
- Promote anti-bullying week and anti-bullying work in general. Ensure the curriculum covers anti-bullying.
- Work with families so that they are aware of the school's policy/practice and specific circumstances if they arise.
- To act as a port of call to advise staff on any bullying related matter
- To liaise with external agencies as necessary in partnership to support anti-bullying strategies
- To ensure bullying is factored into any analysis of student behaviour

The Inclusion Managers

- Ensure that behavioural recording systems record any instances of bullying.

All school staff

- To be constantly monitoring the students for bullying-related behaviour and follow the correct procedure where evidence points towards bullying taking place.
- To be constantly modelling high standards of behaviour and to have high expectations for all the students.

The Students' Voice

There are a number of ways that pupils can communicate to express their feelings and thoughts. These include the school council, annual reviews, Education Health Care Plans, everyday communication with school staff and small group consultation. School staff should be constantly vigilant for signs that a student may be subject to bullying behaviour expressed either through a student voice or from signs such as distress, change in mood, injury, and change in behavioural norms. Claims or expressions of bullying made by students will be taken seriously.

Reporting Process

In the event that bullying behaviours are reported or observed; the member of staff who has that information should report it to the class teacher for follow up action. The class teacher should then investigate to determine the facts behind any arising issue. In the event that bullying is taking place, there are two paths to follow:

Any bullying behaviours should be reported directly to the Pastoral and Inclusion team and recorded on the behaviour database.

Where the issue is complex or not easily resolved the teacher should, as appropriate, seek further advice from the Deputy Head Teacher.

Follow up actions should be devised, recorded and aimed at addressing bullying behaviours.

In the event that bullying behaviour is not successfully changed or prevented; and that agreed strategies do not show indications of working then the matter should be referred to the Deputy Head Teacher. It is expected, through the behaviour support systems, that the Head Teacher would be kept informed of bullying-related issues.

In the event that there is a victim of bullying behaviour the class teacher should assess for any levels of distress and as appropriate take positive action to ensure the child/young person feels safe in the short term.

Working with Families

Close work with the families is an essential part of work at the school. Bullying is one of the most potentially sensitive areas of home/school life.

For individual matters relating to bullying, advice should be sought from the Pastoral and Inclusion team on how to proceed. Efforts should be made to conduct conversations sensitively, bringing family members into school where necessary. Informing and working with families whose child was the victim of bullying should follow standard reporting procedure for involvement in an incident, ensuring a record is kept of any phone call. Students who are receiving additional behaviour support because they are perpetrating bullying behaviour should be subject to joint working with their parents to ensure all parties understand the approach being taken.

Parents/Carers have a responsibility to let the school know if their child/young person is being bullied and work with the school to resolve any issues arising from an incident the child/young person is anxious about. If as a parent/carer you are concerned about your child/young person being bullied you should:

- Contact the school immediately and ask to speak to a member of the Pastoral and Inclusion team.
- Contact the school if the bullying is taking place on home to school transport. You should also contact the designated person for home to school transport so they can also carry out an investigation.

Ratified at the Teaching, Learning and Assessment committee on 14th March 2024

Signed:

Chair of Governors:

Date: