

HARRIS MIDDLE SCHOOL

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

AUTUMN TERM 2009

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: _____

MINUTED: _____

DATE OF REVIEW: **AUTUMN TERM 2010**

Harris Middle School

Anti-bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a **TELLING** school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Rationale

At Harris we recognise that bullying can occur. When it does it can be harmful both physically and emotionally for the victim. It can also be a sign that the child carrying out the bullying has underlying issues that need to be addressed. The purpose of this policy is to enable adults in the school to recognise bullying when it takes place and to deal with it effectively

Objectives of this Policy

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

What is bullying?

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour. It is usually repeated, often over a period of time and when it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

We believe that there are a number of types of bullying:

- **Emotional:** excluding from a group, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating
- **Physical:** hitting, punching, pinching kicking or taking someone's belongings.
- **Verbal:** name-calling, insulting, indirect bullying, through spreading stories about someone, threats, making fun of someone including other family members
- **Racist:** racial taunts, gestures, making fun of someone's culture or religion
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive or sexist comments

- **Homophobic:** because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- **Cyber:** setting up hate websites, offensive e-mails and texts

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not odd occasion falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional ‘joke’ is played on someone.

Children do sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of a child’s development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

It is bullying if it is done repeatedly and on purpose

Whenever the opportunity arises it must be made profoundly clear that we will **not** tolerate bullying at Harris. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so that they can grow and learn in a relaxed and safe environment.

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.

We tackle bullying as an issue because we are an effective, caring school and we believe that:

- bullying makes people unhappy and leads to low self-esteem.
- pupils who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their learning.
- some pupils avoid being bullied by not attending school.
- pupils who observe unchallenged bullying behaviour may copy this anti-social behaviour.
- we wish to build the self-esteem of all pupils, especially victims and bullies.

Role of Parents

Parents have an important part to play in our anti bullying policy.

We ask parents to:

- Look out for unusual behaviour in their child – for example not wanting to attend school, feeling ill regularly, or not completing work to their usual standard.

- Always take an active role in your child's education, enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent time with etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- If you feel another child has bullied your child, please do not approach that child in the playground or on their way home. Please inform the school immediately.
- It is important that you do not advise your child to fight back or to repeat the bully's behaviour. This will only make the situation worse.
- Tell your child it is not their fault they are being bullied.
- Reinforce the school policy on bullying and ensure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
- If you know your child is involved in bullying, please discuss the issues with them and inform the school. The matter will be dealt with appropriately.

Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

Allegations and incidents of bullying at Harris Middle School will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly.

All of those involved will have the opportunity to be heard.

Staff will support all children involved whilst the allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following procedures are to be followed:

- Incidents of reported bullying need to be reported to the form tutor and the year head
- The form tutor will speak to all children involved about the incident separately or if appropriate as a group. This will be reported to the year head.
- The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested
- Staff will attempt to adopt a problem solving approach through circle times and/or drama activities which will move children on from having them to justify their behaviour.
- Appropriate action will be taken to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied i.e. loss of privileges, spending playtime and lunchtimes with an adult, be withdrawn from class, be

withdrawn from participation in a school visit, club or event not essential to the curriculum.

- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- An attempt will be made and support given to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/her behaviour.
- If the bullying continues or in more serious cases of bullying parents will be informed and invited into the school for a meeting to discuss the problem
- Mediating meetings, with both parents and pupils present may be used to resolve the issues
- In serious cases incident will be recorded and kept on file.
- In repeated or serious cases the school may follow the following sanctions: lunch time exclusion, fixed term exclusion, permanent exclusion.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying:

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

These include:

- Work by the form tutor
- Regular PSE teaching following the agreed scheme of work
- Taking part in national anti bullying week
- Awareness through anti bullying assemblies
- Circle time
- Drama/role play activities
- Playground buddies for children who are experiences difficulties settling into school
- 1 to 1 or group work with the school's pupil counsellor
- Following of the whole school behaviour policy which includes using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour.
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another.

Monitoring of Policy

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and through staff meetings and will be reviewed annually