

QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL & HEXHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL HARD FEDERATION

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

Queen Elizabeth High School and Hexham Middle School seek to provide a safe, secure and positive environment where young people can achieve their potential, making full use of the opportunities available to them and have the right to be treated with respect and to be free from intimidation. The schools seek to protect these basic human rights by ensuring:

- We are proactive in setting up a range of preventative measures
- We actively listen to our pupils/students and where appropriate their parents/carers
- We act appropriately on their behalf.

Our commitment is to

- Ensure that pupils/students are aware of the anti bullying policy and to enlist their support and raise their awareness in lessons and around the schools. Our view is that it is essential that Pupil Voice (HMS) and Student Voice (QEHS) activities inform our work.
- Seek to bring about the situation in which pupils/students themselves actively discourage bullying and view reporting of incidents as taking responsible action. Encourage pupils/students to talk to staff about their concerns and reassure them they will always be listened to and kept safe. We aim to ensure our school communities work together towards shared goals on this issue.
- Ensure that staff are alert to the possibility of bullying taking place, e.g. via pastoral team meeting discussions, sending memos to staff, and making sure CPD opportunities are available to all staff.
- Ensure that pupils/students are not left unsupervised in corridors or classrooms.
- Ensure that good communication is maintained when monitoring and managing bullying. We will ensure effective communication with parents/carers and between pastoral and curriculum staff.
- Ensure that duty staff are on time, that pupils/students are in allocated areas/rooms and that a positive presence is maintained. If staff know they are going to be away ensure they arrange to swap duties with someone else.
- Ensure that the teachers model non-bullying behaviour: methods of teaching and control do not endorse bullying tactics.
- Ensure that there is an emphasis on positive expectations of pupil/student behaviour.
- Ensure that staff are on time for lessons and are well prepared.
- Ensure that if pupils/students or parents/carers report bullying the report is listened to, taken seriously, and appropriate investigations made and appropriate strategies put in place.
- Following investigations the outcome is made known to those involved and the situation monitored closely following the incident, e.g. this may include daily meetings if appropriate.
- Ensure that staff moving around the school regularly check the toilets, stairwells/corridors and discourage pupils/students from congregating in these areas.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

We aim to consult with all stakeholders to ensure they can say what they think and feel. These include

- Pupils/Students
- School staff – teaching and support staff
- Parents/Carers
- Governors

The Student Voice Forum, Sixth Form Executive and Year Group Representatives from QEHS, and the Pupil Voice Forum from HMS provide feedback on our draft policy and are involved in its review so the information is accessible and easy to understand for **all** students. The policy also forms the basis for discussion at our multi agency meetings ensuring feedback from wider stakeholders.

It is also presented for staff consultation via the HMS and QEHS school websites. The draft policy is presented to a Federation governors' meeting and feedback is received from all governors, including parent governors. The draft policy is placed on the HMS and QEHS school websites and parent/carers comments are requested.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying may be defined as the abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent to cause distress to another individual or group. It is deliberately hurtful behaviour which may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature. It is repeated over a period of time on those who feel powerless to resist with the intention of causing distress.

Bullying should always be taken seriously. All bullying is unacceptable. Bullying does not only occur between children. The above definition can also be seen to characterise some relationships between adults or between adults and children. In more serious instances where adults abuse their power over a child or a child abuses their power over another child, bullying may be viewed as child abuse and should be treated as such. Bullying occurs in all types of relationships, not just child to child. The above definition applies to adult to adult, adult to child and child to adult relationships and can involve governors, staff, parents/carers or pupils/students as perpetrators or victims.

Bullying is deliberately hurtful. It typically has six elements:-

1. *an initial desire to hurt*
2. *the desire is expressed in action*
3. *someone is hurt either physically or emotionally*
4. *there is an imbalance of power*
5. *it is without justification*
6. *it is typically repeated*

Bullying can also stem from thoughtlessness, such as in name calling or stem from institutionalised attitudes, for example in relation to gender or race. That does not make it any less unacceptable.

Bullying can typically take four forms

1. Physical bullying - *hitting, kicking, taking belongings*
2. Verbal bullying - *name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks*
3. Indirect bullying - *spreading nasty stories, exclusion from social groups*
4. Inappropriate use of information technology – *which may involve the use of the following: texting, use of phones, cameras, emails and social networking sites to harass or transmit derogatory, obscene or threatening messages or images*

Name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics. However, pupils/students can be called names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment or some form of disability. Bullying is always significant to the person being bullied and it is their perception that is the important consideration.

All these things affect people in different ways and each person will react differently when bullied. We believe that if a pupil/student feels intimidated or is made to feel unsafe by the words/actions of another pupil/student then he or she is being bullied. No case brought to our attention will be viewed as unimportant. We want everyone in our school community to view bullying as anti social behaviour which is unacceptable and which will not be tolerated.

BULLYING BY RACE, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR DISABILITY

1. Racist Bullying

The Macpherson (1999) report defines racist bullying as “any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”.

A child or young person may be targeted for representing a group. Attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse – name calling, racist jokes, offensive mockery/mimicry
- Physical aggression or threats
- Wearing offensive or provocative badges or other insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines into the school or organisation’s premises
- Racist inciting of others
- Racist graffiti or other written insults including against food, music, dress or customs
- A refusal to associate with someone of other ethnic origin in work or play

2. Sexual Bullying

Sexual bullying is characterised by the following:

- Abusive name calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Pornographic material
- Graffiti with sexual content

In its most extreme form, sexual bullying takes the form of sexual assault or even rape. Under these circumstances police would normally be involved as these are criminal offences.

Sexual Orientation

Pupils/students do not have to be lesbian, gay, gender reassigned or bi-sexual to experience this type of bullying. In most cases being different can be enough. Factors hindering schools in challenging homophobic bullying include staff inexperience and parental disapproval.

3. Disabilities

Children and young people with special needs or disabilities are often at a great risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly. The bullying is usually about their specific difficulties or their appearance. This is compounded by the fact that these children and young people may not be able to articulate their experiences.

MANIFESTATION OF BULLYING

Identifying those who bully, those who are bullied and witnesses:-

Recognising Bullying

Although bullying can occur on journeys to and from school, most takes place in school. Research shows that 75% of bullying in primary schools takes place in the playground. In secondary schools it is also most likely outdoors but other hotspots are classrooms, corridors and toilets, especially when supervision is minimal. Both boys and girls bully and can bully as individuals or as members of a group.

Children who bully others come from any kind of social or cultural background. Adult bullying of children also occurs and is equally unacceptable.

Bullying always creates inequalities and is damaging to all those involved. The person being bullied, the person who bullies and those who witness or know about the bullying are all affected in some way. Those who bully can experience difficult and unhappy relationships with both peers and adults and frequently need help to overcome these difficulties. Research evidence has shown that those who bully are more likely to engage in anti-social activities and have a greater prevalence of poor mental health. A child or young person could have experienced both being bullied and having bullied others. Bullying is not a natural part of growing up and should never be accepted as such.

Those who bully may show aggression through, for example, poor control of impulsive actions, a positive view of violence or a desire to dominate. They may exhibit anxiety through, for example, low self esteem or difficulties in making friends. They may be easily led in joining in bullying or in standing by whilst bullying takes place.

Those who bully may experience difficulty in admitting what they have done; be reluctant to admit that what they have done is wrong; suppress feelings of guilt; feel no remorse and repeat the hurtful action, especially if this goes unchallenged. Those who are bullied may spend their lives in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and feel that they have done something to attract the bullying. Any child or young person can be bullied.

Those who are being bullied may exhibit the following:

- Unhappiness
- A sense of desolation and in some cases, desperation
- Reduced self esteem and self worth
- Poor academic performance
- Exclusion from normal social experience
- A strong desire to escape the situation which may result in absconding or truanting
- A desire to self-harm or even to commit suicide

Those who are being bullied may exhibit the following:

- Unwillingness to attend or participate in activities
- Unwillingness to venture into some areas of a building
- Fear of walking to school or of using public transport
- Underachievement
- Books or clothes destroyed
- Possessions and money going missing
- Signs of distress such as crying easily, lack of appetite
- Becoming withdrawn or disruptive and/or aggressive
- Stammering
- Stealing to pay the bully or replace missing possessions
- A variety of physical symptoms including cuts, bruising, aches, pain, faints, headaches, stomach upsets, bedwetting, disrupted sleep patterns
- A marked change in well established patterns of behaviour

Those who are bullied are often reluctant to say what is wrong or to seek help. Organisations that tolerate bullying are less effective; morale is lower and absenteeism is more frequent.

STRATEGIES

Dealing with Bullying on School Premises

All staff are made aware of the policy and it is available on the HMS and QEHS school websites to ensure staff are aware of the procedures and strategies used. There is effective monitoring, recording and analysing of the frequency and nature of bullying via the use of SERCO to record all incidents. Different codes are used to record specific types of bullying so that we can identify any patterns or trends.

A regular whole school survey is undertaken in both schools to identify key issues in this area and action plans are implemented to address the issues. Feedback on action taken is provided to stakeholders e.g. in assemblies, school council meetings. Clearly staff and pupils/students need to be aware of how to deal with the incidents of bullying that

occur. All pupils/students are issued with information and advice about bullying e.g. in their planners, in assemblies and within PSHE lessons. Staff are aware incidents of bullying in classrooms e.g. verbal abuse (including that with sexual, racist and homophobic content) must always be challenged and never ignored. They are aware that incidents of bullying must be reported to the pastoral teams as soon as possible so that incidents are dealt with promptly. Staff must be calm and consistent in their approach. All staff must ensure the immediate safety and well being of those being bullied – pastoral staff will assume responsibility for this following a referral.

In addition the schools will:

- Regularly review and reinforce the schools' approach to anti bullying at pastoral meetings, training days etc.
- Offer a confidential service and appropriate advice to lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils/students.
- Explore pupils'/students' understanding of the use of homophobic language, sexism, issues of difference/diversity through the curriculum (including PSHE lessons).
- Ensure the environment is well supervised.
- Ensure pupils/students are listened to and that there are opportunities for them to express their views and opinions – within the curriculum and e.g. in the Pupil/Student Voice Forums and Year Group representatives.
- Explore multi agency working to support the implementation of the policy.
- Explore and celebrate differences and diversity through a wide range of events in/out of the curriculum.

PREVENTATIVE WORK

To ensure the anti bullying policy is successfully implemented we will:

- Consult young people and adults in the development of the strategy.
- Review and reflect on the policy and its effectiveness regularly.
- Specify in the policy the types of behaviours considered to be bullying and therefore unacceptable so all adults/pupils/students are fully aware and make explicit reference to bullying by race, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- Keep pupils/students and adults informed of the development with the strategy through a variety of means – especially via the HMS and QEHS school websites.
- Raise awareness of the effects of bullying on the victim through assemblies, PSHE and pastoral work.
- Encourage peer support and provide peer support training.
- Provide support to those being bullied and to those alleged to be bullies.
- Provide a means for concerns to be voiced anonymously e.g. the Pastoral drop box.
- Provide staff training on bullying.
- Ensure that there is adequate supervision in identified high risk areas.
- Identify hot spots in the physical environment and make the necessary changes e.g. to duty staff deployment.
- Use a wide range of intervention methods within the strategy.
- Raise awareness about E-Safety with staff, pupils/students and parents/carers e.g. assemblies, parent evenings, ParentMail.
- Ensure that procedures for identifying and reporting bullying are clearly publicised.

Specific Strategies to Support Students

- Self-esteem and Conflict Resolution groups/support for individuals e.g. by mentors or external agencies such as LIST team.
- Use of peer supporters (training provided for peer supporters).
- Use of circle of friends' strategy in which pupils/students are asked to befriend the victim.
- Pupil/student discussions/mediation so that the perpetrator can identify with/empathise with the victim.
- Incidents identified to be followed up immediately.
- Very close monitoring following an initial incident e.g. daily drop into a pastoral office to sign in to indicate they are safe or to indicate another incident. Mentor reviews progress regularly and records it on appropriate paperwork.
- Provide student with mentor's mobile phone number (QEHS).
- Use of other organisations to provide specific support (and to inform our work).
- Teaching pupils/students specific techniques to deal with incidents if they arise, to enable victims to be more assertive/less affected.

PROCEDURES

When a member of staff is made aware that a pupil/student is being bullied they must report it IMMEDIATELY to the pupil's/student's Pastoral Leader (QEHS)/Head of Year (HMS). At QEHS, the relevant Curriculum Leader must be informed if in a classroom. Pastoral staff will provide a place of safety for pupils/students who have reported an incident of bullying or a member of staff has reported they have been bullied.

- The incident will then be investigated. The appropriate form will be completed by any staff and pupils/students involved – the bully, the victim, and witnesses – staff and pupils/students.
- Teaching and support staff will be informed to ensure support and close monitoring.
- Parents/Carers will be contacted in all cases and will be invited in where appropriate.
- The incident will be recorded, data will be collated and analysed and appropriate actions put in place.
- Appropriate support will be provided for the victim, the bully and witnesses if appropriate. The Pastoral Leader (QEHS)/Head of Year (HMS) will discuss the most appropriate strategy to be used for the particular case.
- Following the incident both the victim and the perpetrator will need support to ensure there is no recurrence and the situation will be monitored closely for the appropriate length of time following the incident – daily in the first instance. This will include daily drop-ins to the pastoral office/ to speak to the Key Stage Leader to report any concerns with immediate follow up by the year team if any concerns are reported. Monitoring by the **mentor/ Key Stage Leader** will be recorded on the appropriate form so the issue is tracked over time.
- A multi agency approach may be adopted if appropriate to the individual case e.g. with involvement of Primary mental health worker, School Health Advisor, EWO, LIST team e.g. inclusion support worker.

Sanctions will be appropriate to the individual case in line with the schools' behaviour policies and may include:

- Restriction of opportunities to socialise at break/lunchtime i.e. supervised breaks/lunchtimes
- Detentions at lunchtime or after school (by prior notification)
- Placing on daily report
- Removal from parts of a timetabled curriculum for a fixed period of time
- Group changes
- Seclusion e.g. in The Base (at QE) or in the learning Support Area (at HMS) or with a Pastoral Leader .
- In serious cases pupils/students may be excluded for a fixed term following the incident.
- In very serious cases pupils/students may be permanently excluded.

Note: see flow chart of the process – Appendix 1a for QEHS and Appendix 1b for HMS

- Where the victim is a parent/carer they will be referred to the school complaints procedure.
- Where the victim is a member of staff the incident should be reported to a line manager or member of the senior team.
- Where the alleged perpetrator is a governor the incident should be reported to the headteacher.
- Where the victim is a governor the incident should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

DEALING WITH BULLYING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL PREMISES

We are aware of the possibility of bullying taking place outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school. Incidents occurring outside school/on school transport deemed to have a serious impact on the school community will be dealt with using this policy.

Bullying outside school may involve young people from the school, young people from other schools or young people not at school at all. It may also involve the use of technology, so called cyber-bullying. We actively encourage all our pupils/students to tell and to share their concerns and we reassure them they will be listened to. A multi-agency approach may also be used to deal with such incidents to ensure all young people are appropriately supported.

Where a pupil/student reports bullying off the school premises, it may be appropriate to:

- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses;

- Talk to the headteachers of other schools, where pupils/students from these schools are bullying off the premises;
- Plan safe routes to school with the pupils/students;
- Talk to pupils/students about how to avoid or handle bullying outside school premises;
- Talk to the local police about specific problem groups and problem areas/issues

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring is essential to help assess progress and evaluate the impact of the anti bullying policy.

Monitoring will include:

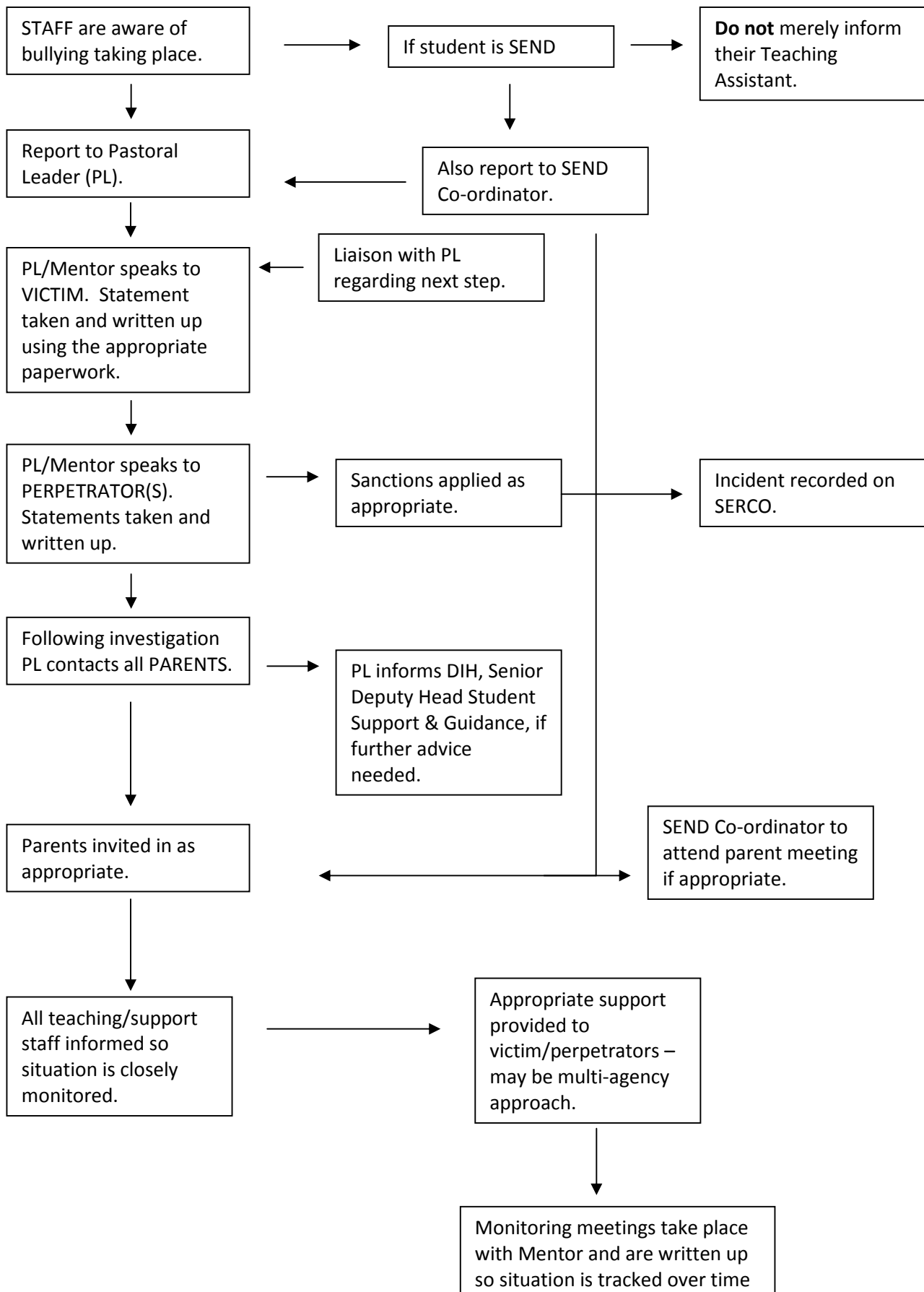
- Regular analysis of information to provide details of types of bullying, frequency, action taken etc. This information to be shared/discussed at pastoral team meetings and practice reviewed.
- Surveys – these will be undertaken to provide information on
 - Safety of pupils/students
 - Areas of school where pupils/students feel unsafe and why
 - Types of bullying
 - Frequency
 - Who pupils/students tell
 - Actions taken and by whom
 - Gaining information from pupils/students about what else they feel we can do etc

This Federation policy links with other policies and should be read in conjunction with them. These policies include

- Child Protection Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- PSHE Policy

Appendix 1a

Flowchart – Reporting Bullying – QEHS



Appendix 1b

Flowchart – Reporting Bullying – HMS

