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2	October 23	H.Tuli	10. inclusion of suspension and exclusion as possible sanction. Alteration of isolation to reflection time.  11. Alteration of PSHE to PATH and tutor period to skills session.

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date:
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## 1. Introduction

This policy was drawn with reference to The Education and Inspectors Act 2006, Department for Education (2014): Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies and The Equality Act (2010). It should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Norton Canes High School Behaviour Policy;
- Norton Canes High School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

At Norton Canes High School, we aim to promote personal dignity and self-esteem, through providing a safe environment which welcomes diversity and encourages mutual respect and to encourage students to be sensitive to the beliefs, values and practices of others. We recognise that bullying occurs in many schools, that it undermines self-esteem and sense of security and may affect a child's attendance and attainment. It can lead to serious psychological damage for the victim and a criminal record for the perpetrator/s. It is possible for any member of the school community to experience bullying. Our policy is to reject and be seen to reject all forms of bullying. No-one deserves to suffer the pain and indignity that bullying can cause. In developing this policy we have considered the needs and views of our students, their parents/carers, those of the teaching staff and visitors who may attend the school.

## 2. Aims of the policy

- *To provide students a safe and purposeful learning environment, without the fear of being bullied.*
- *To comply with government legislation with regards to safeguarding students.*
- *To ensure staff are aware of their duty of care and able to respond to any concerns or disclosures of bullying.*

### 3. Definition of bullying

*Although there is no universal definition of bullying, the DfE (2014) Preventing and Tackling Bullying defines bullying as*

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“the behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.”

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Bullying can take many forms, resulting in repeated occurrences of physical, psychological, social or verbal abuse and cyber-bullying. It can involve threats, physical attacks, name-calling, mocking, harassment and sexual bullying. Bullying may derive from racial, sexist, homophobic and religious prejudice, and may be directed against those with a disability or a different appearance, or those with different home circumstances, for example if a child is a carer.

Within an educational setting, bullying can occur between students, between students and staff, or between staff. It can be perpetrated face to face or indirectly. Single acts of any of the above forms of abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.

There will sometimes be instances where repeated offences take place without the knowledge of the school. As a consequence, when any reported concern is reported for the first time, it will be classed as a single event and behaviour sanctions will be applied accordingly.

There will also be concerns that are raised concerning behaviours outside of school. Although the school does not tolerate poor behaviour from its students, it cannot take action for concerns that are raised for behaviours at home and outside of its parameters. In such circumstances, it would be the person raising the concern to take appropriate action and the school's position is to support and signpost.

## 4. Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of and widespread access to technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. The Byron Review stated:

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*"Cyber-bullying is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones."*

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Cyber-bullying includes using mobile phones, other mobile devices or internet sites to send abusive messages or make defamatory statements about students or teachers. It includes cyber stalking, "sexting", "trolling", "happy slapping" and unauthorised publication of private information or images. Cyber-bullying can happen at all times of the day, and has the potential to reach a wide audience. It can undermine the self-esteem of individual students and can undermine the professional status of staff. Some cyber-bullying is deliberate and intentional, but in other cases distress to the victim can be caused by something that is seen as a joke by the other person. Cyber-bullying can be a criminal offence; children are criminally responsible for their actions and their consequences from the age of 10 (See 'Criminal Law' below).

## 5. Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. Where a criminal offence had been committed, the school would be obliged to inform the police.

## **6. Responsibilities of stakeholders**

### **a. All members of staff will:**

- prevent, de-escalate and stop any continuation of harmful behaviour;
- apply disciplinary sanctions to the student causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience;
- take steps to help 'victims' feel safe and confident again;
- work with students initiating the bullying where necessary and as appropriate, so that they are held to account for their actions and accept responsibility for the harm they have caused.

### **b. The Headteacher and Senior leaders will:**

- communicate clear expectations about student behaviour;
- maintain a strong ethos which promotes equality and diversity;
- ensure that staff are aware of the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures, through training and induction programmes;
- develop a whole school approach so that no one child or member of staff is left alone to try to resolve a bullying problem;
- take a proactive approach to preventing bullying and to mitigating its effects when it occurs;
- develop clear systems for reporting bullying (including on the grounds of the protected characteristics- age, disability, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, gender reassignment, race, religious belief, sex and sexual orientation) and make everyone aware of the procedures to be followed in dealing with incidents;
- ensure that staff and parents are alerted to possible signs that a student is being bullied;
- react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way;
- provide help and support for students affected by bullying, including counselling services and the use of external agencies where appropriate;

- consult with groups of students to gain a true understanding of what is going on;
- establish review procedures to identify patterns of unacceptable behaviour and to prioritise necessary changes, eg to supervision structures and/or to relevant policies, including the ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

Parents/carers are made aware, through the Norton Canes High School Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy and at information evenings, that the school does not tolerate bullying.

- They are aware that they may contact staff if they are concerned their child is being bullied or does not feel safe to learn,
- They can be confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate/resolve as necessary and that the school systems will deal with the bullying in a way that protects their child.
- They are aware of the school's complaints procedure, which they may use if they feel that their concern has not been dealt with satisfactorily.

## **7. Signs of Bullying**

It is important that staff and parents/carers are aware of the signs and symptoms of bullying, so that early help can be ascertained if needed. Some main signs and symptoms are when a student:

- Is unwilling to go to school, without a legitimate reason.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Attempts to, or participates in, self harm.
- Cries at night or starts having nightmares.
- Regularly feels ill in the morning.
- Academic performance starts to reduce.
- Comes home with torn clothes or books damaged.
- Has possessions go missing.
- Asks for money.
- Has unexplained bruises or cuts.

- Stops eating.
- Is frightened to walk home.
- Changes his/her normal routine.

## **8. Reporting and Recording**

It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to report any incident or concern of bullying. All instances of bullying should be reported to the behaviour team. The staff reporting the concern should provide any specific evidence from the victim. Additional sources of information should also be submitted/included (e.g. witness statements). As the concern is raised against the victim/s it is important that information is taken from the victim. Documents will then be stored securely and will be referred to in the appropriate students' files and a copy. Incidents should then be recorded on the anti-bullying register.

## **9. Intervention**

Disciplinary measures will be applied to students who bully in order to punish the behaviour appropriately and show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the students may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable students. The motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator would also need to be considered, as the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

If an incident of bullying outside the school premises is reported to the school, it will be investigated and appropriate action taken. Cases of bullying or suspected bullying that are observed in class or around School must always be taken seriously. Any occurrence which cannot be simply sorted out and dealt with should be discussed with the relevant member of the school's pastoral team, as soon as possible.

The Headteacher will be notified of any serious case of bullying or of any on-going situation. In serious cases, the Headteacher, will, in consultation with others, take the final decision about how the matter is to be dealt with and resolved.



## **10. Reaction and sanctions for bullying**

The school recognises bullying as a serious misdemeanour and makes provision for the application of strong sanctions (including suspension and exclusion), as well as support for both the victim and the perpetrator.

Appropriate and commensurate disciplinary sanctions will be implemented by the Senior Leadership Team.

In implementing sanctions, it is necessary to ensure that bullying behaviour is dealt with in a way which protects the victim, which does not lead to escalation but resolution and which gives the best chance that bullying will not be repeated.

Disciplinary sanctions can include interview, social exclusion, detention, internal reflection time, suspension or exclusion. In the case of cyber bullying they may also include the confiscation and searching of mobile phones or other mobile technology whilst in school and withdrawal of access to school ICT facilities in accordance with the school's ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

Permanent exclusion may be justified in the most serious and persistent cases.

Consideration would be given to devising an appropriate learning programme for the perpetrator, to help them to face up to the harm they have caused and provide them with an opportunity to make amends, encourage empathy and reflection if appropriate. Where a student has retaliated after persistent bullying, the school will consider this different from an unprovoked attack.

Student support systems are also in place to safeguard and trigger support for the victim and perpetrator.

At Norton Canes High School, sanctions are applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any SEN or disabilities that pupils may have, and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children. Bullying by children with disabilities or SEN is no more acceptable than bullying by other children

and it should be made clear that their actions are wrong and appropriate sanctions imposed.

We expect all students to be proactive and seek help from members of staff if they witness another student being hurt or they are concerned about others

Should there be a substantiated case of bullying, we will adopt a graduated response and sanctions for incidents of substantiated bullying are issued on a 'case by case' basis following investigation by members of the senior leadership team/pastoral team.

The following disciplinary steps may be taken:

- Official warning to cease offending
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises or certain activities
- Detentions
- Removal from peers
- Reflection time
- Referral to senior staff and/or external agencies e.g. Education Welfare Officer, Police Liaison Officer.
- Suspension or permanent exclusion.

## **11. Prevention**

The school aims to create a culture of good behaviour, where students treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave.

All members of the school community are expected to promote an atmosphere of inclusivity and equality in which it is clear that no form of bullying will be tolerated.

When bullying does occur, the school will respond promptly, firmly and consistently. Staff must be clear about their roles and responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying.

We use a range of proactive strategies to prevent bullying. These include;

- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying culture.
- Use of curriculum opportunities, in particular, skills sessions and PATH lessons where issues of diversity are discussed and anti-bullying messages are drawn out.
- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying
- Whole school assemblies.
- Pupil surveys.
- Poster campaigns.
- Improved supervision in potential problem areas.
- Review of general and specific staff induction and continuing professional development to ensure staff training reflects the anti-bullying policy and practice of the school.

## **12. Safeguarding Children and Young People**

A bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and will contact external agencies where it is considered that a Child Protection issue has arisen.