



BRIGHTON AND HOVE CLINIC SCHOOL

PREVENTING BULLYING POLICY

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Brighton and Hove Clinic School is committed to promoting equality in all its activities.
We aim to provide an environment free from discrimination and unfair treatment.

Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy, Admissions and Exclusion Policy, and the Online Safety Policy.

Statement of intent

Brighton and Hove Clinic School believes that all students are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos within each service.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines a number of legal obligations regarding our response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. These measures are part of our Positive Behaviour Policy, which is communicated to all stakeholders.

All staff, parents/carers and students work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at Brighton and Hove Clinic School. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at Brighton and Hove Clinic School.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

This policy has been written in accordance with DfE advice, including, but not limited to:

- DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (2017)
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, bullying is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable students are more likely to be the target of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some students have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable students may include, but are not limited to:

- Students with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Students who are adopted.
- Students suffering from a health problem.
- Students with caring responsibilities.

Types of bullying

Many different kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything. Teasing another student because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or special educational needs are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (Cyber)

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Statutory implications

We understand that, under the Equality Act 2010, Brighton and Hove Clinic School has responsibility to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Brighton and Hove Clinic School understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and students at Brighton and Hove Clinic School to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

The National Association of Head Teachers has guidelines that recommend Headteachers must 'satisfy themselves' that their local protocols in relation to the Preventing Bullying Policy complies with the HRA; the Headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

Prevention

Brighton and Hove Clinic School clearly communicates a whole-service commitment to addressing bullying and has developed its own procedures to promote this.

All reported or witnessed instances of bullying in Brighton and Hove Clinic School are investigated by a member of staff.

Staff encourage co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work.

All types of bullying are discussed as part of the curriculum, and diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.

Seating arrangements in class will be changed and organised in a way that prevents instances of bullying.

Potential victims of bullying are drawn into working groups with children who do not abuse or take advantage of them.

Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.

All members of the Brighton and Hove Clinic School community are made aware of Brighton and Hove Clinic School's Preventing Bullying Policy.

All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

A safe, supervised place is available for students to go if they are involved in conflict with their peers or wish to avoid a bully.

Students deemed vulnerable, will be supported to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly.

Brighton and Hove Clinic School will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing students to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

Signs of bullying

Some of the signs that a student at Brighton and Hove Clinic School may be a victim of bullying include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Being frightened to attend school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Poor attendance
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill in the morning
- Decreased involvement in schoolwork
- Torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating.

Students who display a significant number of these signs should be approached by a member of staff in order to determine whether they are due to bullying or other underlying issues.

Staff principles

Prevention is at the forefront of Brighton and Hove Clinic School's Preventing Bullying Policy.

Staff treat reports of bullying very seriously.

Staff do not ignore signs of suspected bullying.

Unpleasantness from one student towards another is always challenged and never ignored.

Staff take action immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.

Staff always respect students' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to. If the member of staff believes the student is in serious danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Follow-up support is given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

Key roles and responsibilities

- The Management Committee evaluates and reviews this policy to ensure that it is non-discriminatory.
- It is the responsibility of all staff at Brighton and Hove Clinic School to be alert to possible bullying of students and to deal with incidents as the highest priority.
- The Headteacher at Brighton and Hove Clinic School implements the policy at local level and keeps a Bullying Record of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- The Headteacher will analyse the data in the Bullying Record in order to identify any trends in the types of bullying occurring and implement the appropriate measures to tackle it.
- The Headteacher arranges appropriate training for staff members.
- An identified member of staff corresponds and meets with parents/carers where necessary. They also provide a point of contact when more serious bullying incidents occur.
- All staff are alert to social dynamics in class and are available for students who wish to report bullying. They also provide follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- All members of staff ensure that they are alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the student's key contact of such observations.
- All staff will avoid gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- All staff have a duty to report any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a student for support.
- Parents/carers are advised to inform their child's school if they are concerned that their child may be being bullied or be involved in bullying.
- Students are advised to inform a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Students are taught not to make counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Students are taught to walk away from any dangerous situations and avoid involving other students in incidents.
- Students are advised to retain all evidence of cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying

Brighton and Hove Clinic School has in place an Online Safety Policy, which includes the school's zero tolerance approach to cyber bullying.

Brighton and Hove Clinic School views cyber bullying in the same light as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

Brighton and Hove Clinic School will support students who have been victims of cyber bullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the student about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with the guidance this policy.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, Brighton and Hove Clinic School has the right to examine and delete files from students' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a student's mobile phone.

If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, the Headteacher will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the relevant policies.

Brighton and Hove Clinic School Procedures

All incidents of bullying are investigated and the incident and outcome is recorded on the Bullying Report Form.

Minor incidents are reported to the victim's Key Teacher, who investigates the incident, sets appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and informs the Headteacher in writing of the incident and outcome using the Bullying Report Form.

More serious incidents are reported immediately to the Headteacher for further investigation.

When investigating an incident of bullying, the following procedures are adopted:

Stage 1- Information and Investigation

- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the students being interviewed, including electronic communication
- If a student is injured, members of staff take the student immediately to the nominated First Aider for an opinion on the extent of their injuries. Further medical attention will be sought if required.
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
- A witness is used for serious incidents
- If appropriate, the alleged bully, the victim and witnesses, are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete
- All concerned students are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other students

Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic and sexual bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

Stage 2- Sanctions

If the Headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the student will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.

The Headteacher informs the student of the type of sanction to be used in this instance (detentions, service-based activities, etc.) and future sanctions if the bullying continues.

If possible, the Headteacher will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the bully. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion is used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully.

The perpetrator is made to realise that some students do not appreciate the distress they are causing, and that they should change their behaviour.

Parents/carers are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

Staff informally monitor the students involved over the next half-term.

Stage 3- Support

A nominated staff member informally checks whether the bullying has stopped for an agreed amount of time e.g. on a weekly basis for a month after the initial complaint of bullying.

If necessary, group dynamics are broken up by members of staff by assigning places in classes.

The victim is encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

The victim is encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by taking part in different activities.

Stage 4- Follow up support

The progress of both the bully and the victim are monitored by the identified member of staff. One-on-one sessions to discuss how they are progressing may be appropriate.

If appropriate, follow-up correspondence is arranged with parents/carers after the incident.

Students who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:

- Being listened to
- Having an immediate opportunity to meet with a member of staff of their choice
- Being reassured
- Being offered continued support
- Being offered counselling, where appropriate

Students who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents/carers

Students who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Headteacher) will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services or in-house therapeutic support.

Bullying outside of school

Staff have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside of Brighton and Hove Clinic School premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off Brighton and Hove Clinic School premises, such as on a school trip, on school or public transport, or on a community visit/ walk.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the student on school premises, or elsewhere when the student is under the lawful control of the member of staff.

The Headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of Brighton and Hove Clinic School premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Headteacher the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

The Headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a student.

If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed.



Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher on an annual basis. Any necessary changes will be communicated to all members of staff and relevant stakeholders.

Appendix 1 – Bullying Report Form

This form will be sent to the Headteacher upon completion:

Personal details

Name of person reporting incident:		
Name of student (s) being bullied:		
Year group:		
How may we contact you (please circle)?		
At school	At home	
Home address:		
Telephone:		

Incident details

What happened?
Where did the incident take place?
When did the incident occur?
Who has been suspected of bullying?

Did anyone else see the incident?
According to the victim, how often does the bullying take place?
According to the victim, how long has the bullying been going on?

Impact of the bullying

What emotional impact has the bullying had on the student?
Was anyone physically hurt?
Did anyone need medical attention?
Has anyone else been informed of the bullying?
If so, when were they informed?
If not, why has the incident not been reported?

Help and support

What type of help and support is available to the victim?

Do you have any concerns about reporting the bullying?

What more do you think could be done to help prevent instances like this in future?