

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

DEFINITION

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another student or group either physically or emotionally. It is a deliberate act done to cause distress, often in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully, and can have serious physical and emotional consequences which may cause psychological damage. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a student is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. The school recognises that children with special educational needs can be disproportionately impacted by bullying and seeks to ensure specific needs are addressed.

The school recognises that bullying may take place and can happen to all children and young people, but promotes the view that such behaviour is totally unacceptable in school, on school buses, during off site expeditions and visits and indeed anywhere, albeit it beyond the jurisdiction of the school. Bullying should never be dismissed as 'banter' or accepted as a normal part of growing up.

Bullying includes:

- Hurtful behaviour such as swearing, unpleasant nicknames, personal insults often motivated by prejudice against particular groups for example on the grounds of religion, race, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability or because a student is adopted or a carer. It may occur directly as malicious gossip, persistent teasing or 'banter', aggressive and insulting gestures, spiteful practical jokes or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).
- Deliberately leaving a student out of a friendship group or activity, or online by deliberate replication of this behaviour.
- Making a student do something against her will.
- Physical assaults.
- Vandalism or removal of personal belongings including work.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is any bullying that takes place using technology, for example on social media sites, through a mobile phone or on a gaming site, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.

Examples of cyberbullying:

- Abusive comments, rumours, gossip and threats made using digital communications and/or technologies; this includes internet trolling.
- Sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause harm or humiliation.
- Hacking into someone's email, phone or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send hurtful content while posing as that person.
- Creating dedicated websites that intend to harm, make fun of someone or spread malicious rumours.
- Pressurising someone to do something they do not want to such as sending a sexually explicit image.

PREVENTING BULLYING

We follow the guidance given by the Department for Education in *Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for School Leaders staff and Governing Bodies* (October 2014) , *Supporting children and young people who are bullied – advice for schools* (March 2014) *Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff* (November 2014), and *Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying* (November 2014).

In order to promote a culture which rejects bullying, we take the following steps:

- We focus on creating an environment of good behaviour and mutual respect with helpful examples set by staff and students, and celebration of success.
- We foster emotional and social skills and empathy, mainly through form time, the PD programme and assemblies.
- We challenge discriminatory language and make it clear that it is not acceptable
- We ensure all students, staff and parents are aware of the school's Anti-bullying policy by putting a copy on the school extranet. Students have a condensed form in their planners and on form noticeboards. (Appendix 1)
- We make it easy for students to report bullying to any member of staff in the confidence that they will be listened to and that procedures are in place for the resolution of the problem. Personal guidance is always available from pastoral staff including, in particular, Form Tutors, Heads of Section/Head of Junior Department, Deputy Heads of Section, the School Chaplain and the School Counsellors. The Student Support Team and Prefects are also advised on how to support requests for help regarding bullying.
- We ensure that all students have access to information about whom to talk to in school and which outside agencies are available outside school. Phone numbers of help lines are available in student planners and on the School extranet in this policy where they can be accessed in private. (See Appendix 2)
- We provide ongoing support for both the young person doing the bullying and the young person being bullied to address the problem and evaluate procedures.
- We support teaching staff to identify bullying and understand the actions to take, for example through discussions of scenarios in department meetings which are then recorded in minutes, This policy provides teachers with updated knowledge of what their legal responsibilities are and how to address different forms of bullying e.g. by mobile phone text messaging, email and chat rooms (See Appendix 3). Staff will:
 - Never ignore suspected bullying
 - Never make premature assumptions about the situation
 - Listen carefully to all accounts and deal with them sensitively and effectively
 - Adopt a problem solving/no blame approach so students are not required to justify themselves
 - Follow up repeatedly to check bullying has not returned
 - Record with Section Heads all incidents of bullying
- We discuss bullying, its definition and possible consequences as well as how to prevent it using form time, assemblies, PD lessons, School Council forum and lessons such as drama and history. Students are educated through anti-bullying campaigns run in form time, PD or lesson time e.g. poster campaigns, poetry competitions, drama, literature, historical events and current affairs. This includes openly discussing differences between people that could motivate bullying such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality and recognising that using prejudice-based language is unacceptable. We want students to understand the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders to the action with older students

setting a good example for the rest of the school community helping to reinforce this. Appropriate use of social media is also reinforced through assemblies, PD, General Studies and form time.

- We monitor bullying by
 - regularly canvassing students' views on the extent and nature of bullying through form time and School Council
 - recording by Heads of Section all incidents of bullying so that any patterns of behaviour can be identified and tackled by the Senior Management Team; file to be kept of such incidents and record to be passed to next Head of Section when students change section.
- We ensure that parents are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and they are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their daughter or another student is being bullied. Parents should feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issues in a way that protects the student. We work with parents in supporting all students involved.
- We will remove from the school system access to any website or chat room if it is used to send bullying or threatening messages.
- We require all students to understand and abide by the School's Behaviour Policy (a simplified version is included in student planners) and ICT Acceptable Use Policy – Students. See also Safeguarding - Online Safety Policy
- Under the Education Act 2011, teachers are given the power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images or files on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF BULLYING

1. In the first instance a student who feels that she or another student is being bullied should talk to her Form Tutor or to ANY member of staff with whom she feels comfortable. Factual notes will be made of this conversation afterwards, and passed to the Head of Section/Head of Junior Department. This includes bullying outside school, as teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable".
2. Although confidentiality cannot be promised, the student will be reassured that no action will take place without her prior knowledge and, where possible, her consent.
3. A student's parents may also wish to contact the Form Tutor, Deputy Head of Section or Head of Section/Head of Junior Department should there be cause for concern.
4. The student or students being bullied and those who have been accused of bullying will then be seen individually by the Form Tutor, Deputy Head of Section or Head of Section/Head of Junior Department.
5. A written record will be made of all reported incidents that require further action and of the action that is proposed. This will be stored by the Head of Section Head of Junior Department and passed on the next Head of Section when students move up the school and change sections; this handover takes place at the weekly Pastoral Care Committee meeting at the start of the academic year when the past year is reviewed by the Director of Students, Heads of Section and Head of Junior Department.
6. Parents will be contacted if it is felt appropriate to do so.
7. The action that is proposed will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the member of staff dealing with it to ensure that the bullying has ceased. They will liaise with the pastoral staff responsible for the student and with parents and records of this will also be kept.

8. Records will be kept in Section offices where, in addition to the Head of Section/Head of Junior Department, they may be accessed by the relevant Form Tutor and Deputy Head of Section.
9. Guidance will be given to all students involved in the bullying incident to help them to understand and remedy the situation.
10. Serious and/or repeated bullying will be referred to the Headmistress and the parents of the students concerned will be informed.
11. A bullying incident will be treated as a Safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. In such cases the bullying issue will be reported to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who may report the concerns to the local authority social care department. See Safeguarding Policy (Child Protection).
12. If staff feel that an offence has been committed, they should report this to the Headmistress who may then seek assistance from the police.
13. Persistent bullying may be dealt with by the Headmistress through a contract of behaviour between the student and the School which the student and her parents are asked to sign.
14. Failure to comply with this contract may result in exclusion from the school.

DISSEMINATION

Copies of this document will be available for inspection by parents, students and staff on the student and parent area of the school website. A copy will also be displayed on form room notice boards for students' reference.

Policy last reviewed:Trinity 2017

Next review due: Trinity 2018

Person responsible for review:Head of Middle School

Audience: Students/Staff/Parents

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF POLICY FOR STUDENT PLANNERS

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another student or group either physically or emotionally. It is a deliberate act done to cause distress, often in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the person who is doing the bullying, and can have serious physical and emotional consequences which may cause psychological damage. Bullying should never be dismissed as 'banter' or accepted as a normal part of growing up. Bullying is totally unacceptable in school, on school buses, during off site expeditions and visits and indeed anywhere. We take bullying very seriously and will investigate allegations carefully, considerately and as confidentially as possible.

Bullying includes:

- Hurtful behaviour such as swearing, unpleasant nicknames, personal insults often motivated by prejudice against particular groups for example on the grounds of religion, race, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability or because a student is adopted or a carer. It may occur directly as malicious gossip, persistent teasing or 'banter', aggressive and insulting gestures, spiteful practical jokes or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).
- Deliberately leaving a student out of a friendship group or activity, or online by purposefully not liking a status or photo or excluding from group chats.
- Making a student do something against her will.
- Physical assaults.
- Vandalism or removal of personal belongings including work.

Cyberbullying

What is cyber bullying?

Cyberbullying is any bullying that takes place using technology, for example on social media sites, through a mobile phone or on a gaming site. It is the misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.

Examples of cyber bullying:

- Abusive comments, rumours, gossip and threats made using digital communications and/or technologies - this includes internet trolling.
- Sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause harm or humiliation.
- Hacking into someone's email, phone or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send hurtful content while posing as that person.
- Creating dedicated websites that intend to harm, make fun of someone or spread malicious rumours.
- Pressurising someone to do something they do not want to such as sending a sexually explicit image.

When you are using digital technology, remember:

1. Always respect others – be careful what you say online. Remember that comments intended to be funny can be misinterpreted online.
2. Be careful what pictures or videos you upload. Once a picture is shared online it cannot be taken back. **DO** not post photos or videos of anyone without their consent.

3. Block people who send unpleasant messages. If you receive an unpleasant message, stay calm: do not retaliate or reply to offending e-mails, text messages or online conversations, but save the evidence. Always keep a copy of offending e-mails, text messages or a screen grab of online conversations and pass to a parent, a carer or a teacher.
4. Immediately report any messages or internet content that is inappropriate or upsetting. Tell an adult: a teacher or parent, or call an advice line like Childline on 0800 1111 in confidence.
5. Most social media services and other sites have a button you can click on to report bullying. Doing this can prevent a bully from targeting you and others in the future. Many services take bullying seriously and will either warn the individual or eliminate his or her account

What should you do if you or someone else is being bullied?

If you feel you are being bullied or are worried another student is being bullied, please talk to a member of staff you trust: this can anyone you choose to speak to, like your Form Tutor, Head of Section/Junior Department, a subject teacher, the Chaplain or one of the School Counsellors; we are all here to help and support you. The most important thing is that you tell someone. Telling an adult is not 'telling tales' and it will not make things worse. Please do not suffer in silence – and don't be a bystander: if you see something that worries you in the way another student is being treated, tell an adult!

When you speak to us, although we can't promise confidentiality where your or another student's safety is at stake, we will not do anything without your prior knowledge and, where possible, your consent. Please remember that being bullied is not your fault and it is not something to be ashamed of – it can happen to anyone.

What we do when someone tells us they, or someone else, is being bullied is explained in the Anti-Bullying Policy which you can find in the parent and pupil area of the School Extranet.

As well as Childline, Kidscape offers advice if you are being bullied: www.kidscape.co.uk / 020 7730 3300.

APPENDIX 2

USEFUL WEBSITES FOR PARENTS, STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

<http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>: Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

<http://www.childline.org.uk/>

<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>: Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

<http://www.each.education/>: (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia): provides a national freephone Actionline for targets of homophobic or transphobic bullying and training to schools on sexual orientation, gender identity matters and cyberhomophobia.

Cyber-bullying

www.antibullying.net/cyberbullying1.htm

<http://www.childnet.com/>: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>: resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.

<http://www.digizen.org/>: provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.

Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying (November 2014).

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf

APPENDIX 3

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS: RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for School Leaders staff and Governing Bodies (October 2014) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>: guidance for schools on tackling bullying and links to legislation

Supporting children and young people who are bullied – advice for schools (March 2014)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/368135/supporting_bullied_children_factsheet_october2014.pdf

Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff (November 2014),
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf