

Update: March 2017

Review: March 2019

Anti-bullying policy

Introduction

The School does not tolerate any form of discrimination or bullying based on the sex, race, religion, age, disability, or sexual preferences of an individual. All complaints of discrimination or bullying in whatever form will be treated with the utmost seriousness and investigated thoroughly.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is behaviour or action taken by one or more children towards another or others that is:

- Deliberately hurtful and
- Repeated over a period of time and
- Difficult for the victim(s) to defend themselves against.

Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:

- Physical: e.g. hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal: e.g. name-calling (the most common direct form of bullying, because of individual characteristics or of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour, alleged sexual orientation, religion or some form of disability), insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect: e.g. spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, making someone the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious (possibly anonymous) messages on paper, by email or by text message on a mobile phone.
- Cyber bullying: « Cyber bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. »

Cyber bullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Bebo, Facebook, Myspace, emails and mobile phones used for SMS messages and as cameras (www.cyberbullying.org).

The School's anti-bullying policy applies to racial harassment.

Signs of bullying. Children may

- be frightened of walking to and from School
- change their usual route
- not want you to go on the School bus
- beg you to drive them to School
- be unwilling to go to School (or be 'School phobic')
- feel ill in the mornings
- begin truanting
- begin doing poorly in their School work
- come home regularly with clothes or books destroyed
- come home starving become withdrawn, start stammering, lack confidence
- become distressed and anxious, stop eating
- attempt or threaten suicide
- cry themselves to sleep, have nightmares
- have their possessions go missing
- ask for money or start stealing (to pay the bully)
- continually 'lose' their pocket money
- refuse to talk about what's wrong

- have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- begin to bully other children, siblings
- become aggressive and unreasonable
- give improbable excuses for any of the above

Aims and objectives

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a School ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim, as a School, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.

The School anti-bullying policy aims to produce a consistent School response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the School aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our School.

The role of the Board of Directors ("the Board")

The Board supports the Head in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the School. The School anti-bullying policy makes it very clear that the Board does not allow bullying to take place in the School, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The Board monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the School policy regularly. The Board requires the Head to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the Board about the effectiveness of the School anti-bullying strategies. The role of the Head

It is the responsibility of the Head to implement the School anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the School policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Head reports to the Board about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Head ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this School. The Head and adults draw the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Head may decide to use it as an opportunity in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.

The Head ensures that all staff receive sufficient information to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying. The Head sets the School climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming School, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The Head keeps careful notes of all bullying incidents.

The role of the teacher

Teachers in the School take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class and those they are aware of in the School.

If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the teacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.

The School keeps careful notes of all incidents of bullying that occur outside lesson time, either near the School or on the children's way home or to School. If any adult witnesses an act of bullying, the event should be recorded.

In the event of an observed or reported instance of bullying, a careful record will be made of who was involved, what happened, when and where. This will be passed to the class teacher who will liaise with the Head.

The School will keep parents informed if and when it may be dealing with a significant bullying situation. Parents are asked to let the School, and that means the class teacher in the first instance, know if they have cause for concern, either on behalf of their children or because of rumours about incidents involving others. The School always tries to handle information discreetly, and while it likes to follow up such matters it does not do so without careful consultation first. It is much easier to counter problems at an early stage.

Every effort will be made to resolve the problem through counselling of both parties, which will seek to support the victim(s) and change the behaviour of the child(ren) who has/have bullied the others. This process will

normally be carried out by the class teacher, working in conjunction with the Head

For all incidents of bullying (whether isolated or occurring over a period of time), disciplinary sanctions will normally be applied, and this may include time-out, reporting to the Head at regular intervals or- as an absolutely last resort- expulsion. Counselling may, however, be maintained for both parties even after the sanctions have been applied.

Teachers receive information, which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying. They explain to their pupils some things to do if they are being bullied to put off the bully:.

- Try not to show you are upset – which is difficult
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied
- Tell an adult that you trust
- Get friends together and say NO to the bully
- Try to ignore the bully
- Fighting back may be worse. If you decide to fight back, talk to an adult
- If you are different in some way, be proud of it! It is good to be an individual
- Stay with people, even if they are not your friends, there is safety in numbers
- Try being assertive, shout loudly. (Practice in front of the mirror to gain confidence)
- If you are in danger, get away. Do not fight to keep possessions
- Walk quickly and confidently even if you do not feel that way inside. Practice!
- Try to be careful about what you may say to other pupils, they may make personal remarks and they may not see the funny side of your remarks

The role of parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the School's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the School.

Monitoring and review

This Policy is kept under continuous review by the Head who reports to the Board about the effectiveness of the policy.

The Board reviews the School anti-bullying policy annually. It does so by examining the staff's anti-bullying information, and by discussion with the Head. All staff have a responsibility to bring to the Head's attention issues relating to this policy which are causing concern

General

This document has been drawn up to clarify the policy of the School against bullying and to inform parents, guardians and pupils of what that policy is. It is not intended to extend or alter the contractual or other legal rights that exist between the School and parents, guardians or pupils. The contents of this document are statements of intent made in good faith, but are not intended to be legally enforceable.

References :

- Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in Schools 2012
- Department for children, Schools and families 2014

Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017

- Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies