



# ANTI BULLYING POLICY & GUIDELINES

Reviewed May 08

- Rationale
- Policy
- Guidelines
  1. Identifying bullying
  2. Action by staff
  3. Action by pupils
  4. Action by parents
  5. Support strategies taught in school and by outside agencies
- Review
- School Improvement Plan

## RATIONALE

The only way to combat bullying is through a multi-agency approach with **all** school members contributing consistently.

- To identify bullies and to work with them.
- To promote an openness about bullying and responses to it amongst pupils and staff.
- To identify/support victims and work with them on strategies to limit victimisation.
- To develop mutual respect between individuals.
- To encourage good interpersonal relationships.
- To ensure that the role models from those in authority encourage positive attitudes.
- To ensure that ownership of the school's 'Code of Conduct' is taken by all members of the school.

## GUIDELINES

### Identifying Bullying

There is no particular age group or kind of school which is at risk – or free of risk from bullying. Bullying can have a devastating effect on victims ranging from becoming withdrawn, absenteeism, underachievement, depression and suicide. Bullying can be short term or continue over years. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or just a look. It can be withdrawal of friendship used to gain control. Bullying can be subtle or overt.

Bullying is often the wilful conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else but can also be a habitual pattern of behaviour. (Very occasionally it is **NOT** intentional but an inherent character trait). This gives a power which is not always recognisable by an adult.

“Bullying is when one or more people physically, emotionally or psychologically hurt or cause harm to a person who is in a weaker position than him/her/them, and is so less able to defend himself/herself. Bullying usually happens over a period of time, and consists of series of different incidents.”

**Different Types of Bullying Include:**

**Physical** – hitting, kicking, spitting, tripping someone up, stealing/damaging someone's belongings, etc.

**Verbal** – name-calling, insulting a person's family, threats of physical violence, spreading rumours, constantly putting a person down.

**Emotional/Psychological** – excluding someone from a group, humiliation.

**Racist** – insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived ethnic origin or faith, name calling, graffiti, racially motivated violence.

**Sexual** – sexually insulting language/gestures, name calling, graffiti, unwanted sexual contact.

**Homophobic** – insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived sexuality, name calling, graffiti, homophobic violence.

**Cyber Bullying** – bullying by text messaging, bullying on the internet (in chat rooms, on bulletin boards and through instant messaging services), hate websites. The School recommends immediate contact with the POLICE by parents for this type of bullying

Bullies can also be victims, although bully/victims are in a minority. Both male and female bullies have something in common:-

- Bullies tend to have assertive, aggressive attitude over which they exercise little control.
- Bullies can rarely imagine what the victim feels like.
- Bullies tend to lack guilt.

Victims may –

- Be new to the school
- Be different in appearance
- Suffer low self-esteem
- Show 'entertaining' reactions when being bullied
- Be more anxious or nervous

**Procedure (For Staff)**

- Be aware of the school's Code of Conduct, and the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Be alert to the signs of bullying in class and generally around the school.
- Take on incident or report it.
- Take action as quickly as possible.
- Remain calm.
- Decide whether your action needs to be private or public.
- Re-assure the victim (don't make them feel inadequate).
- Offer advice, support or where help can be sought.
- It is vital to record the action in writing, take accounts and give to the Head of Year on a PRS.
- Make it plain to the bully that you disapprove.
- Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view.
- Punish the bully but with care. Reacting aggressively can give the message that it is all right to bully if you have the power.
- Explain why the punishment is being given.
- Parents are informed where necessary by the Head of Year.
- Once an incident has been dealt with, let it be.
- All racial incidents have to be reported to Head of Pastoral care for recording for LA.

### **By Students**

- Inform a teacher or member of staff (e.g. school nurse, dinner lady, a parent, a friend, a peer mentor) if you feel you are being bullied or are aware of others being bullied.
- Be aware of the school's Code of Conduct, and the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Use the School Council to suggest strategies.
- Encourage everyone to feel responsible for trying to stop bullying in school.
- Once an incident has been dealt with, let it lie.
- Talk to parents, friends, support staff or teachers when you have concerns.
- Use the peer mentor service. (Drop-in sessions in the PSC during break time).

### **By Parents**

- To be aware of the school's Anti-bullying Policy.
- To be encouraged to report any suspected bullying to the school promptly and to let the staff deal with the situation not family members who are personally involved.
- To give the name(s) of those alleged to be bullying.
- Parents of identified bullies to be informed and advised of the action taken.
- Be aware of the role of the internet, (MSN), and mobile phones in bullying – an area that schools will be unable to control.
- Students and parents need to be aware that the criminal charges can be brought by the victim if a complaint is made to the Police.

### **Support given and strategies taught in school**

#### **Victim**

- Strategies to develop assertiveness and self-esteem.
- A place of safety provided any time a pupil feels threatened.
- Peer mentoring scheme to support Year 7 & 8 pupils.
- On-going training of new peer mentors.

#### **Bully**

- Be given support.
- To be made to view their feelings and those of the victim.
- Ensure that the pupil understands the school's Code of Conduct and where their behaviour needs modifying.
- To work to correct/support areas causing concern.

### **Outside Agencies**

- EWO can offer counselling to victim and bully.
- Telephone numbers available for Child Line, Samaritans, schools liaison officer and school nurse.
- X-stream support team.
- Growing Through.
- Police involvement.
- Police Anti Social Behaviour Officer.

### **REVIEW**

- The policy to be reviewed by students, departments and the Pastoral Team on an annual basis.