

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

JUNIOR HOUSE

This policy has been prepared with regard to DCSF Guidance '*Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools*' (2007) and '*Bullying – A Charter for Action*'. This policy forms an integral part of the school's wider Behaviour Policy.

Contribution to Every Child Matters

It is our aim that wherever possible, the curriculum should contribute to all pupils' well-being by helping them achieve their potential academically, emotionally, physically, socially and spiritually.

We acknowledge that it is the right of every child to be helped to be healthy and safe, to enjoy and achieve, to make a positive contribution to the community.

Bullying – definitions

The government defines bullying as:

"Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."

The school understands bullying to be:

Deliberately hurtful behaviour, often repeated over a period of time, which makes another person feel uncomfortable, intimidated or threatened, whether this is intended or not.

Bullying can take many different forms and may be carried out through electronic means, commonly known as 'cyberbullying'. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice and may focus on disability or perceived 'difference'; it may be racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist or homophobic in nature.

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

Physical: Hitting; kicking; pushing; taking or hiding belongings; deliberately damaging someone's work or possessions

Verbal: Name-calling; teasing; taunting; mocking; making offensive comments

Indirect: Spreading unkind stories about someone; inappropriate use of mobile phones and/or texting, emailing, misuse of MSN or social networking sites; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups; spreading malicious rumours.

Bullying is a whole school issue. Whilst bullying is not specifically a criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. The school recognises that bullying has serious consequences and can cause psychological damage and even suicide. Bullying behaviour can occur between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face or indirectly. It can be fuelled by prejudice and be of a racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist or homophobic nature. It may be focused on someone's appearance, health, disability, intelligence, sexuality or their home situation. Bullying can take many different forms and is increasingly carried out through electronic means, commonly known as 'cyberbullying'.

All forms of bullying are taken equally seriously.

The school's aims with regard to bullying:

PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Prevention

- i. To make it clear to girls, staff, parents and guardians that bullying will not be tolerated; promoting an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
- ii. In accordance with the school's Christian foundation, to instil in all members of the school community a sense of caring and kindness for one another; encouraging positive behaviour and respect for others.
- iii. To promote a positive environment where every member of the school community feels safe and supported.
- iv. To encourage a climate of openness in which girls, staff and parents act immediately if there is any suspicion of bullying occurring.
- v. To provide a clear framework for dealing with incidents of bullying, which ensure that pupils, staff and parents know how to report bullying and how to get help
- vi. To apply disciplinary sanctions fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably to deal with those pupils who are found to be bullying; taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children. The aims of such sanctions are:
 - to impress on the perpetrator that what they have done is unacceptable;
 - to deter them from repeating that behaviour;
 - to signal to other pupils that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it;
 - to hold the pupil who bullies to account for their behaviour and ensure that they face up to the harm they have caused and learn from it;
 - to provide an opportunity for the pupil to put right the harm they have caused.

- vii. To educate pupils in resisting in bullying in all its forms; being clear about the roles that pupils can take in preventing bullying, including as a bystander.
- viii. To provide variety of opportunities to address bullying issues through a whole-school and whole curriculum approach to developing social and emotional skills in areas such as empathy and the management of feelings.
- ix. To make use of opportunities through the school calendar to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying (eg Anti- Bullying Week in November; and whole-school assemblies, Pastoral evenings for parents).
- x. To provide effective support for those being bullied and a framework within which those bullying others may recognise and reform their behaviour.
- xi. Train older girls as playground 'Pals' to support, identify girls who they suspect being bullied.
- xii. To promote pupil's health via resilience.

Intervention

The aims of school anti-bullying strategies and intervention systems are:

- i. To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- ii. To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- iii. To safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the pupil as appropriate eg the School Counsellor.
- iv. To apply disciplinary sanctions to the pupil causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multiagency support.
- v. To provide support for both the pupil who has experienced bullying and for the pupil exhibiting bullying behaviour.

Procedure for dealing with incidents involving bullying:

- i. All teachers should be alert to possible warning signs in pupils such as distress, work difficulties, illness and irregular attendance.
- ii. If a girl informs a teacher that she is being bullied, or a member of staff hears that bullying has taken place, he/she should take careful notes of time, place etc and satisfy themselves that there is a case to answer. All reports of bullying must be taken seriously.
The teacher should then speak to the Head of Junior House who will investigate (with either the Keystage Coordinator or Deputy Head) the allegation by interviewing both victim and perpetrator separately. Detailed notes should be taken throughout. This will enable any patterns to be identified.
- iii. If both the Head of Junior House and Deputy Head/Keystage Coordinator agree that bullying has taken place, the Head of Junior House will then inform the parents of the girl concerned into school. After discussion, suitable sanctions will be decided in line with the School's Behaviour Policy. Strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying.

- iv The Form Teacher and Keystage Coordinator should follow up any incidents with appropriate support and advice for the victim.
- v If appropriate, the Head of Junior House may suggest the involvement of the School Counsellor and discuss this with the girl(s) concerned and their parents.
- vi Staff receive training which focuses on recognising and tackling bullying behaviours, and raises awareness about times and places where it is most likely to happen.

The school does not use corporal punishment.

Curriculum Support

The anti-bullying message is communicated regularly to the girls through assemblies, and various areas of the curriculum, most notably through PSHE/Citizenship lessons, the ICT curriculum. Throughout Junior House we focus on bullying during the Anti-Bullying (Friendship) Week in November.

All teachers should use appropriate opportunities to reinforce the anti-bullying message through the standards they set in their relationships with the pupils and those they expect between pupils, whether inside or outside the classroom. Training for staff regarding anti-bullying is provided.

Reviewed: Autumn 2009