

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy has regard to the DCSF Guidance on the prevention of bullying contained in the 'Safe to Learn' – Embedding anti-bullying work in schools.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is repeated behaviour which makes other people feel uncomfortable or threatened, whether this is intended or not.

There are different sorts of bullying but the six main types are:

Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating spreading rumours.
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or hiding belongings including money any form of violence or threats
Racial	Racist, Religious or Cultural taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	Unwanted physical contact or abusive or homophobic comments
Verbal	Name calling, teasing, insulting, writing unkind notes.
Disability	Excluding, name calling, insulting

Initiation ceremonies intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation etc will be regarded as bullying.

Virtual or cyber bullying (being sent an abusive or threatening text message, or seeing nasty comments about yourself on a web-site) is explained further in our separate guidance document.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to clarify for pupils and staff that bullying is always unacceptable and incidents will always be addressed. Our school is a community founded on Christ and we therefore try to uphold gospel values – love, forgiveness, reconciliation etc. Every pupil has the right to feel safe and happy in school and to be protected when feeling vulnerable.

Possible Signs

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as nervousness, avoiding the playground, feigning illness, clinging to adults e.g. slow to leave the classroom or over-keen to do jobs during break times. They may show changes to work patterns, lack concentration or truancy.

Encouragement to tell

It is important that we create an atmosphere in the school where students who are being bullied or those who know about it, know that they will be listened to and believed, and that action taken will be sensitive and effective.

If everyone has a right to feel safe then we all have a responsibility to ensure the safety of others.

We brief Senior pupils who are given positions of responsibility over other pupils, on the appropriate action they should take, should they receive any allegations of abuse and how they should deal with younger pupils.

Any pupil who is subjected to a sustained level of unpleasantness, which includes any of the behaviours listed above, should report the incidents as bullying to the class, or form tutor, or to any adult within the school that they feel comfortable to confide in.

Bullying causing psychological damage and even suicide is very serious (although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour).

Procedures

A 'No Blame' Approach - In the first instance, it is important to make it clear to the victim that revenge is inappropriate and to the bully that her behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress.

Once a bullying incident is reported, a member of staff will talk to the pupil ideally on that same day and will go through a statement if one has been made at home, or will take a statement.

It is vital that everything that happens is carefully recorded in a clear factual way and the Head should be informed. Reference to the incident should be kept on a central register.

An investigation will take place. This will usually mean talking separately to the bully/bullies and to any witnesses.

Every effort is made to resolve the problem through counselling of both parties. The focus should be on how the situation can be resolved, rather than who did what, when.

The incident will be logged and the form teacher, will be informed.

Parents of both parties should be informed of what has happened and how it has been dealt with.

If the bullying behaviour continues, and counselling has not worked, then sanctions follow. It is important that counselling is maintained for both parties, even when sanctions have been applied.

Consequences

There will be consequences for bullying behaviour. The consequences will vary according to the severity of the incident but all incidents of bullying will be treated seriously.

Typical consequences include:

1. Informing the parents of the bully who will possibly be called into school to discuss their daughter's behaviour.
2. Bullying incidents will be logged in the pupil's file for a fixed period of time. Previous bullying incidents will be taken into consideration.
3. The bully may write a letter of apology to those involved.
4. The bully will be made aware of her behaviour and its effect upon others.
5. The bully may be segregated from other pupils during break and lunch times for one or more days.
6. In very serious situations the bully may be excluded from lessons or excluded from school for a fixed period.
7. The bully will be given counselling and help to improve her behaviour.
8. The Headteacher will become involved when offences are repeated / very serious.
9. Serious incidents of bullying will result in expulsion - (See Behaviour Policy, Exclusion from School).

Parents will be kept informed and the situation will be monitored to ensure all conflicts have been resolved.

Curriculum

Our curriculum enhances this policy:-

- by dealing with the topic of bullying, in a way which explores why it happens and gives alternative ways of behaving and dealing with difficulties.
- by using teaching methods which encourage co-operative work and a variety of groupings, so that pupils extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.
- through assemblies and PSHE.

The following information is distributed to pupils (Years 3-11) annually through their Homework Diaries.

- Personal and Confidential Matters
- Formal Complaints.
- Cyber bullying

Staff Awareness

Staff awareness of bullying is raised regularly in Staff Meetings and through briefings and training sessions.

Amended 27th October 2009

