



ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGY

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying (also referred to as 'child on child abuse') may be defined as the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another pupil or group of people physically or emotionally.

Types of bullying include:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Emotional
- Cyber bullying
- Unpleasant remarks or actions related to any of the following:
 - Race, religion or culture
 - Sex (i.e. talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way)
 - Gender, gender identity or perceived gender identity
 - Sexual orientation (e.g. homophobic bullying)¹
 - Disability or Special Educational Needs
 - Intellectual or other abilities
 - Appearance or health conditions
 - Being adopted or a carer

All staff should be aware of the signs of bullying including:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the school office or own GP outside school with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Choosing the company of adults
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares

Preventing Bullying

The member of staff with overall responsibility for anti-bullying work in the Senior School is the Deputy Head and in the Junior School the Head of Faculty for the Junior School.

We aim to prevent bullying by:

- Fostering a whole school ethos and environment of good behaviour, mutual respect, and consideration. We aim to create a safe, happy, and inclusive environment for learning
- Creating a culture in which everyone is valued, differences are respected, diversity is championed and celebrated and in which the school takes a pro-active role in educating pupils.
- Developing a culture in which the vulnerable are protected and incidents which might demonstrate prejudice or intolerance are tackled and addressed e.g. prejudicial language.
- Encouraging all members of the school community to have high expectations and model how to behave towards each other
- Raising awareness about bullying through opportunities in the curriculum, the PSHE programme, assemblies, and national events such as Anti Bullying Week
- Developing pupils' social skills, confidence and self-esteem
- Educating pupils and other members of the school community about how to keep themselves safe when online or using social media or other electronic means of communication, so they take maximum precautions to help prevent themselves being victims of cyberbullying
- Ensuring all pupil sign the Acceptable Use Agreement in which we make it clear that cyberbullying is unacceptable. This message is regularly reinforced in lessons, assemblies and form tutor sessions.

- Making it clear to all that there are effective procedures for reporting, investigating and tackling bullying, and encouraging pupils to report instances of anything they perceive to be bullying.
- Making it clear to all that incidents of cyberbullying or bullying of any kind that occur off the school premises but have an impact on the classroom environment or relationships between pupils will be pursued with the same seriousness as bullying occurring within school.
- Making it as easy as possible for pupils who are being bullied to talk to someone they trust and get help confidentially
- Having strong pastoral support dedicated to pupil welfare and experienced in dealing with bullying issues. All our staff are trained in recognising and responding to bullying and staff awareness is raised through regular communication about pupil concerns.
- Taking pupils' views into account through Form Councils in both Junior and Senior Schools, PSHE Time in Junior School, and developing the roles that pupils can play in anti-bullying work, for example as Big Sisters or House Captains.
- Carrying out annual Pupil Voice to identify their concerns around bullying, including the reporting and dealing with incidents.
- Ensuring that the IT filtering and monitoring systems are effective in protecting members of the school community
- Working in line with national guidance, and the requirements of our regulatory bodies.

DEALING WITH BULLYING

The School believes the responsibility for bullying lies with perpetrator, not the victim. We recognise that it is better to act against bullying rather than simply remove the victim from further threat.

- Anyone who feels she is the victim of bullying can speak to her Form Tutor/Teacher in confidence
- Any incident of bullying should initially be reported to the Form Tutor/Teacher who may, if necessary, refer the matter to a higher authority
- Every effort will be made to resolve the problem through talking to both parties
- In serious cases the Headmaster will inform the parents and the matter will be dealt with appropriately
- It must be made clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate
- It must be made clear to the bully that her behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress
- If bullying continues then sanctions will follow (see staff handbook and Behaviour Policy)
- Support may be offered to the victim (and the "bully" if necessary) through referral to the School Counsellor or outside agencies

Pupils

If you are being bullied

- Stay calm and try to appear confident. Tell the bully to stop and get away from the situation as quickly as you can
- Do not suffer in silence: talk to a member of staff. This could be your class teacher in Junior House, Form Teacher or Counsellor in Senior House, or any other member of staff you trust in both Junior and Senior Schools. If you are unhappy about talking to a member of staff directly, you could talk to someone in your family, a friend or a member of the Sixth Form such as your Big Sister, Head Girl, Deputy Head Girls, or another member of the Sixth Form Leadership Team. Telling does not make you a 'snitch': not telling means that the bullying is likely to continue. Remember you may not be the only victim.
- In Senior House, girls can also email or report on Teams, a concern about bullying to the Deputy Head or Form Teacher.
- Be assured that we take every report of bullying seriously and will act upon it, even if it occurred outside the school. We will keep records of what has happened, and consult you and support you in whatever action we take
- Remember being bullied is not your fault, nobody ever deserves to be bullied
- If you feel you are being bullied by a member of staff you should take the same action as if it were another pupil, that is, report the matter to someone you trust. All forms of bullying are unacceptable and all reports of bullying are investigated and dealt with irrespective of who the person responsible for the bullying incident might be

Partnership with Parents

We believe that working with parents/guardians is essential to establishing the anti-bullying ethos and resolving any issues that arise.

- Parents are encouraged to reinforce the principles of the Anti-Bullying Policy at home
- Parents are asked to let Class Teacher in Junior House or Form Teacher in Senior House know directly if they have cause for concern.
- In any serious case of bullying parents will be informed by the school and may be invited in to discuss the matter. We will keep in regular contact with parents until the issue is resolved

TEACHERS – WHAT THE SCHOOL WILL DO

The exact course of action will vary with each situation but the main objectives should be that bullying incidents are brought into the open and strategies agreed to help resolve the problem.

- All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated immediately
- Everything that happens will be carefully recorded using CPOMs where appropriate.
- The most important thing is to stop the bullying and ensure the victim is safe
- We aim for a peaceful resolution: revenge is not helpful for the victim or appropriate
- The victim will be supported throughout the process
- Guidance and help will be available for the perpetrator to help change her behaviour
- Staff will monitor the situation to ensure that the bullying does not continue. If bullying recurs, further action will be taken
- In any serious case of bullying the Headmaster will be informed and the school will work with the parents of both the victim and the perpetrator. The school will remain in regular contact with parents until the situation is resolved
- A bullying incident will be regarded as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' (Children Act 1989). Where this is the case, after the Headmaster and DSL have been involved and appropriate procedure followed, it may be necessary to make a report to the Social Services and in certain cases the Police
- The school will keep a log of all reported bullying incidents which is monitored in order to identify trends and inform preventative work in the school and future development of policies and procedures.

If you think that bullying is happening, talk to the girls concerned and ask them what has been happening. Record this in CPOMs. Any allegation should be referred to the Head of Faculty in Junior House and Deputy Head in Senior House and thence to the Headmaster.

We need to be vigilant before school, at breaks and lunchtimes as these are the times when victims are more vulnerable. We need to be aware that bullying is more likely to occur in areas which are less formally supervised such as the toilets, cloakrooms, corridors and grounds.

We need to be aware that bullying also takes place in the classroom. We must be aware that sarcasm is never appropriate in teaching as a girl is not in a position to respond on an equal footing and this can be perceived as a form of bullying. We must be sensitive to the reaction of girls to one another in class and be quick to stamp on covert bullying in the form of the reactions of the class to an individual girl's answers or behaviour.

We can all promote attitudes which discourage bullying:

- 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 girls extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.

SANCTIONS

It is important that those found responsible after investigation are held to account and accept responsibility for the harm caused. Action will be taken, therefore, which communicates unambiguous disapproval of her/their activities and this will usually include sanctions.

If sanctions are warranted, the person(s) responsible will receive a sanction in accordance with the Behaviour Policy. Any sanctions imposed must be fair, proportionate and reasonable, take account of any special educational needs or disabilities that pupils may have and consider the needs of vulnerable pupils. Staff will inform the parents of those responsible of the decisions taken with regard to sanctions. In the most serious cases, the sanction may be fixed term or permanent exclusion.

In line with our Behaviour Policy, our aim is also to change the attitude of those responsible and encourage a return to responsible, caring behaviour. Action taken towards this aim will be determined on a case by case basis, but may include measures such as “restorative justice”. We will also provide those responsible with access to any support they might need to achieve the return to acceptable behaviour.

Links to other policies

This strategy operates in conjunction with:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour and Rewards Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Acceptable Use Agreements
- ALS Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Westfield PSHE Schemes of Work

The effectiveness of these strategies will be evaluated annually through a review of the anti-bullying policy and consultation with the pupils.

Key Contacts

- Senior School: Kate Quinn, Deputy Head
- Junior School: John Drake, Head of Faculty
- Senior School Form Tutors
- Junior School Class teachers
- School Counsellor, Anne Simpson
- Childline, 08001111
- NSPCC: www.there4me.co.uk