



ANTI-BULLYING (STUDENTS) PROTOCOL

Purpose of Protocol

The intention of the school is to develop a culture where bullying of any form is not tolerated, and where it occurs, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. The key principles and values underpinning this intent is that all staff and students have a right to feel safe and secure within our community, and that we meet the expectations of other stakeholders, including parents and carers, in ensuring that the school effectively deals with bullying situations.

The designated member of staff with overall responsibility for 'Freedom from Bullying' will be the Assistant Principal (Attendance and Behaviour), although all staff have a role to play in ensuring that students feel safe and secure.

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 seven *main* types are:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, spreading rumours, looks and gestures.
- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings, including money.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or unwelcome gender-related comments.
- Verbal – name calling, teasing, insulting, writing unkind notes or graffiti
- Homophobic – name calling, teasing, taunts in relation to sexual orientation
- Racial – name calling, teasing, taunts in relation to ethnic background gestures, taunts, graffiti, physical violence, mocking in relation to ethnic background; this can also be of a religious or cultural nature.
- Cyber Bullying – texting, sexting, social networking harassment and unwelcome comments, alarm, distress or humiliation that uses internet-related and telephone technology.

Stakeholders should also be acutely aware of individual circumstances such as disabilities, SEN, appearance or health conditions, and home circumstances which may lead to issues of bullying.

People react differently. It is not always possible to tell if someone is hurt or upset. Bullying can therefore be different from acts of direct aggression, and often the psychological or emotional trauma can be as damaging as the physical effects of aggression.

Aim

The aim of our Anti-Bullying (Students) protocol is to clarify for students and staff that bullying is always unacceptable. Every student and every member of staff has the right to be safe and comfortable in the school environment, and be protected when feeling vulnerable.

Objectives

- All staff, Governors, students and parents should have an understanding of bullying.
- Bullying will not be tolerated and will be dealt with according to procedures identified in this protocol.
- Clear procedures for reporting bullying should be understood and followed by staff, parents and students alike.
- Incidents of bullying will be monitored to identify and address specific issues.



Prevention

We will strive to create an atmosphere in the school in which bullying of any sort is not tolerated. School and House Assemblies will frequently raise the issues, and, although clearly some curriculum areas are better placed than others to become directly involved, there will be a whole school approach to establishing the unacceptable nature of bullying. The school will continue to promote 'Freedom from Bullying' and will involve itself fully in the National Anti-Bullying week.

The school has an Anti-Bullying Charter which is signed annually by the entire school community.

The PSHE programme will cover the problem, providing opportunities for analysis and open discussion, placing students in situations which require them to view the issue from different perspectives, and by establishing alternative ways of behaving and strategies for dealing with difficulties.

The PSHE programme will cover areas of discrimination including sexual orientation.

RE will cover areas surrounding religion and ethnicity and prejudice.

Drama, English, Music, Art and Religious Education all provide outlets for students to express emotion, and can also provide role play and discursive opportunities.

Roles and Responsibilities

A named member of staff will assume the responsibility for 'Freedom from Bullying' work at the school, although every member of the school community has a responsibility to treat bullying seriously.

Governors

'Freedom from Bullying' should be discussed at the appropriate Governors committee on annual basis.

An annually nominated Governor will work with the designated member of staff responsible for 'Freedom from Bullying' work, including attendance at the focus group meetings.

Reporting Bullying - Encouragement to Tell

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

Not telling protects and gives support and encouragement to the bully or bullies. It also increases the isolation of victims.

Every member of staff should be alert and sensitive to an approach by a student, and be prepared to support the student as necessary.

It is hoped, of course, that students have sufficient confidence in their tutor to feel comfortable in reporting any incidents. The tutor would normally be the first person to approach in any case of bullying, but if for some reason this was not possible, or the student does not feel comfortable talking to their tutor, another suitable adult or the Head of House could be approached.



The “Buddy” system established within the tutorials encourages the older students to take responsibility for the younger ones and might provide another route for disclosures. This process is introduced to Year 9 students during PSHE lessons in the summer term.

Procedures and Consequences

Reporting bullying incidents to staff

If the bullying is deemed to be of a low level, where both parties are spoken to and a solution found the incident need not be recorded on PARS and in the Bullying Log.

Staff need to use their discretion as to additional sanctions which may include a break time, lunchtime or after school detention and which may require communication with parents/carers. All such incidents should be recorded on PARS and in the Bullying Log.

If staff are unsure of the appropriate course of action, further advice should be sought from the Head of House or the Assistant Principal (Attendance and Behaviour).

Where the situation cannot be resolved, the incidents will be recorded by staff and written statements collected from both victim and perpetrator, and appropriate action taken.

In serious cases, parents will be informed and asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

Investigation of the bullying behaviour and threats of bullying will be initiated within a 48 hour period wherever practicable.

A concerted effort will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour, and to restore the confidence and boost the self-esteem of the victim.

In serious cases, exclusion, even permanent exclusion, will be considered.

Whenever possible, the students will be reconciled through ‘Restorative Justice’ mediation, and if it is thought that it would be constructive, the bully will offer an apology, either verbal or written.

Mutual Respect Contracts – this is a set of commitments made between students or groups of students who have been involved in bullying or conflict. The contract is agreed and signed in the presence of a member of staff, a copy is held by the school as well as being sent home to parents/carers.

Work within the Inclusion Unit – support can be offered to both the victim of bullying as well as to the perpetrator by staff in the Inclusion room.

Parents Commitment

If you think that your child is being bullied or if you are told that that is the case, please let us know straightaway. Reassure them that we will deal with it sensitively, but firmly.

Children may indicate by signs or changes in behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware that these are possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking or travelling to or from school
- is unwilling to go to school
- begins to do poorly at school



- becomes withdrawn, starts stammering
- regularly has books or clothes damaged or destroyed
- becomes distressed, stops eating
- cries easily, has nightmares
- becomes disruptive or aggressive
- has possessions that go 'missing' or money 'lost'
- starts stealing money
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- attempts suicide or runs away
- spends a lot of time on the internet / social networking sites / social habits change / do not socialise

Of course, these signs and behaviours could indicate other problems not connected to bullying, but it should certainly be considered. If parents have any concerns, contacting the school can help to resolve the issues, with school and parents working together to support the student.

Students Commitment

If you are being bullied, or you know that someone else is, please tell us straight away, and it will be dealt with. Not telling means the victim will continue to suffer and the bully will carry on, probably with others too. We all have the responsibility to make sure that bullying is not allowed to continue in our school. In the first instance, inform your tutor or any other member of staff who you trust. They will then take the necessary action as appropriate.

Teachers Commitment

If you think that bullying is happening, talk to all the children concerned (including bystanders), and ask them what has been happening. If appropriate, ask them to write it down, or do so yourself, so that it can be passed on to the Tutor or Head of House.

We need to be particularly vigilant at breaks and travelling times, around corridors between lessons and in the areas of the playground and the toilets. These are times and places where victims are more vulnerable and bullying is not easily seen.

Help Organisations

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0171 354 8321
Barnadoes	See local telephone directory / Internet
ChildLine	0800 1111
Children's Legal Centre	0171 359 6251
Child Guidance Centre	See local telephone directory / Internet
Kidscape	0171 730 3300
NSPCC	See local telephone directory / Internet
Parentline	01268 757077
Samaritans	See local telephone directory / Internet

Further Assistance

KIDSCAPE has produced three booklets about bullying:

- Stop Bullying!
- You Can Beat Bullying! A Guide for Young People
- Preventing Bullying: A Parent's Guide



A free copy of each booklet can be obtained by sending a large SAE to:

KIDSCAPE
152 Buckingham Palace Road
London
SW1 9TR

Monitoring and Review

The Senior Leadership Team shall review this protocol from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

If Staff have any questions about this protocol or suggestions for additions that they would like to be considered on review, they may do so by emailing the Principal or Business Manager.

The School will continue to review the effectiveness of this Protocol to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

Date of Review

August 2015