



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

1. This policy has been produced in line with the DfES Guidance 0064/2000: "Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence", DCSF Guidance "Safe to Learn - Embedding anti-bullying in schools" and "Bullying – A charter for Action". This policy is a 'Whole School Policy' and informs practice in the Senior School, Prep School and Nursery. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our School. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* School. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

### WHAT IS BULLYING?

2. Battle Abbey School uses the government's definition of bullying as:

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

"Bullying includes: name-calling; taunting; mocking; making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; pushing; taking belongings; inappropriate text messaging and e-mailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the Internet; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups; and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours. Although sometimes occurring between two individuals in isolation, it quite often takes place in the presence of others".

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time. It happens when an individual (**or a group**) goes out of her way deliberately and persistently to threaten, intimidate, abuse or hurt someone else.

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying has an impact on its victims' attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups that may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives. At worst, bullying has been a factor in pupil suicide. Bullying should never be tolerated; no one should suffer the pain and indignity that a bully can cause.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (eg hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racial - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Disability - any offensive remarks targeted at an individual which make reference to any special educational needs or disability they may have
- Religious – any offensive remarks targeted at an individual which make reference to any religious belief
- Cultural – offensive remarks making reference to an individual's or group's culture or traditions
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber - all areas of internet ,such as email and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, and misuse of associated technology(eg camera and video facilities)

### **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RESPOND TO BULLYING?**

3. Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

### **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

4. A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- does not want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## **PROCEDURES**

The Deputy Head and Head of Prep School will:

- Ensure that all staff have an opportunity to discuss strategies and reviewing them
- Determine the strategies and procedures
- Discuss development of the strategies with SLT
- Ensure appropriate training is available
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils
- Be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems
- Keep the Headmaster informed of incidents
- Arrange relevant staff training
- Determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems
- Advise on methods for encouraging pupils to let it be known that they are being bullied
- Make a report to the Headmaster each term to enable patterns to be identified

Senior Tutors and Senior Teachers will:

- Be responsible for ensuring that the school's strategies are put into practice
- Know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported
- Put into practice methods for encouraging pupils to tell someone that they are being bullied.

Form Tutors / Class teachers will:

- Be responsible for liaising with Senior Tutors/Deputy Head/Head of Prep School over all incidents involving pupils in their form
- Be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution. The bully should be encouraged to offer an apology and whenever possible the pupils should be reconciled.
- Support the anti-bullying policy in the PSHE programme/tutor time/class time.

All staff will:

- Know the policy and procedures
- Deal with incidents according to the policy
- Never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity
- Fully support the anti-bullying policy.
- Be aware of their responsibilities while carrying out duties at break and lunch time, paying particular attention to those areas of the school where bullying might occur.

### **Strategies for dealing with Bullying**

There are 2 strands to our policy – Prevention and Dealing with Incidents.

#### **a) Prevention**

i) Create an Ethos of Respect

a) Our ethos must be one in which all pupils are valued not only by the teaching staff but also by their peers

b) The way in which staff treat pupils and each other must reflect this ethos. Pupils should not be humiliated and made to feel inadequate. When dealing with pupils – or even talking to colleagues about them – we should avoid sarcastic comments, derogatory nick-names and dominating behaviour

- c) The staff must be vigilant and observant
- i) The School should be properly patrolled during break and lunch periods
- ii) At least one member of staff should be regularly present during those periods
- iii) All staff should be sensitive to changes in behaviour, moodiness, and patterned absenteeism
- iv) It is the responsibility of all staff to draw the attention of the Senior Tutors/ Deputy Head/Head of Prep School to a pupil over whom problems may be sensed
- v) The School Nurse is also available to counsel any girls, as are our trained Peer Supporters

## ii) **Create a 'Be Prepared to Tell' Culture**

In order to combat the culture of silence, a culture of being prepared to tell should be encouraged. This can be done in a number of ways. Serious consideration will be given to the topic within the framework of peer pressure in the Religious Education / Personal and Social Education. Training of Form Bronzes as Peer Supporters will also address the problem of bullying and encourage the culture of being prepared to tell. Assemblies will, from time to time, focus upon it. All in all, there must be communicated an emphasis that not only is it right to tell, it is important to do so. We need to listen carefully to pupils when they are willing to talk about bullying and be sensitive to their need for privacy and respect.

## b) **Dealing with Incidents**

CONTEMPORANEOUS NOTES SHOULD BE KEPT OF ALL INVESTIGATORY MEETINGS/PHONE CALLS. ALL NOTES SHOULD BE FACTUAL.

- If bullying is suspected or reported the incident will be dealt with initially and immediately by the teacher approached
- The teacher will record the details of the incident and inform the Senior Tutor/Deputy Head/Head of Prep School
- The Senior Tutor/Deputy Head/Head of Prep School will interview all the parties separately and make an objective record. Parents of any pupils interviewed will be informed by phone at this stage
- Staff teaching the bullied pupil and the Form Tutor/Class Teacher will be informed
- The Senior Tutor/Form Tutor/Class Teacher will determine in consultation with the Deputy Head/Head of Prep School the appropriate strategy to combat the bullying
- Parents will be kept informed in writing by the Senior Tutor/Deputy Head/Head of Prep School
- Any punishments used against the bullies will be determined by the Senior Tutor/Deputy Head/Head of Prep School in line with school sanctions
- A member of staff (usually the Deputy Head) will meet with the parents of the victim and bully after the investigation to discuss the findings and also strategies for dealing with the situation
- The Deputy Head will hold a follow up meeting with the Senior Tutor, 2 weeks later, will be arranged to ensure the situation has improved

For serious or persistent offences the school may use the ultimate sanction of permanent exclusion – this will be determined by the Headmaster. Bullying may not be a criminal offence but the school acknowledges that criminal laws apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

### **Strategies for dealing with bullying**

Any strategies agreed with parents should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and confirmed in writing to parents. These strategies will be monitored very closely and reviewed regularly.

Strategies may include:

- Close monitoring by staff
- One on one discussion between staff and victim/bully

- Counselling for the victim/bully
- A log/diary kept by the victim
- Intervention strategies such as games to extend friendship groupings, role play, deliberate pairings
- Finding a buddy for the victim
- A round table discussion led by a teacher
- Disciplinary action (from detention through to exclusion, depending on the incident involved)

### **Support**

Both victim and bully will need support to move on from any incident. This will be provided by his/her Senior Tutor/Form Tutor/Deputy Head/Head of Prep School and the progress of those involved will be carefully monitored.

### **OUTCOMES**

- The bully/bullies may be asked to apologise genuinely.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- After the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure that repeated bullying does not take place. This may include signing a Behaviour Contract.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.

### **HELP ORGANISATIONS**

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4)	0845 1 205 204
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Bullying Online	<a href="http://www.bullying.co.uk">www.bullying.co.uk</a>
	<a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a>

*This policy was reviewed by the Full Court of Governors on 28 Oct 11 in accordance with para 59 of the ISI Regulatory Requirements.*



*I S Mercer  
Chairman of Governors*