



Anti-Bullying Policy

Revised: September 2016

This policy applies to all pupils in St George's School Edgbaston, inclusive of those in our EYFS.

Introduction

St George's School strives to create a safe and happy environment, believing that all bullying is unacceptable. We believe that our school should provide a safe, caring and happy place for young people to learn and adults to work. If this is achieved, the school will be able to develop teaching and learning while fostering an attitude of responsible behaviour at all times to promote safety, both on the school premises and out of school hours.

The policy should help to ensure that members of the school community are clear about their roles and responsibilities, and how to manage a bullying incident if it occurs. However, bullying is not confined to school and this policy aims to make pupils aware of what action they can take both now and in their adult lives, whether as victims of bullying, or as bystanders.

Aims and Objectives

- To ensure that all students, parents and staff are aware of the definition of bullying and the distressing effect it has on its victims.
- To ensure that all students' parents and staff are fully aware of the referral procedures for reporting bullying incidents and the strategies adopted for supporting those involved in these incidents.
- To establish a climate in which students who are being bullied, or think another student is being bullied, can speak to an appropriately trained person in the full knowledge that they will be listened to and receive a prompt, appropriate and sensitive response.
- To outline the school's strategy for responding to any incidents which are reported.
- To create a school community where bullying is recognised as unacceptable and where all students can feel valued, secure and happy.

Context, Roles and Responsibility

This policy draws on Department for Education guidance *Preventing and tackling bullying Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (October 2014)*. The policy is compliant with The Education and Inspections Act 2006, The Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice 2014:0 to 25 years and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016. It should also be read alongside other school policies such as the Behaviour Policy (Upper and Lower School), Safeguarding Policy and Curriculum Policy.

The Board of Trustees will monitor incidents of bullying and will offer guidance they consider to promote the safeguarding and welfare of pupils.

The Headteachers and senior pastoral staff will have overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation. Incidents will be managed according to the circumstances recorded and will be reviewed to see whether patterns emerge from the nature of the bullying.

The Trustees, Headteachers and staff will share responsibility for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed and are consistently and fairly applied.

Parents and Guardians will be encouraged to work in partnership with the school in order that high standards of behaviour are maintained both in and out of school, address any incidents of bullying that occur and support the school to ensure that pupils respect both similarities and differences between themselves and other members of the school and the wider community.

Pupils will be expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour and will be made fully aware of the school's anti-bullying policy, the procedures arising from cases of bullying and the rationale behind them. All pupils have a collective responsibility to ensure that they are considerate towards one another and respectful of each other's differences. All pupils follow a programme which includes anti-bullying themes and content during school assemblies, tutor time and PSHE programmes

Definitions of Bullying:

Bullying behaviour can be defined as an action, or number of repeated actions, causing harm to people or relationships. This behaviour could be intentional or unintentional and may be on-going. The definition equally encompasses physical or non-physical actions, therefore the harm could be physical, emotional, or both.

Bullying has many forms – e.g. physical, verbal, emotional or electronic (cyber-bullying). A bully is someone who targets others and makes them unhappy or frightened over a period of time. They may do this by:

- Threatening behaviour
- Using physical violence
- Using unpleasant words – insulting comments, mocking verbal abuse
- Stealing property, taking or demanding money
- Deliberately upsetting people
- Sending unpleasant text messages/images
- Using the internet/MSN/technology/to spread unpleasant rumours (cyber bullying)
- Sexting/Sharing of images

Single one off incidents are not usually bullying, but if they are repeated, they must be reported and dealt with by the school.

We are aware that bullying can happen anywhere, but we strongly believe that wherever students are they have the right to be safe. Nobody has the right to

make anyone unhappy. Staff need to, make it clear that bullying is bullying and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Bullying behaviour can be direct or indirect, simple or complex.

Direct bullying includes physical threats, verbal insults or taunts and directly contacting a person with obscene or insulting messages by using, for example, a mobile phone.

Indirect bullying includes persistently ignoring a pupil so that they feel socially isolated, spreading malicious rumours, or insults, often via social network sites on the Internet, or writing offensive graffiti.

Cyber-bullying uses technology to harm a person, group of people or a relationship and can happen both inside and outside of school and at any time of the day or night. The school has installed monitoring software on all school owned devices to monitor usage of computers and report any inappropriate use.

Bullying differs from ‘friendship fall-out’, or other aggressive behaviour:

Where there is bullying:

- there is normally a power imbalance so that the victim does not feel able to defend him/herself
- it is usually persistent but could be an isolated incident
- it might relate to racism, homophobia, LGBT, sexism, ageism
- it might relate to a disability or a special educational need (SEN). In these examples, victims may not be aware of being bullied
- there is normally an intention to cause harm, although there may be instances when there is a lack of awareness that the actions are harmful.

All bullying issues, whatever their nature, will be treated with equal importance and the response will be based upon the guidelines in the policy.

Signs and Symptoms:

A victim may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. These may include:

- reluctance to attend school
- unwillingness to travel on the school bus/public transport
- truancy from specific lessons
- damage to clothing or possessions
- ‘losing’ more items than usual
- unexplained bruises/swellings
- deterioration of school work/academic performance

- being afraid to use the Internet
- becoming jittery about receiving text messages
- unkempt uniform
- bullying towards siblings
- taking money without permission

Symptoms may include:

- loss of appetite
- headaches
- stomach aches
- stammering
- sudden changes in behaviour
- lack of confidence
- signs of depression
- nervous/edginess
- difficulty in concentration
- lack of motivation to complete work

Reporting Bullying

Pupils are encouraged to report all forms of bullying, whether carried out by another pupil or by an adult. The hope is that by reporting the problem in the first instance, this will become the first step in empowering the victim to overcome the bullying. Parents are encouraged and can contact the school in confidence to talk about any concern they may have.

Whenever a pupil experiences bullying, it should be reported immediately, whether by the victim, friends of the victim, bystanders or via parents, who should contact the school. Information can be reported to a member of staff, Class/Form Tutor, a Head of House or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. All staff should first immediately secure the safety of the young person before following the school's procedures.

For cases involving Lower School pupils, staff should report incidents to the Head of Lower School or Deputy Head of Lower School. For cases involving Upper School student's staff should report incidents to the Head of House, Head of Sixth Form or Mr Nicholls SLT. These staff will notify the Headmaster and keep him informed of the schools response.

When a problem occurs outside of school and immediate advice or support is required, Childline (0800 1111) for example, would provide an alternative, particularly if a child did not feel comfortable discussing the matter with a parent, family member or carer. The school would hope that the child would feel able to discuss the matter with a member of staff upon their return to school.

Responding to Bullying

1. What should a pupil do if they witness bullying behaviour?
 - i. Support the victim by offering your friendship and make it clear that in your opinion what is happening to them is wrong.
 - ii. Encourage them to speak out on their own behalf by confronting the bully, or with their permission confront the bully yourself.
 - iii. Accompany the victim to a member of staff or trusted adult or suggest that you see a senior member of staff on their behalf.

2. Procedures for a member of staff should you witness an incident of bullying or it is reported to you:
 - i. Reassure and support the pupil(s) involved.
 - ii. Advise them that you are required to pass the details on to the relevant member of staff Head of House, Mr Nicholls SLT (Upper School) or Mrs Shaw Headteacher, Mrs Sadiq DHT (Lower School).
 - iii. Inform the appropriate member of staff immediately.

3. What will Happen?
 - i. All incidents are recorded and investigated.
 - ii. If the investigation confirms a bullying incident has taken place parents are contacted.
 - iii. The school response will include support for the victim and if required mentoring and counselling.
 - iv. The investigation will try to understand the reasons for the bullying in order to support the rehabilitation of the bully and to prevent a reoccurrence of their behaviour.
 - v. Sanctions will depend upon the individual incident but may include:
 - Lunchtime or after school detentions
 - Restriction of access around the school site
 - Transfer of form or teaching group
 - Internal Exclusion
 - Exclusion from after school clubs or Aftercare
 - Formal School Warning
 - Fixed Term Exclusion
 - Permanent Exclusion
 - vi. If it is deemed appropriate and agreed with the victim and parents the school may adopt a restorative approach with those involved.
 - vii. The school will monitor students involved following a bullying incident.

The school will attempt to resolve bullying issues using the above procedure and sanctions. However, in very serious cases it may be necessary to make a report and refer a matter to Social Services or the Police.

St George's School is committed to creating a school community where bullying is recognised as unacceptable and where all students can feel valued, secure and happy.

Our stated commitment is that when a young person speaks out about bullying:

- **They will be listened to**
- **Their concerns will be taken seriously**
- **The matters will be investigated**
- **Together we will find a way to tackle it**
- **Someone will be there to help and support the young person**

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