

The New School at West Heath

Policy on Anti-Bullying

Introduction

This policy aims to ensure that all those connected with the school are protected from bullying behaviour. The ongoing and long-term aim of the policy is to reduce the number of students who experience bullying through increasing awareness of this behaviour, its causes and consequences in the students, staff, parents and carers who make up the school community, and to help students find and put into practice a series of solutions to the problem of bullying.

The policy also aims to ensure that individual cases of bullying will be dealt with consistently and in a constructive and fair manner when they occur. Procedures for dealing with bullying are clearly set out so that all members of the school community know what they can expect from the school and what the school expects of them.

What is bullying?

Bullying is when one or more people physically, emotionally or psychologically hurt or cause harm to a person who is in a weaker position than him/her/them, and so is less able to defend himself/herself. Bullying usually happens over a period of time, and consists of a series of different incidents.

Different types of bullying include:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, tripping someone up, stealing/damaging someone's belongings, etc.
- Verbal – name-calling, insulting a person's family, threats of physical violence, spreading rumours, constantly putting a person down.
Emotional/psychological – excluding someone from a group, humiliation.
- Racist – insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived ethnic origin or faith, name-calling, graffiti, racially motivated violence.
- Sexual – sexually insulting language/gestures, name-calling, graffiti, unwanted physical contact.
- Homophobic – insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived sexuality, name-calling, graffiti, homophobic violence.
- Electronic – bullying by text message, bullying on the internet (in chat rooms, on bulletin boards and through instant messaging services), hate websites.

Bullying is the abuse of power by one person over another. All of the types of behaviour listed above are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at this school.

Strategies

This policy was developed and is reviewed and monitored through consultation with the whole school community and applies to all members of that community.

How we handle bullying at ... School

- When bullying is reported it will be taken seriously.
- Staff will work with the young person who is being bullied to help them feel safe and find responses to bullying that work.
- Staff will work with the young person or people who are bullying to change the bullying behaviour.
- Wherever possible, staff will work with the parents/carers of any student who is being bullied to support and encourage that student in finding solutions to the bullying.
- Wherever possible, staff will work with the parents/carers of any student who is bullying to support and encourage that student in finding alternatives to the bullying behaviour.

Excluding pupils from school is a last resort. If particularly serious victimisation, abuse and intimidation, or physical bullying against any other person belonging to the school community is reported, those pupils who carried out the bullying will have to be suspended from school activities while it is investigated and solutions are sought. If the solutions have no effect, or if the bullying was so severe that it would be harmful to the rest of the school community to allow the suspended pupil to return to the school, he/she may have to be permanently excluded.

Standing up to bullying behaviour

This school is committed to stopping bullying behaviour and to do this we need everybody's help. Here are the things that every member of the school community can expect from the school and the things that are expected from each member:

All Students

All of us find ourselves in vulnerable positions sometimes, e.g. when we start a new school/job/subject, if we are having problems at home, etc. As part of the school community, you have a responsibility to help combat bullying by supporting other students when they are vulnerable. Don't gang up against another student in a vulnerable position; try to help him/her feel less vulnerable. Don't join in with making fun of them, even if you don't feel able to

challenge the bullying behaviour yourself. And don't turn a blind eye to bullying and victimisation.

Here's what to do if you know that another student is being bullied (this could be a friend that you know really well, someone in one of your classes, or someone that you just see around the school and have never even spoken to; and the bullying could be happening at school, or on the way to and from school):

Let a member of staff know about the bullying. You can do this in lots of different ways:

- Fill out a bullying report form or just write down the details about the bullying and put it in one of the bully boxes around the school (who is being bullied, how they are being bullied, and when and where the bullying is happening/happened; if you can, write down who is doing the bullying and also your name).
- Tell a peer mentor, who can advise you how to tell staff and support you in doing so, or tell them for you if you are unable to do so.
- Find a quiet moment to speak to a member of staff. Members of staff. After lessons can be a good time to approach teachers. You can always pretend that you need help with some work if you are worried that other pupils might hear you ask the teacher for a private word.
- We have two members of staff with a special responsibility for making sure any bullying is dealt with properly. One works during the school day and the other works beyond it, in boarding. You can always speak with either of them.

When you let staff know about bullying you can expect what you say to be taken seriously and that action will be taken to stop the bullying behaviour. If you choose to tell a member of staff about bullying in person or if you write your name on a bullying report form before posting it in the Bully Box, staff will not name you when they investigate the bullying unless they have to pass the information on to another agency. You will be told that this may need to happen before anyone is told about your support of the person being bullied

If you are ever worried for your own or another student's physical safety (including if you are afraid that a pupil may harm himself/herself), do not hesitate to tell a member of staff so that they can take immediate action to keep the pupil safe with the help of other staff at the school.

Students who are being bullied

If you are being bullied, you can expect that:

- You will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Action will be taken to help you to stop the bullying.
- You will be involved in the process of deciding what action to take to help stop the bullying and any worries that you may have will be listened to and respected.

- You will be given the opportunity to talk about the way that the bullying has made you feel and to find strategies to deal with these feelings and to understand and cope with bullying behaviour. This means:
 - Your form tutor, Key Worker or head of year and the most appropriate member of staff in charge of the anti-bullying policy will be told about your situation so that they can help to support you.
 - You will be given the chance to work with them to find strategies to deal with bullying and to talk about any feelings and worries that you may have.
 - Your form tutor will ask to let your parent(s)/carer(s) know what is going on, and to offer them the chance to help support you, too.
 - You will have regular meetings with staff (e.g. every week for a month, a half-term, or a term) to make sure that the action taken to stop the bullying is really working and that you are happy with how things are going.
 - If you are ever in fear for your physical safety, staff will take immediate action to keep you safe.

Pupils who are bullying

Bullying behaviour has no place at this school. If you are involved in bullying, you can expect that:

- Your bullying behaviour will be challenged.
- You will be treated fairly
- You will be given the opportunity to change your behaviour and encouraged and supported in doing so.
- You will be expected to work with staff to look at the reasons that you have been bullying and to find and put into practice other ways of behaving.

Your form tutor will let your parent(s)/carer(s) know what is going on, and to offer them the chance to help support you in changing your behaviour. You will have regular meetings with staff to review your behaviour (e.g. every week for a month, a half-term, or a term). If you don't work at changing your behaviour then staff will have to take more serious action, e.g. suspending you from school activities. Our priority is to make this school a safe and positive place for the whole school community. If you take part in a campaign of victimisation, abuse and intimidation, or episode of physical bullying against any other person belonging to the school community, you will be instantly suspended from coming to school whilst the behaviour is investigated and you may well be excluded.

Staff

All staff can expect to be properly trained and supported in dealing with bullying. All staff will be expected to:

- Promote an environment that is constructive and safe for all pupils through their own teaching practice and actions.
- Follow the procedures set out in this policy when they are dealing with bullying.

Parents/carers

All parents and carers can expect to be kept informed of the school's anti-bullying work throughout the school year. Staff will do their best to address any concerns that you may have about bullying; and you will be asked to co-operate with the school in supporting your child and promoting the message that bullying behaviour is not acceptable.

If your child is being bullied, you can expect that:

- You and your child will be listened to and believed.
- Staff will ensure that you are involved in the process of supporting your child in dealing with the bullying.
- Staff will do their best to address any concerns you may have.

If your child is bullying another student, you can expect that:

- You and your child will be listened to.
- Your child will be treated fairly.
- Your child will be expected to change his/her bullying behaviour and supported and encouraged in doing so by staff.

If you have any concerns that another child who attends the school (e.g. a friend of your child) may be experiencing bullying, please do not turn a blind eye but mention this to a member of staff.

Bullying Involving Adults

Although this policy has been framed with the obvious and most likely incidence of one student bullying another, we are not unaware of the possibility of other types of bullying:

- A member of staff by a student
- A student by a member of staff
- A member of staff by another member of staff

In all cases, staff and students who experience being bullied should speak out and share their concerns. Some suggestions for students are written earlier in this document. Adults should speak with a colleague and/or manager in whom they can trust. Both students and staff may arrange to speak with the Principal if need be.

Trustees

Trustees can expect to be kept up-to-date on the progress of the school's anti-bullying work, and to receive a comprehensive annual report on anti-bullying work. Trustees will be expected to:

- give feed back on the monitoring and evaluation of the anti-bullying policy and practices in the school;
- publicly support the school's anti-bullying message.

Implementation and Monitoring

Anti Bullying	
This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: Promoting Positive Behaviour, Quality of Opportunity, Race Relations	
Appendices:	
Monitoring of Policy Implementation is the responsibility of: The Senior Leadership Team	
Lead responsibility:	Vice Principal – Development
Approved by: S.S. Committee	Date approved: 12:03:03
Ratified by: Trustees	Date ratified: 10:01:2008
Reviewed – no changes	Date:
Reviewed – with revisions	Date: 12:2007
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