



St HELEN'S COLLEGE

## Anti-bullying Policy

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Bullying is action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child, either physically or emotionally, and is often targeted and repeated.
- 1.2 Children are bullied for a variety of reasons, and for no reason. Specific types of bullying include bullying related to race, religion, culture, disability, gender, sexual orientation or appearance, but often victims are selected because of their social position within the group and their inability to respond effectively. Bullying may take the form of comments, physical contact, social exclusion or 'cyber bullying' – e.g. social websites, text, msn or youtube messages.
- 1.3 Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery. It undermines confidence, self esteem and victims' sense of security, and can have a life-long impact on some victims' lives. It can cause psychological damage and even lead to suicide.

### 2 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 Develop a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- 2.2 Maintain a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.
- 2.3 Produce a consistent and effective school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- 2.4 Make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying.

### 3 Strategies

- 3.1 Strategies adopted to prevent and deal with bullying include:
  - effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos;
  - provide staff induction and regular training for all staff;
  - having regard to DCFS publication '*Safe to Learn – Embedding anti-bullying work in schools*'.
  - use of curriculum time – e.g. Circle Time and SPAHCE – to raise awareness of bullying issues;
  - use of opportunities in the school day/year – e.g. assemblies and School Council – to raise awareness of issues surrounding bullying;
  - engaging pupils in the process of developing the school anti-bullying policy and encouraging open and honest reporting;
  - using displays to highlight the importance of anti-bullying attitudes, behaviours and remedies;

- ensuring adequate supervision of pupils at all times and especially on residential visits;
- creating opportunities for pupils to speak confidentially to members of staff about concerns;
- following an appropriate course of action, including disciplinary measures and contact with parents, when an incident/episode of bullying is reported;
- keeping centralised records of incidents of bullying to allow patterns to be identified.

#### 4 **Action to be followed when bullying has been observed/reported**

1. Reassure the person who makes the allegation that the matter will be fully investigated.
2. Make a record of the allegation and keep records of all follow-up actions taken.
3. Confer with the Head.
4. Take immediate and appropriate corrective action (in consultation with the Head). This will vary according to the circumstances, but might involve a talk with the perpetrator and/or victim, a class talk about friendship/relationships, contact with parents, disciplinary penalties against the perpetrator and/or more serious action by the Head, such as a warning letter or suspension.
5. Ask all staff who have contact with the alleged perpetrator and victim to be watchful and a) report their observations back to you, or the Head, within 2/3 days; and b) continue to be vigilant and to report any further incidents between the pupils concerned.
6. Speak again to the person who made the allegation, informing them of your findings, and of the action taken.
7. Pass incident notes to the Head for filing in the centralized record.
8. Continue to monitor the situation.

#### 5 **The role of the Heads**

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of the Heads to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying.
- 5.2 The Heads ensure that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour. The Heads draw the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Head may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.
- 5.3 The Heads ensure that all staff receive sufficient, regular training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.
- 5.4 The Heads set the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.
- 5.5 One of the Heads takes Philosophy or Positive Psychology lessons throughout the school from Nursery to Year 6, and this gives a way of monitoring the emotional health of a class; in this open forum children will often speak honestly about their relationships with one another.

5.6 The Heads are informed by the teachers of any bullying behaviour and this information can be disseminated through departmental meetings to all teachers and also to the SMSA's who can then keep a particularly watchful eye on the children named, while in the playground.

## 6 **The role of the Teacher**

6.1 Teachers in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep records of all incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the school.

6.2 If teachers witness an act of bullying, or if an incident is reported to them, they follow the procedures detailed in Section 4 above. They do all they can to support the child who is being bullied, and to give appropriate guidance and support to the bully. After consultation with the Head, the teacher consults the child's parents.

6.3 Teachers must be good listeners, and give time and opportunity for children to report concerns. They have an allocated 10 minutes with each pupil each term, when others are having assembly, when the pupils can speak to their class teacher of anything that is bothering them. In the Foundation Stage the children have to put a face with a particular emotion on it into a pocket with the child's name on it, and from this the teacher and Keyperson can judge if a particular child has more need of an urgent talk with the teacher or Keyperson than another.

6.4 Teachers, Assistant Teachers and SMSA's receive training as necessary to equip them to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

6.5 Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, they aim to prevent incidents of bullying. Opportunities are taken to address issues such as bullying, assertiveness, tolerance and relationships.

## 7 **The role of Parents**

7.1 Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher or the Head immediately.

7.2 Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

7.3 Parents of pupils who have been bullied, and those of pupils who have been bullying, should work closely with the school to resolve bullying problems and prevent recurrences.

## 8 **The role of Pupils**

8.1 Pupils are expected to observe the Pupils' Code of Conduct and to support the aims of the school in respect of bullying. They are expected to have a 'zero tolerance' to bullying, and to report any incidents which they experience or witness.

8.2 Children are encouraged to act to prevent bullying, as appropriate, and to support victims.

- 8.3 Pupils are consulted, for example through the School Council, when the anti-bullying policy is under review. Pupils help to draw up rules, which are posted around the school, and are expected to follow and support the rules.
- 8.4 Playground Pals are responsible pupils, trained in peer support, who are appointed by the staff. They are available at playtimes to mediate, when requested by children, when there is a dispute or unkind behaviour. In cases of simple disagreement, Playground Pals may help children to come to agreement - in all other cases they will refer the matter to a Lunch Assistant or teacher.
- 8.5 There are also Playground Pals at Lower School, but these children are not old enough to do the Peer Support Programme so they are monitored closely by their teachers.
- 8.6 At Upper and Lower School there is a Friendship Bench where children wait if they feel that they are lonely, and the Playground Pals will make sure that they take them to a familiar group of children to play with.

## 9 **Monitoring and review**

- 9.1 This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Heads and teachers.
- 9.2 The effectiveness of this policy is reviewed annually by the SMT. They do this by examining incidents of bullying throughout the year, and by discussion with the staff and pupils.

## 10 **References**

*Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in our schools* (DCSF)

- Teachernet summary:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/safetolearn/>  
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/safetolearn/>

- Executive summary:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/doc/11907/Summary%20-%20Safe%20to%20Learn.pdf>

- Full report:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/safetolearn/>

*Bullying – a Charter for Action* (DCSF)

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/safetolearn/>

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