

Policy statement for Bullying

Vision.

We believe that every child should be free to develop in all aspects of their life at school

The school seeks to promote an environment in which all students feel valued and accepted as unique individuals, in the family of the School Community.

Intrinsic to our values is a belief that every individual is unique and of inherent value, made in the image of God. Our behaviour towards one another should reflect these values. Bullying of any kind, is unacceptable in our school.

If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

The school does not underestimate the damage that bullying can cause in the life of the person being bullied, to their character and development. This also applies in different ways to the character and development of the person/s doing the bullying, including those who know the bullying is going on but do nothing to challenge it.

Responsibility

The responsibility for the outworking of this policy rests with the Headteacher and the SMT. However, day to day oversight will be delegated to fall teachers including form teachers.

Aims

We aim to make all governors, teachers and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents aware of what we mean by bullying in our school.

We also aim to make all governors, teachers and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents aware of how they should respond to bullying in the school.

All involved in the school community should know that bullying will not be tolerated

Means

We have a bullying charter as a school. [Appendix I]

Bullying is also often defined succinctly as 'any abuse of power'. In our context as Christians, we would add that bullying can further be defined as an individual, or a group of pupils not challenging or checking sin in their personal relationships, or in those relationships they are a part of in the school community. As a school, we have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying and a shared agreement that it is wrong, and that pupils can and should challenge such behaviour with the support of the staff in the school.

Definitions of bullying contain three common themes. (Definitions of bullying taken from a pamphlet produced by 'Kidscape', referring to research findings published by Sheffield University in a research task commissioned by The Department for Education)

Bullying is defined as behaviour which is:

- ✓Deliberately hurtful.
- ✓Repeated over a period of time.
- ✓Is difficult for the person being bullied to stop the bullying behaviour on their own.

Bullying can take many forms, but six main types are:

- ✓Physical – hitting,kicking, destroying or damaging belongings. Etc.
- ✓Verbal – name-calling, insulting remarks. Etc.
- ✓Emotional– spreading stories about someone excluding them from social groups..etc.
- ✓Cyber bullying- where pupils are bullied through the use of text messaging or through technology involving the internet.
- ✓Racist – making derogatory comments or intimidating a person on the basis of their ethnic origins.
- ✓Homophobic – making derogatory comments or intimidating a person on the basis of their sexual orientation.

There are a number of reasons for challenging bullying behaviour:

- ✓The safety and well being of students who are being bullied.
Pupils lives are made miserable; they may suffer injury, they may become unhappy about coming t school. Over time, they are likely to loose confidence and self esteem. This may have long term effects on character and personality. Persistently bullied pupils are more likely to be depressed as young adults and may move to self harm themselves.

- ✓Educational achievement.
The unhappiness of being bullied is likely to affect pupil's ability to concentrate and their level of achievement will suffer. A sense of security is important in a school community for pupils to reach their learning potential and be happy at school.

Unchallenged, bullying will have a wider negative affect in the school community, and undermine the confidence of pupils and their parents in the school's ability to provide an environment where children are safe and able to fulfil their potential.

This policy us reviewed every two years within school , and the Anti-Bullying charter is displayed around the school to coincide with these reviews.

The Anti-bullying charter is also printed in the planner of pupils in the Middle and Upper school, and is used at the start of the school year and reviewed when form teacher's think it might be necessary.

Monitoring the policy:

Monitoring the school's policy is the responsibility of the whole community; staff,pupils, and parents.

Parents should contact the head of department if they feel that bullying has occurred.

pupils chosen as Prefects have an important role to play , as they patrol the school where staff may not be in immediate supervision. Prefects are encouraged to challenge possible bullying themselves. They should be able to talk to the Year 11 form tutor who meets regularly with the Prefect body.

Review:

This policy was first written in in 1999, and has been reviewed with a pupils awareness day every two years since.

This version of our policy has taken consideration of the recommendations of 'Bullying. Don't suffer in silence' an anti-bullying pack for schools and Kidscape's 'Anti-Bullying policy for schools; Some guidelines.

Date of last review: November 2009

Date of next review: Autumn 2011

Appendix : Students Anti Bullying Charter

Bradford Christian School

Student's Anti-Bullying Charter

- ✓ We admit that bullying can go on in our school.
- ✓ We are aware of what is meant by 'bullying' in our school.
- ✓ We all have the ability to bully because of our sinful natures.
 - ✓ Bullying behaviour is damaging and can have serious consequences for the person being bullied and also, but in a different way, for the person or persons who bully.
- ✓ Bullying behaviour can go on anywhere and at any time, but there are key times and key places that staff as well as students should be aware of.
- ✓ As students, we must take responsibility for our own behaviour. This means exercising self-control and showing each other respect. It means we must be brave enough to challenge bullying behaviour if it happens to us or if it happens to another students and we witness it.
- ✓ If our challenge is not effective, we must tell a teacher who will follow our agreed policy for challenging bullying behaviour.
- ✓ I agree with our school's policy and know that I must take responsibility to see that that our policy works.

Appendix II : Procedures for staff:

Preventing Bullying

Bullying may be prevented from arising through fostering a proper attitude of mutual acceptance. Promoting mutual respect and acceptance through:

- ✓the way we promote and model relationships during everyday life at school.
- ✓the use of different seating arrangements in different subjects, remaining sensitive to the needs of particular subjects.
- ✓specific teaching on relevant areas (friendship, acceptance, differences. etc)
- ✓ Providing opportunities to foster relationships, and to minimise opportunities for bullying.
e.g. Activities at break times where pupils can be constructively occupied
- ✓ Designated areas where pupils can gather safely under some level of adult supervision.
- ✓ Supervised lunchtime sessions where pupils learn to communicate openly and honestly with one another. (Tutor having lunch with groups of pupils, or pupils involved in a lunchtime club.)

Identify potential problems by:

- ✓Getting pupils to review the school's policy every two years, to raise awareness and to use Prefects and older pupils to conduct a survey of possible bullying within school.
- ✓Identify areas in school premises where bullying could more readily occur, (such as action to be carried out every two years at the time of the policy review). Arrange for such areas to be supervised more regularly.

Signs and Symptoms

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 be investigated. If a child :

- ✓is frightened of walking to or from school
- ✓Doesn't want to go to school/on the public bus
- ✓begs to be driven to school, when normally they would walk
- ✓changes their usual routine
- ✓is unwilling to go to school
- ✓begins to truant
- ✓becomes withdrawn or anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- ✓Starts stammering
- ✓attempts or threatens suicide or running away
- ✓cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- ✓feels ill in the morning
- ✓begins to do poorly at their school work
- ✓comes home with clothes torn or property damaged

- ✓ has possessions that 'go missing'.
- ✓ Asks for money or starts to steal money (to pay a bully)
- ✓ has dinner money or other money that is continually 'lost'
- ✓ has unexplained cuts or bruises
- ✓ comes home hungry (money or lunch has been stolen)
- ✓ becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- ✓ is bullying other children or siblings
- ✓ stops eating
- ✓ is frightened to say what is wrong
- ✓ gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- ✓ is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- ✓ is nervous and 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.

Promote a climate where speaking ill of each other is discouraged.

Deal firmly and swiftly where you overhear pupils speaking ill of each other.

Use such occasions to reinforce publicly our positive values.

Ensure pupils understand that school does not accept bullying. Promote a climate of safe reporting.

Establish safe channels of communication - e.g. through trusted friend, parent, senior student, or direct to teacher. (Part of the role of Prefects.)

Develop parent-teacher communications further. In particular, provide information of policy to parents, ensuring all new parents and pupils understand school's policy on bullying.

Provide training for staff, whereby they are better equipped to ask the 'right questions'.

Procedures

If you, as a member of staff come across bullying what can you do?

Involving Others: do -

- ✓ Inform school management and/or other appropriate persons.
- ✓ Inform colleagues if the incident arose out of a situation where everyone should be vigilant, e.g. unsupervised toilets.
- ✓ In serious cases, parents should be informed and will be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem
- ✓ If necessary and appropriate, the police will be informed
- ✓ The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- ✓ An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

Do:

- ✓ remain calm; you are in charge. Reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun and give the bully control of the situation
- ✓ take the incident or report seriously
- ✓ take action as quickly as possible.
- ✓ think hard about whether your action needs to be private or public; who are the pupils involved?
- ✓ reassure the victim(s), don't make them feel inadequate or foolish
- ✓ offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim(s)
- ✓ make it plain to the bully that you disapprove
- ✓ encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view
- ✓ punish the bully if you have to, but be very careful how you do this. Reacting aggressively or punitively gives the message that it's all right to bully if you have the power.
- ✓ explain clearly the punishment and why it is being given.
- ✓ make sure the incident doesn't live on through reminders from you.
- ✓ try to think ahead to prevent a recurrence of the incident, if you uncover the trigger factor.

Don't :

- ✓ Be overprotective and refuse to allow the victim to help him/herself
- ✓ assume that the bully is bad through and through; try to look objectively at the behaviour, with the bully
- ✓ Keep the whole incident a secret because you have dealt with it
- ✓ try to hide the incident from the parents of the victim or of the bully
- ✓ call in the parents without having a constructive plan to offer either side.

Where Nature of Bullying is Less Clear

When a pupil shows sign of being a victim of bullying, but there is no clear evidence of bullying taking place, the following procedure is recommended. It can be referred to as 'no blame' approach.

✓ The 'victim' needs to be made to feel that the complaints/concerns are being heard. Establish clearly how the pupil is feeling and why. Get him/her permission to share these "feelings" with others in the group. Get the pupil to understand that we are not seeing to blame anyone, but we are looking for everyone, including the 'victim', to take responsibility for their own future actions.

✓ Talk to other members of the group either individually or corporately about how the 'victim' is feeling.

- 'Were they aware of this?'
- 'Why does he/she feel like this?'
- 'What can be done to help him/her?'

Make them aware of the power of their words, - explain the 'hearing' process whereby what we say gets filtered by the hearers' feelings and emotions - often to mean something we never intended to say.

- 'Are there things they have said that could have been misinterpreted?'
- 'How can they communicate differently?'

✓ Avoid use of terms bullied, victim, bully etc in these discussions

✓ Ideally, work towards getting the 'victim' to agree to sit with the 'bullies', so that open sharing of one another's feelings can be expressed, forgiveness spoken out, and new intentions verbalised - in front of a third party witness (e.g. form tutor)

✓ An alternative to 'no blame' approach when working with a year group, the 'victim' may prefer to be helped by being supported by older students (members of the Prefect Body) and also by trusted members of their own year group, where possible. It may be possible for the older students to achieve the same end result, as a staff member, through a more informal approach, speaking on behalf of the 'victim'.