

BOLDON SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING: A POLICY DOCUMENT

Definition of Bullying in Boldon School

Bullying is any repetitive, willful or persistent act that hurts, threatens or frightens someone else. It is an act which is intentionally harmful and involves the imbalance of power, leaving the person who is bullied feeling defenseless. It may be physical, verbal, sexual or psychological in nature and includes:

- racism
- sexism
- homophobic comments
- name calling or insults
- taking possessions
- unpleasant phone calls/text messages/e-mail messages
- bribery/extortion
- deception
- 'framing' someone
- forcing someone to try something dangerous
- graffiti
- hiding equipment
- ignoring
- making fun of appearance
- mimicry
- prejudice towards beliefs
- pressure to conform
- physical abuse
- poison pen letters
- public humiliation
- 'rubbishing' the family
- sarcasm
- spoiling work
- spreading rumours
- threatening someone
- photographing someone without their consent

Aims of the anti-bullying policy

1. To create school conditions that minimise the possibility of bullying.
2. To produce a school ethos that views all forms of bullying as unacceptable behaviour, regardless of the provocation.
3. To encourage all pupils to reject bullying and report it.
4. To involve the whole staff, the children and parents in recognising and dealing with bullying and being aware of the school anti-bullying policy.
5. To make it known that all bullying is taken seriously and pupils who are bullied are helped. The school does its best to protect all parties while issues are resolved.
6. To have calm, consistent procedures for dealing with bullying if it occurs.

June 2005

Strategies for tackling bullying

- The pupils have a sheet in their Planners that makes it very explicit what is meant by bullying, and encourages them to TELL someone whenever they are bullied. Also in their Planners, they have a list of useful helpline numbers, for example, Childline.
- In every classroom there is a sheet “Don’t Suffer in Silence” which advises pupils about what to do **when** they are being bullied, **after** they have been bullied, and what information they need to give to the adult they are talking to about bullying. The sheet will be in the Planners in September 2005.
- In every classroom there is a pupil guidance sheet from Childline which also contains a website address.
- We encourage others to help by reporting observed bullying, and we frequently remind pupils that bullying thrives on a bed of secrecy.
- There are anti bullying posters around the school, again encouraging pupils to TELL.
- All racial incidents are now reported termly and in writing to the Ethnic Minorities Services Manager.
- We often involve the police with incidents of bullying, especially with racial and homophobic bullying.
- Bullies are punished. Exclusion is a possible outcome for students who harass others without reason and cause distress. The victim is kept informed of the sanction given to the bully. Victims are encouraged to report it immediately if there is further unpleasantness.
- Our comprehensive anti bullying policy is given to all staff and is available for parents from the school office and is on the school website.
- Staff keep a close watch on areas of the school that pupils have identified as “least safe areas”. From 8.30 am staff are on duty inside and outside of the school.
- Every Wednesday morning pupils have a PSHCE lesson. It is the responsibility of the Director of Learning and the Assistant Director of Learning to build work into their pastoral programme every year on bullying. The school has made a big financial commitment to anti bullying resources.
- Bullying is a regular subject of year group assemblies.
- Guidance sheets are available for parent/carers, staff and pupils.
- Our surveys of parents/carers, pupils and staff keep us informed of where and when unpleasantness takes place, enabling us to make changes or to respond to situations appropriately. Feedback of results is given to all involved.
- Often victims need help to repair some of the damage caused by bullying. Mr Littledyke in our Education Support Centre runs three day courses on raising self esteem and re-building confidence. Ms Hanson and Mr Herbert, our Learning Mentors, work separately with victims and bullies in a one to one situation, and in small groups.
- Repeated bullying which causes significant harm to a victim is now a category for referral to the Laygate Referral and Assessment Service. When necessary we make referrals and victims are then given the help, support and advice they need from outside agencies.
- Sometimes pupils who have problems or are bullied prefer to talk to another student. Some Year 9 and Year 10 students have been trained as peer supporters/peer mentors, and together with our Learning Mentors and Mrs Halsey, they hold a drop in club every Tuesday and Thursday lunchtime and any pupil can attend.
- Bullying is a topic for Year Council meetings. Pupils are encouraged to forward to their Council any ideas they have to make Boldon a safer school.

- Boldon has its own “Charter for Action”. This is an open pledge that the school as a whole will not tolerate bullying and will take steps to deal with it. It has been signed by the Chair of Governors to show that the governors support our strategies, by the Head Teacher to show that all staff are committed to doing all they can to eradicate bullying, and by the Head Girl and Head Boy as representatives of the pupils.
- 5 CCTV cameras have been placed on the outside of our buildings and monitor everything that happens 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This makes it much easier to identify bullies.
- A whole school anonymous questionnaire has been completed by pupils annually since April 2001. 2 classes in every year group complete this questionnaire. The Directors of Learning summarise the results and the children's ideas are discussed at a Pastoral inset day in June each year. Every Director of Learning and tutor is made aware of bullying within their year group and within the whole school. Action is taken following the information gained from the questionnaires.
- A bullying log is kept in the school office. Staff record reported incidents, action taken and send a card to the relevant Director of Learning if further action is required. All racist and homophobic records are completed in red ink and the Director of Learning is always informed. The logs are analysed termly by a representative from the LEA and action is taken.
- A 'safe room' has been set up at lunchtime for those who feel vulnerable or upset. This is supervised by a teacher and prefects, and is in addition to the Library and other lunchtime activities that are already available.
- The staff do all they can to prevent bullying by:
 - rewarding positive behaviour and developing an environment where behaving well gets a child noticed more than behaving badly;
 - making responses in lessons which promote positive attitudes and values, build self esteem and help pupils to develop friendship skills, conflict management skills, independent problem solving skills, and understanding of their feelings and other people's feelings;
 - keeping a close watch on areas that pupils have identified as those where they feel least safe;
 - identifying vulnerable children, for example, those with no friends or new to the school, and by trying to include them in social groupings and activities, and if necessary, by seeking support from the ESC and the Learning Mentors;
 - teaching pupils how to deal with bullying: this is largely done in PSHCE lessons;
 - being good role models.
- Staff deal with bullying by using solution focused mediation. The aim is to find solutions to repair the damaged relationships between children. Everything is done to encourage bullies and those who colluded to behave in a more acceptable way.
- Guidelines employed in the confidential mediation include: -
 - staff speak to pupils concerned and ask them to be honest (that is victims, witnesses and bullies);
 - there is no verbal or non verbal threatening behaviour;
 - each child is given time to tell their side of the story without being interrupted;
 - everyone listens to what is being said;
 - bullies are asked to suggest one or two ways of making amends with the child who has been hurt or upset. Bullies are helped to develop an understanding of the damage caused by their bullying, and aided to repair the damage caused to victims. They also receive some punishment for their bullying behaviour.

- The anti-bullying policy is updated annually and all staff are given a copy. Directors of Learning ask them to discuss the policy with their tutorial class. Updated copies are also given to the governing body and the non-teaching staff. A copy is also in the pack for all new teachers and new Learning Mentors.
- The policy focuses on bullying with regard to pupils, but in addition all staff are encouraged to report:
 - any bullying they themselves experience from other staff;
 - any bullying they themselves experience from pupils;
 - any bullying they observe between members of the staff;
 - any bullying they themselves experience from parents/carers;

PLEASE NOTE - staff must record any physical violence in the log in the school office and must complete a form and send it to the LEA.

Only by presenting as good role models can we encourage a positive attitude to bullying in our students.
- Above all, we convey the message that Boldon is a “listening and telling” school and that we each have the responsibility to look out for one another.

Bullying outside school premises

- Bullying that occurs outside school premises is not the direct responsibility of schools. However, as part of our duty of care we will take steps to help. These could include:
 - contacting the local police;
 - consultation with transport companies about bullying that occurs on buses and trains;
 - where bullying is perpetrated by pupils from another school, consultation with the head of that school to ensure a consistent approach.
 - PSHCE work on bullying outside school premises is carried out.

Roles

1. The WHOLE STAFF is committed to following the anti-bullying policy and striving to create an anti-bullying ethos.
2. The DIRECTOR OF LEARNING:
 - monitors and responds to bullying within the year group;
 - makes sure that all pupils in the year group are aware of the anti-bullying policy;
 - makes sure that anti-bullying work is delivered in pastoral lessons;
 - involves the police and outside agencies where appropriate;
 - involves parents in finding solutions to problems;

and, in serious cases of sustained physical or emotional abuse, refers the matter to child protection, after consultation with the designated teacher for Child Protection.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- A questionnaire is administered to pupils by the Director of Learning at least once a year.
- Views of staff are regularly asked for and discussed in year meetings.
- Questionnaires are completed by parents and staff and are analysed by a representative from the LEA.
- Incidents are recorded in a log and are analysed termly by a representative from the LEA.

Policies and practices are regularly reviewed.

Success Criteria

1. Reduction of recorded bullying in:

- school log;
- pupil questionnaires.