

ANTI - BULLYING POLICY

Definition

Bullying is the use of words or actions that are intended to hurt. Bullying can be a one-off example of child-on-child abuse. Bullies exclude people and encourage others to do the same, they leave people out of games, won't share, ignore others and often act in groups or get others to be mean as well. It can be recognised in various forms:

- (1) Physical bullying: Arm twisting, hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, any physical abuse
- (2) Verbal bullying: Rude remarks, teasing, name-calling, shouting, telling tales, frightening, threatening, racist, sexist, cultural, religious, special educational needs, disability and homophobic comments.
- (3) Taunting: ganging up, nationality, looks, intelligence, skills
- (4) Cyber-bullying: Social websites, mobile phones, text messaging, sexting, photographs, videos and email (see also ICT Policy)

Bullying may cause psychological damage (although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour).

Staff awareness is raised through training, taking action to reduce the risk of bullying at crucial times and knowing the places around school where it is most likely to happen.

Bullying is often hidden and subtle, but it can also be overt and intimidating. Specific types of bullying include:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture – this includes colour racism, phobias about religious beliefs and mocking personal or cultural customs.
- Bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities – this includes taunting a boy who has Learning Support lessons, name-calling (e.g. 'retard') and innuendo based on a boy's perceived academic or intellectual ability, and exploiting a boy's inability to react physically or mentally to what is happening to him.
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions – this includes hurtful teasing or exclusion from a group because of physical appearance or health issues.
- Sexual bullying – this includes bullying behaviour that has a specific sexual dimension and it may be physical, verbal or non-verbal/psychological. Behaviours may involve suggestive sexual comments or innuendo including offensive comments about sexual reputation; or using sexual language that is designed to subordinate, humiliate or intimidate.
- Homophobic bullying – this includes bullying that is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people. It includes spreading rumours that someone is gay, or suggesting that something or someone is inferior and so they are "gay".
- Cyberbullying – this includes all bullying related to the internet, mobile phones, social networking sites or any other form of electronic communication. It can include all the above types of bullying but technology is the method by which the bullying is carried out. It differs from other types of bullying in that it invades home/personal space and is difficult to control once information is circulated. It may also include sexting.
- Bullying related to a child's family circumstances (e.g. because a child is adopted, or has caring responsibilities at home).

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all boys may learn without fear; that boys may grow up in a positive and happy atmosphere; that they understand how to behave towards each other and that they feel safe in school.

At Ludgrove all forms of bullying are totally abhorred. Bullying will not be tolerated in any form and we respect that everyone in the school community has a right to be happy and feel safe in the school.

Pastoral Care

A very watchful eye is kept on all boys as individuals both upstairs in the dormitories and downstairs in all that they do. Upstairs in the dormitories and bathrooms the head matron and matrons are responsible for the happy welfare of the boys. They should be aware of boys' separate needs and weaknesses. In the daily round downstairs Division Masters /Mistresses, Duty Masters, as well as the Headmaster and the Headmaster's wife are responsible for the happy, tolerant daily life of all boys.

A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.' In such cases the school should report its concerns to the local authority social care department.

Procedures to follow

If a boy feels he is being bullied he should inform his division master or any adult, at once. There is a list of who to speak to in every division. A sympathetic ear is always available. The member of staff must immediately take action. Initially he/she should determine the circumstances of the bullying then inform the Headmaster. In cases where it is a child protection issue the Headmaster will follow the procedures set out in the Safeguarding Children Policy. They will take the correct punitive action and record the incident on the Safeguarding and Serious Incident Register held by the DSL and Deputy Head Pastoral who has an overview of all bullying incidents which take place. He tracks the incidence of bullying in the school which enable the school to identify any patterns of bullying and also to evaluate the effectiveness of punishments. He meets with the Deputy Head and boarding master on a weekly basis to ensure the SMT are all informed. If the incident is more than a minor upset the Headmaster will inform the parents of both the boy being bullied and the bully of the circumstances. The situation will be assessed thoroughly and appropriate action taken which might take the form of talking to or sanctions. Every case is unique and therefore the sanctions will depend on the particular circumstances of the bullying but will be appropriate to the incident and the age of the boys involved, but could lead to temporary or permanent exclusion at the Headmaster's discretion. (see also Discipline, Rewards, Sanctions and Exclusions Policy)

Prevention Techniques

Staff undergo regular training in safeguarding which includes how to identify the signs of bullying and how to prevent it.

The school recognises the importance of offering parents advice and guidance in relation to the internet and cyberbullying and does so on a regular basis via the use of workshops run by external organisations and also in the distribution of the school's ICT policy.

All boys are regularly reminded of their responsibilities to each other and the code of behaviour which is expected in our community. Staff and the older boys are expected to set good examples to the rest of the school. A PSHEE class is held regularly in the form of division time, which establish behaviour standards. These are reinforced in year group and whole school assemblies and within the curriculum. Boys are educated about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. The school will operate in accordance with the advice set out in the DfE Guidance *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* (July 2017) and the statutory Guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2022)

Use of technology by parents and visitors

Parents and visitors have use of the school's wifi system when on site using their own devices. This is password protected and the password is changed on a very regular basis.

Reviewed September 2023
FGAA

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding Children Policy and ICT Policy and is available to view on the School's website.