



Anti-Bullying Policy

Bromley Independent Grammar

1. Introduction

It is a Government requirement that all Schools have an anti-bullying policy. Our policy reflects the DfE guidance, in particular 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (DfE July 2017) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Dept. for Education September 2019).

At the School we are committed to providing a warm caring, safe, environment for all our students so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment.

2. Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to try to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the School have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the School policy. This will happen in the following ways:

- To describe School systems for dealing with bullying
- To have strategies in place to support victims and bullies
- To ensure that parents know who to approach if they are worried that their child is being bullied
- To ensure that students know what bullying is and know what to do when it occurs

3. What is Bullying?

The DfE guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful, and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (e.g. being ignored or not spoken to).

The NSPCC's definition of bullying is 'when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable (Oxford English Dictionary, 2018). It can involve people of any age, and can happen anywhere – at home, school or using digital technologies (cyberbullying). This means it can happen at any time. Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours which are often combined.

The School will provide training through our online training portal, INSETs and through appropriate providers on areas such as:

- ensuring the principles of the School policy are understood
- reporting and recording arrangements
- ensuring legal responsibilities are known
- ensuring action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, including in relation to on-line bullying
- understanding that sources of support are available, particularly to understand the needs of and support students with protected characteristics (SEN, LGBT, etc.)

Our students were asked the question ‘What is bullying?’ and the School has adopted the following collaborative definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying is:

“Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for victims to defend themselves. Bullying is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim/s”.

4. Bullying can be:

- Emotional Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures) ridicule, humiliation, threatening, undermining
- Verbal Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone
- Physical Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching, or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone’s things
- Racist Racial taunts, graffiti. Gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- Sexual Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Sexist Covers a wide range of behaviour from name calling to physical sexual assault. It is the use of sexual language or negative stereotyping on the basis of gender.
- Homophobic Because of/or focussing on the issue of sexuality directed towards people who are or are perceived as gay, bisexual or show characteristics.
- Online/cyber Setting up ‘hate websites’, sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones, ‘trolling’, creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos, excluding from online group, hijacking identities.
- SEND Remarking upon, drawing attention to, or discriminating against persons with physical disabilities or learning difficulties or other identified special educational needs.
- Religious Attacking faith, belief, religious practice or custom.
- Cultural Focusing on and/or playing off perceived cultural differences or similarities
- Gestures/Actions Any unfavourable or negative comments made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs

5. Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose.

Students sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of students’ development to learn to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

6. Where does Bullying happen?

It can happen anywhere in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground, during off site visits etc. Bullying, especially cyber-bullying, can also take place outside the School premises.

7. School systems for reporting and monitoring bullying

When it is reported that a student is being bullied (either by themselves or someone else) then action will be taken promptly and firmly, usually within a day. The allegation will be thoroughly investigated by the Principal (or nominated senior member of staff). Both victim and alleged bully will be interviewed separately and a record of the incident will be kept by the Principal. The bully will be informed that such behaviour is unacceptable and be made aware of the consequences of their actions (in line with our Behaviour and Discipline policy). Whenever an accusation is made, staff will gather as much information as possible to ascertain the facts before any action is taken, unless of course there appears to be a health and safety risk. The Principal will monitor patterns of behaviour by protected characteristics so that action can be taken.

Procedures

Procedures should be followed by staff as closely as possible when a complaint of bullying is brought to their attention. In the first instance, care should be taken to reassure and comfort the victim and deal with the situation as quickly as is reasonably possible.

1. Listen to the complaint carefully, make notes if necessary. Do not make judgements at this stage. Make a record using the 'Student Incident File', copy to the Principal and place in the student files (instigator and victim). This enables staff to see if there is a pattern of bullying emerging and to decide whether parents should be informed.
2. Gather evidence to support the claim from other adults or students who may have witnessed the incident. (seek advice from senior colleagues if necessary). Hear what the victim and perpetrator have to say, really listening and allowing them to express their feelings at length.
3. Convene a meeting of those involved in the bullying, including the instigators and some observers (the victim can be absent if they prefer)
4. Explain that there is a problem for the victim and recount their story in a clear way so that the feelings of distress are described.
5. State that you know members of the group are responsible people and can do something about it.
6. Ask group members for suggestions about ways in which they might help and ensure that these are put into place. Follow-up to ensure that the matter has been resolved.

If staff suspect or know that a student is being harmed or is likely to suffer significant harm, that incidence of bullying will be treated as a student protection concern, the DSL will be alerted and School safeguarding procedures will be followed. Similarly, if a student is at risk of immediate harm, then staff will follow the School's safeguarding procedures and will report immediately to the LADO. Finally, if the School suspects or believes that a crime may have been committed, the School will inform the police.

In most cases, once a bullying incident has been reported and the students involved spoken to, there will be no further incidents. If bullying persists then parents of both the bully and the victim will be informed and encouraged to work with the School to stop this happening again. In such cases the students involved will be highlighted to all staff to help monitor and prevent the bullying. The Principal (or nominated senior member of staff) is responsible for conducting an investigation. **(The Principal must be consulted before contacting parents.)**

Where it is found that a student is carrying out bullying, the Principal (or nominated senior member of staff) arranges a separate meeting with the parents of both the bully and the victim. Both the victim and the bully may be offered counselling and support. It may be necessary to exclude the bully if they do not stop bullying.

Preventing Bullying

Staff should be familiar with the School's behaviour policy promoting positive behaviour through the School council, circle time, assemblies, displays, stories etc. Members of the School community should be encouraged to report instances of bullying straight away. Students may also be used to support other students e.g. circle of friends, peer mediation. Students should be made aware that being a bystander to bullying could mean being complicit in that bullying. Whistle-blowers who act in good faith will be supported irrespective of the outcome.

8. Who bullying can be reported to?

All members of staff take bullying seriously. Students are encouraged to tell someone straight away if they think they are being bullied or if one of their friends is being bullied, or if they find themselves as a bystander to a bullying situation. In assemblies/PSHE lessons they are told they can tell any adult including:

- A member of staff in the playground
- Their class teacher
- Lunch time supervisors
- Classroom assistants
- Office staff
- The Principal
- Their parents
- A friend or fellow student who is prepared to tell an adult

Parents should approach the class teacher in the first instance if they have concerns about their child being bullied. If their concerns continue they can speak to the Deputy Principal or the Principal. If bullying remains a consistent problem, then reporting to, and asking for advice from external agencies (such as Bullying UK 0808 800 2222) may be necessary. Further helplines and agencies are listed at the end of this policy.

9. Support for students involved

Victims will be:

- Encouraged to confide in a named member of staff if the bullying continues
- Helped to develop positive strategies and appropriate assertive skills
- Monitored in class by teacher and in playground by meal supervisors
- Told how the bullies have been dealt with
- Encouraged to share feelings during class discussion times
- Supported through restorative justice methods if bullying persists

Bullies will be:

- Made aware of the seriousness of their actions and possible consequences
- Monitored in class by teacher and in playground by lunch time supervisors
- Where behaviour does not improve have their own personal behaviour plan

If bullying persists parents of victim and bullies will be informed and involved in the restorative justice process.

After the bullying has ceased, the students and families involved will continue to receive support from the School from time to time in order to ensure that incidents are not continuing.

Using the curriculum to talk about bullying

The curriculum can be used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and the anti-bullying policy
- Increase understanding for victims, and help build an anti-bullying ethos
- Teach students how constructively to manage their relationships with others

At the School opportunities for students to discuss bullying and relationships are found through the following means:

- Assemblies
- Class assemblies
- Direct teaching through PSHE
- Circle time
- Cooperative group work

Care is taken to include SEN students in curriculum work about bullying in an appropriate way for their individual needs.

10. Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated. Following an annual review any amendments will be made to the policy and everyone informed. The anti-bullying policy is the responsibility of the Principal.

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Sources of further information support and help

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and students have found useful.

Name of organisation	Telephone number	Website
Kidscape	020 7730 33009 (general enquiry no.) 08451 205 204 (helpline for adults only)	www.kidscape.org.uk
Childline	0800 1111 (helpline for Students)	www.childline.org.uk
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222	www.parentline.org.uk
Anti-bullying Alliance	0207 843 1901	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	www.nspcc.org.uk
Beat Bullying	0208 771 3377	www.beatbullying.org
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793	www.ace-ed.org.uk

Bullying Online 020 7378 1446 www.bullying.co.uk
Bully Free Zone 01204 454 958 www.bullyfreezone.co.uk
The Children's Legal Centre 01206 872 466 www.childrenslegalcentre.com
Anti-bullying Network 0131 651 6103 www.antibullying.net
Department for Education 0370 000 2288

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

Date	Position	Name of Reviewer	Date of Next Review
January 2020	Principal	Mrs L. Harries	January 2021
January 2020	Proprietor	Mr A. Khan	January 2021