

Section 11.4: ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Aims and Objectives:

To make staff, students and parents aware of the different types of bullying and action that all parties can take to prevent bullying happening.

By bullying we mean a **systematic** undermining of another person's development, confidence and enjoyment of school.

Bullying may be

Physical:	Pushing, hitting, threatening.
Verbal:	Teasing, taunting, name-calling, intentional exclusion, texting
Indirect / emotional:	Social isolation, dismissive body-language.
Expression of prejudice:	Mocking of race, religion, cultural, accent, physical characteristics, sexual / sexist, homophobic, disability
Theft:	Of work / coursework, bags, pens, kit etc.
Cyber:	Social Websites, Mobile Phones, Text messages, photographs and emails.

The result of bullying can mean great distress for an individual, psychological damage and even suicide. Factions or cliques can grow up in a form. People are deprived of the opportunity to contribute to lessons. All parts of the school community must work together to tackle bullying.

What Pupils can do

Pupils must not hesitate to "tell" when bullied, even if they fear this might lead to further bullying. They might tell a teacher, parent, Sixth Form Prefect ... anyone, but it is vital to tell someone. This applies whether you are the victim or the witness to bullying. Be aware of the school's definition of bullying and avoid doing it.

What Sixth Form Prefects can do:

- Should be alert to difficulties within their form-group.
- Younger pupils might refer problems to Prefects, the Head Girl or her deputies.
- Anyone receiving such information must never promise confidentiality or attempt to sort out the problem herself. This information must be passed on immediately to her Form Tutor, Head of Section or the Deputy Head.

What Parents can do:

- Parents who hear of their child being bullied are sometimes reluctant to contact the school for fear of further victimisation of their child. However, bullying has to be tackled and stopped. So do inform the school immediately via your daughter's form tutor or the Deputy Head/Head of Junior Department if your daughter reports bullying to herself, or a another pupil.
- Help to restore your child's confidence after she has been the victim of bullying.

What Staff can do:

- Never allow an abusive, threatening or nasty "teasing" comment pass in class without challenging it.
- Avoid creating situations in which pupils can feel isolated, e.g. allowing pupils to pick teams, or practising pair-work which will inevitably produce an outsider if there is an odd number in the group.

- Be vigilant whilst on duty (Before School, Break, Lunch, After School); make sure quiet areas are visited.
- Be aware of isolated pupils when walking around the school. Discuss any unhappy-looking individuals with Form-Tutors or Heads of Section/Year. Use the GCC (Girls Causing Concern) vehicle in the Junior Department.
- Regular training will be given to recognize signs of bullying through section meetings and full staff meetings.

Procedures when bullying is reported:

Any reported incidence of bullying must be investigated as a matter of priority.

The response should be corrective and supportive of both the victim and the bully.

When an incident occurs:

- The person to whom it is reported must reassure the victim and explain that the appropriate action will be taken.
- The Form Tutor, Head of Year and Deputy Head/Head of Junior Department should be informed as soon as possible.
- Written accounts should be made.

If the bullying is admitted:

- The victim will receive support from school staff and other girls as appropriate. Her parents will be informed.
- The bully should apologise to the victim.
- The bully should be given advice and support to prevent this happening again.
- The bully's parents should be informed.
- Written records will be kept on the files of the pupils concerned in the incident.

If the bullying continues, further action will be taken including the possibility of exclusion.

If the bullying is not admitted:

- A second interview with both parties should take place to clarify necessary points.
- If the bullying is shown to have taken place but is still not admitted, the girl(s) involved will be told that the incident has been noted on file and given a warning about future behaviour. The complainant will be given appropriate advice and support.
- All action will be carefully recorded.
- Staff will be alerted to the situation and asked to be vigilant and report any inappropriate behaviour.
- The alleged bully's parents should be informed of the allegation, actions taken and support offered.

Promotion and Reinforcement of Policy and Procedures

The Policy and Procedures are available to all pupils and parents.

The Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy are to be discussed with girls by the Form Tutor at the beginning of a new school year. They are displayed on every form board in the school.

Bullying is covered and discussed as part of the Tutorial and PSHE programmes. A variety of material is used including the **DCSF Safe to Learn – Embedding anti-bullying work in schools**.

All members of the school community should be familiar with these policies and procedures. They will be regularly updated and reviewed, with opportunity for comment by staff and pupils.

