



ANTI BULLYING POLICY

This School Policy is reviewed annually and has regard to:

Preventing and Tackling Bullying DfE 2017

Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff (2014)

The Equality Act 2010

See also: **Behaviour and Discipline Policy, PSHEE Policy, Use of Technology Policy**

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At Lyndhurst House, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Every student has the right to be safe and happy in school and to be protected when they are feeling vulnerable. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. When bullying occurs, all pupils should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

The purpose of this policy is to inform all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, parents and pupils what bullying is, how seriously we take it and the school procedures when bullying is reported. Pupils and parents are assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. Staff awareness is raised by regular discussion and training.

DEFINITION

Bullying is repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer - it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).

Bullying can take many forms:

- Cultural - discriminating on the grounds of a person's background or different views
- Cyber - the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.
- Disability - discriminating due to someone's physical or mental disability
- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Religious - discriminating on the grounds of a person's religious beliefs

- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Sexist - targeting another for being a member of a particular gender - impacting on the individual person and on all men and women
- Social Isolation - behaviour leading to social isolation, including gossip spreading gossip and encouraging others to ignore another
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

THE SERIOUSNESS OF BULLYING

Bullying is unacceptable in any form and the School will always respond to concerns and take appropriate action.

The impact of bullying, both physical and emotional, can have extremely serious consequences for a child, including psychological damage and loss of self-esteem. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; the Headmaster will make his own judgement about each specific case.

Peer-on-peer abuse is abuse and abusive comments and interactions will not be tolerated by the school or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", or "part of growing up" (see Safeguarding Policy).

Some signs and symptoms

A pupil may indicate by signs or patterns of behaviour that he is being bullied. He may;

- become frightened of walking to or from school
- be unwilling to go to school
- feel ill in the morning and complain of tummy / head aches
- begin to do poorly in school work
- become withdrawn, start stammering
- regularly have books or clothes destroyed or stolen
- become distressed, stop eating, overeat
- cry easily or have nightmares
- become tired and listless due to inability to sleep
- become disruptive or aggressive
- have possessions go 'missing'
- be frightened to say what is wrong
- have frequent injuries and unexplained bruises
- run away
- self-harm

These signs and behaviour traits could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW WHEN BULLYING IS REPORTED

The Procedure for dealing with any incident of poor behaviour is detailed in the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy. Should an investigation into an alleged bullying incident be found not to be bullying, then this does not mean that the incident is closed. It will be dealt with under the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

Children are often very reluctant to 'tell' on their friends and classmates and victims of bullying can be particularly reluctant to come forward. Although this is addressed in the PSHEE Programme, teachers must be vigilant at all times and report a bullying incident, including cyber-bullying and bullying outside school, or any concerns they may have about a child to the Headmaster immediately.

There may be occasions when a bullying issue will need to be reported to external agencies (such as police or children's social care). A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm – in such a case, Safeguarding procedures should be followed and a decision would be taken to seek external advice from the local childcare services. Staff should also be aware that bullying outside the home can be an indication that a child could be experiencing abuse at home.

Form Teachers

A Form Teacher is best placed to talk to a child who is displaying any symptoms of being bullied or about whom they have concerns. They should first report their concerns to the Headmaster and discuss the best course of action. The conversation with the child should take place in a familiar place, which could be the classroom, but with no other children present and without the likelihood of interruption. However, the teacher should take sensible steps to protect themselves from allegations (see Safeguarding Policy)

Parents

Parents may be the first to notice symptoms that their child is being bullied and may report their concerns to the Headmaster. Parents will be told about the School procedures, including support for the child. However, great care should be taken that the term 'bullying' is not used out of context or incorrectly. Children can find life in a large community quite hard and do not always behave as we may wish. There is a wide band of 'naughty' behaviour that is not bullying. It is bullying if the intention is to hurt another, either physically or emotionally. The support of both sets of parents (both of bully and victim) is needed, just as both the bully and the victim are fully involved.

Headmaster

It is the responsibility of the Headmaster to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and it is important that all concerns about bullying are reported to him immediately. The Headmaster works closely with the Deputy Heads, who have responsibility for the day to day running of the School, and the Deputy Heads and/or the Head of Pre-Prep or Senior Master may assist the Headmaster in the investigation of any incident.

Once a case of bullying has been reported, the Headmaster will discuss the matter with the victim's Form Teacher and decide on the course of action in order to ascertain the facts. The Form Teacher will ask the child to talk to the Headmaster and will be present during the interview.

The Headmaster may need to interview other children, including the alleged perpetrator. It may be that asking all children to write down their account of an incident is helpful in getting a clear picture of an incident, and frees the children from the fear of 'telling' (see Behaviour Policy).

Once the facts are clear, the Headmaster will discuss the incident with the parents of all children concerned. Should it emerge that this is a case of bullying then the Headmaster will see the perpetrator's parents in person and will discuss with them the School's response. The child will also be asked to join the discussion and will be informed of the Headmaster's decision.

The Headmaster will also discuss the bullying incident with the victim's parents and later with the victim present. The Headmaster, with the Deputy Head who has responsibility for the day to day running of the School, will put in force a programme of support for the victim.

Ideally, the victim and the perpetrator will meet in the presence of the Headmaster and the Deputy Head Pastoral and will share their feelings and shake hands after an apology. For minor incidents, the School tries to avoid the label of 'bully' and will give the child who is at fault guidance and support to help them modify their behaviour. Both victim and perpetrator will be given support as appropriate.

The incident will always be logged by the Headmaster in the School's Records (the "Record of Behaviour, Sanctions and Unkindness"), and if the incident has been deemed 'bullying' then it must be recorded as such with a record of the sanctions imposed. Records are kept in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted or to enable patterns to be identified.

After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, the matter will be discussed at a Staff Meeting and any necessary measures put in place to prevent any repetition.

Managing Pupils' Transitions

In order for seamless transition from one year group to another, and also from Lyndhurst House to another school, it is important that any records of behaviour are passed on from one form teacher to another, and where deemed appropriate by the headmaster passed on to the next school.

SANCTIONS (see Behaviour and Discipline Policy)

Disciplinary sanctions will be imposed that reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect. Should a repetition occur, the nature of the sanction will escalate.

For minor incidents, a letter of apology or the return of property may be sufficient, but other sanctions such as a “minus” may be appropriate. For all incidents, a written warning is given to the bully and his parents with a copy of the Behaviour and Discipline Policy. However, a serious or persistent case of bullying may result in immediate suspension or expulsion.

PREVENTION

Bullying is wrong and can cause serious psychological damage to individual or groups of children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

Staff

Regular training raises the awareness of staff, so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and available sources of support are understood. At times, the school invests in specialist training to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities. Staff also lead by example, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance. Staff guidelines regarding appropriate behaviour towards pupils and sanctions to be used are included in the Staff Handbook, and in the Rewards and Sanctions section of the Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Regular discussions at Staff Meetings includes places where bullying is most likely and the need for staff vigilance. In the event that a **potential** bullying incident is observed then the member of staff must not let it go unnoticed. A gentle reprimand, the separation of a group, the calming down of horseplay or sending for the Deputy Head Pastoral can prevent situations escalating, and also give the children a message about the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

The message to staff is: If in doubt – act!

Allegations of bullying by staff

If an allegation of bullying by staff (whether of pupils or staff) is made, then the Disciplinary Procedure will be followed and a thorough investigation will be carried out with all sides being given opportunities to state their case (see the School's Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure and also the School's Whistleblowing Policy).

Older Pupils

Responsibility Ties (for Prefects, Head Boy(s) or others) are awarded to boys who have shown during their time in the School that they are responsible, showing a kind and caring attitude to others. Their example is made evident to younger boys.

The Classroom

Children need to know the difference between right and wrong, although very young children will often not distinguish between the contexts in which words such as 'right' and 'wrong' are used, e.g. sometimes the word 'wrong' will refer only to socially unacceptable behaviour, like poking your tongue out; whilst at other times a moral absolute is involved, like bullying. Nevertheless, children need to be introduced from an early age to concepts of right and wrong, so that moral behaviour becomes an instinctive habit.

An atmosphere of trust, caring and respect in the classroom is essential. This is augmented by the use of educational elements such as personal, social, health and citizenship education and (PSHEE), with discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language as well as assemblies, projects, drama, stories, literature, historical events and current affairs to stimulate discussion.

The following should be displayed on classroom notice boards after discussion in anti-bullying week (held throughout the school every November):

WE DON'T ACCEPT BULLIES AT LYNDHURST HOUSE SCHOOL

Lyndhurst House is not prepared to accept pupils who are unkind in what they say or do.

You have the right to lead your life without being upset by bullies.

Bullies are people who keep worrying you by pushing, punching or teasing you, either inside or outside School..

Bullying is any form of unkind actions or words. Cyberbullies use text messages, nasty web sites and emails.

Pupils must help each other by telling if they know of others being bullied or cyberbullied.

If you are worried about bullying and are not sure what to do:

Tell a teacher or assistant

or tell your parents

or tell Ms Conway or Mrs Dicks

or Mrs Mays or Mr Herd

or tell Mr Reid (or use his "Concerns Box")

TELL SOMEONE!

Telling about bullies is not 'telling tales'.

We will find time to listen to your problem, or your friend's problem, and can help you.

Rewards

The award of House Points is not only for academic success but can be for small acts of kindness, a general helpful attitude or for generosity of time in for example, charitable fundraising. In this way, the importance of personal and moral values is celebrated.

Cyber-Bullying (see also the Use of Technology policy and the School's Safeguarding Policy)

Cyber bullying includes bullying by electronic means (social websites, mobile telephones, text messages, email, photographs etc) and is equally unacceptable.

At Lyndhurst House, we do not allow pupils access to their own email accounts (except in exceptional circumstances under strict supervision – for example to email a forgotten homework), and mobile phones must be handed in to the headmaster if they are brought in to school. Social networking sites are similarly not allowed in school. Pupils are given strict guidance within PSHEE and ICT lessons about the use of the internet, and are made aware that any inappropriate use within school or off-site may well be treated as a serious offence and will incur the standard School sanctions. It may even be treated as illegal and police may be informed of certain types of behaviour. Staff should report any instances of inappropriate internet use to the headmaster, and pupils are reminded that if they receive unpleasant text messages or become involved in unkind comments on social network sites, they should never delete the message but save it and then show it to a responsible adult.

All staff have a responsibility in ensuring that pupils are kept safe online; they are given , and particular responsibility lies with form teachers and the Head of ICT in educating pupils in safe use of the internet and technology. School Internet access has been designed for pupil use and includes filtering appropriate to the age of the pupils. Pupils are taught what is acceptable and what is not acceptable and given clear objectives for Internet use. Pupils in Years 5 and above are asked to sign a “Responsible use of the internet” form, and parents are asked to give their consent to their sons’ responsible use of the internet. In the unlikely event of staff or pupils discovering unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content must be reported to the Headmaster who will ensure that it is reported it to the Internet Service Provider.

Parents are given regular information about how to keep their children safe online, for example through letters from the headmaster and evenings hosted by the school.

Bullying Linked to Disability

At Lyndhurst House School, we are aware that a child with a disability, be it physical or mental, may be subject to bullying from other pupils. These children will be continually monitored to ensure that they are not the subject of ridicule or bullying in any way. By nature of their disability, e.g. autism, some children may be seen to provoke other children into an act of aggression or verbal abuse. However, this is not acceptable and to prevent this, teachers and assistants impress on all pupils, the need to be kind and thoughtful to everyone.

Bullying Linked to Ethnicity or Faith

There is no place for either of these in our School culture, which embraces a diversity of different ethnicities and faiths. Each family is welcomed into the School community and is valued for their contribution to our happy, stable and cosmopolitan environment. As our youngest children may be intrigued by differences in the physical appearance or customs between themselves and their classmates, this is covered in our PSHEE programme and parents are invited into the School to talk about, for example, their celebration of a religious festival.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and also covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Schools are now required to comply with the new Equality Duty.

Communication

The School's policies on behaviour and bullying are regularly communicated to parents, and are available on the School's website. Parents are therefore aware of the school's attitude to bullying and feel confident in coming to report any concerns that they make have.

REVIEW

The Headmaster with the Senior Management Team will review this policy every year; with reference to any incidents of bullying, how they were dealt with and the success of the School's policy on prevention of bullying.

Headmaster

July 2019

This policy is reviewed annually

To be reviewed: November 2019 following Anti-Bullying Week

Further Sources of Information can be found at the end of *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* DfE June 2014 and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>