

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### AIMS

1. The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to clarify for students and staff that bullying is always unacceptable. We want to encourage an environment where independence is celebrated and individuals can flourish without fear. Every student has the right to be safe and happy in school and to be protected if s/he is feeling vulnerable.

### DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING

2. Bullying is repeated behaviour which makes other people feel uncomfortable or threatened whether this is intended or not. There are different sorts of bullying, but the four main types are: -

**PHYSICAL:** hitting, kicking, taking, damaging or hiding belongings including money.

**VERBAL:** name calling including racial abuse, teasing, insulting, writing unkind or abusive notes or sending unkind, abusive or offensive text messages.

**EMOTIONAL:** being unfriendly, excluding, freezing out, tormenting, spreading rumours, looks.

**SEXUAL:** inappropriate physical contact of a sexual nature. People react differently. It is not always possible to tell if someone is hurt or upset. Remember adolescents do fall out and disagree with each other.

### POSSIBLE SIGNS

3. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, pretending to be ill or clinging to adults. They may show changes in their work patterns, may lack concentration or truant from school.

### TO STUDENTS

4. If you are being bullied, or you know someone else who is being bullied, please tell a member of staff straight away and it will be dealt with. Not telling means that the victim will continue to suffer and the bully will carry on, probably choosing other victims too. We all have a responsibility to make sure that bullying is not allowed to continue in our school. The people that you can talk to are;

- Your tutor
- Your Director of Learning
- Any of your subject teachers

- The Sixth Form Mentoring team (for Years 7 & 8 only). They are available at lunchtimes in Room N2.

### **TO PARENTS**

5. If you think that your child is being bullied, or s/he tells you that s/he is, please inform their Tutor or Director of Learning immediately. Please reassure your child that we will deal with the matter sensitively but firmly. If your child tells us that s/he is being bullied, or we discover that s/he is bullying others where appropriate we will contact you and discuss with you how the situation can be improved.

### **ENCOURAGEMENT TO TELL**

6. It is important that we create an atmosphere in school where students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action will be swift but sensitive to their concerns. Students are also encouraged to tell the school about any bullying which takes place out of school hours. Not telling protects the bully or bullies, and gives the message that they can continue, perhaps bullying others too.

### **PROCEDURES**

7. In the first instance, it is important to make it clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate and to the bully that the behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress. Every effort should be made to resolve the problem through counselling both parties. At this stage the parents of both bully and victim may be informed of what has happened and how it has been dealt with. It is vital that everything that happens is carefully recorded in a clear and factual way on school incident forms. If the bullying continues and counselling has not worked, then sanctions will follow. It is important that counselling is maintained for both parties, even when sanctions have been applied.

### **TO TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF**

8. If you think that bullying is occurring, talk to the students concerned and ask them what has been happening. Either ask them to write it down, or do so yourself, so that it can be passed on to the Tutor, Director of Learning, Key Stage Co-ordinator, or Deputy Headteacher. If you feel unable to talk to the students concerned refer directly to one of the people mentioned above. We need to be particularly vigilant at breaks and travelling times, around the corridors between lessons and in the area of the changing rooms, playground and toilets. These are times and places where victims are at their most vulnerable and bullying is not easily seen. Curriculum work, including the PDC programme, can enhance this policy in two ways:
  - By dealing with the topic of bullying in a way which explores why it happens and gives alternative ways of behaving and dealing with difficulties.
  - By using teaching methods which encourage co-operative work in a variety of groupings so that students extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.

9. Where bullying involves child protection issues, it should be understood that this information will be kept confidential as far as possible, but it may be necessary to share it with outside agencies e.g. Social Services. Students making such disclosures will need to be made aware of this fact.

### **REVIEW**

10. This policy will be reviewed by the Student Welfare sub-committee of the Governing Body every three years or sooner if circumstances dictate.

15th November 2013