

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

MEM April 2015

A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

SCHOOL AIMS

We are a caring, co-educational, multi-ethnic school which aims to:

- Recognise individual achievement
- Give everyone a sense of self-esteem and pride in belonging
- Provide each person with an awareness of their potential and opportunities to realise it
- Provide a broad range of learning experiences in a positive and stimulating environment
- Respect each individual and value the richness which comes from the variety of cultures, beliefs and abilities of our members
- Work in partnership with the family and the wider community to enable everyone to be informed, responsible and effective members of society.

It is the basic right of all students, staff, and visitors to work and play in an environment free from humiliation, oppression and abuse.

It is recognised that bullying occurs in all schools but this policy seeks to provide effective strategies to prevent and address bullying.

The success of the ongoing anti bullying procedures and policies at Little Ilford School has been acknowledged by the following external agencies:

OFSTED, October 2012; Healthy Schools, 2009; Community Cohesion (gold award) 2010;

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is the wilful conscious desire to hurt another and put her/him under stress (Tatum 1988).

There are six main forms of bullying:

- Verbal bullying
- Physical bullying
- Gesture bullying
- Extortion bullying
- Exclusion bullying
- Cyber bullying

For most people it is the physical form which comes to mind when thinking of bullying, mainly because it is visible. This can range from a punch to an assault with a deadly weapon.

Verbal bullying can be equally hurtful. It can range from teasing and taunting, the spreading of malicious rumours, to abusive comments about a person's appearance, ability, clothes or family. Particularly disturbing forms of verbal abuse are sexual and racial abuse. The former demeans people and the latter is an attack on an individual's family, culture and ethnicity.

Bullying can take place via technology, i.e. mobile phone/texting and computer/social networking sites (Cyberbullying). This can include setting up/joining "hate groups" and making inappropriate personal comments about an individual which can then escalate.

Students with special needs and disabilities can be particularly vulnerable to bullying.

Gesture bullying can be frightening because of the implied threat of more physical violence to follow. Gestures can also carry embarrassing sexual or racial connotations.

THE BULLY

- Must be seen by staff - parents should be consulted.
- Must be asked why they bully and what they get out of it.
- Must be counselled (where deemed appropriate) and helped.
- Must make restitution with the victim.

THE VICTIM

- Must be seen to be fully supported by the school.
- Must be followed up by the pastoral team on a regular basis after the incident to ensure that there is no repeat of the bullying.

THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- Should be a fun, enjoyable and friendly place to be .
- A nice environment.
- Consist of staff that have time to listen, help and give advice.

PARENTS

Parents/carers are expected to:-

- Be able to rely on a safe and welcoming place for their child
- Be given clear indications of procedures to be followed when their child is being bullied
- Refrain from encouraging a child to hit back although s/he may need to defend themselves if attacked.
- Be able to talk to someone at school and be listened to with sympathy and in

confidence.

- Contact the Form Tutor or Pastoral Leader as a first port of call
- Feel supported, reassured and confident that something will be done.
- Be aware of any change in their child's behaviour or manner of health. This may indicate problems or unhappiness at school.
- Support the school in developing strategies to help their child whether they are the person being bullied or the perpetrator.
- Be kept informed.
- Be helped and supported by the school when the problem occurs only outside school, although it may be necessary to contact a solicitor and/or the police.
- Make sure they understand the consequences for bullies who fail to respond to help and support.

THE SCHOOL STAFF

The expectations for all staff are as follows:-

- Provide a safe welcoming atmosphere.
- Be good listeners and be prepared to talk.
- Attend anti bullying training provided by the school (all staff.)
- Raise awareness through regular use of tutor time, presentations, assemblies and Anti Bullying Week.
- Follow procedures and communicate appropriately.
- Be encouraged to challenge all incidents of bullying.
- Have a clear reporting procedure for all incidents.
- Make students and parents aware of actions taken.
- Support bullied students and their parents.
- Help bullies with suitable strategies in order to raise self-esteem.
- All discovered bullying must be acted upon as soon as possible, and be seen to be acted upon
- Notify parents of truanting.

NOT TO ACT IS TO CONDONE!

PROCEDURES

All staff employed within the school have a responsibility to act immediately, reporting any incident.

- The present procedures for Pastoral Care & Discipline are the best vehicle for dealing with bullying.

Staff must ensure they are familiar with these procedures.

- Incidents should be carefully recorded using the SIMS behaviour module. The bully/bullied should also be asked to make a statement in writing about the incident.
- Interview witness(s) and collect statements using the school form. Reassure victims that action will be taken.
- Parents of bullied and perpetrator children should be informed and involved at an early stage (N.B. contact may bring other issues to light).
- New staff and students should be made aware of procedures.
- Danger times are breaks, lunchtimes and the start of lessons where students arrive before staff. Conscientious exercise of professional duties should minimise the opportunities available to bullies.
- Support bullied children by seeing them daily initially, to know how they are coping, encouraging them to stay positive and feel supported.
- Be available for the victim to share information should further difficulties arise.
- Schedule follow up meetings in the months ahead.
- Ask student's friends' to help, support and share information with staff if anything further happens.
- There are implications for students' management by staff. If staff bully students, the idea that bullying is a legitimate way of exercising power and control is reinforced.
- Teaching about bullying through the curriculum is an essential prevention strategy. In many ways, all staff are managers and have a role to play in creating a climate and attitude within the school which does not sustain bullying. This is created mainly through valuing others and treating everyone, their property and the school with respect.
- Examples of good practice are essential and include notices around the school which are polite and positive. Staff must endeavour to treat each other, and students, with consideration.

GOVERNORS

Governors must satisfy themselves that the school policy, structures and systems are preventative, yet allow staff to deal effectively with bullying, should it occur.

If the safety and education of other students is persistently threatened by a student then Governors would be asked to support the use of the EXCLUSION sanction, with permanent exclusion as a last resort.

SANCTIONS

It is important that the bully realises that sanctions will be imposed. Sanctions must be sustainable, fair and consistent if they are to be successful. These must be seen to be fair by other students and will hopefully bring about some change in attitude. Praise for improved attitude/behaviour is essential, and should underpin the whole strategy. Very often the bully needs support. A positive open approach will be most effective. Support and counselling should be used to attempt to bring about change.

- Removal of certain privileges.
- Reporting to Form Tutor/Head of Year/Senior Staff at break times and lunchtimes.
- Report for behaviour and attitude to students/teachers during lessons.
- Restorative Justice.
- Failure to comply after other strategies tried - permanent exclusion.
- Log of bullying incidents/use of school council members, mid-day supervisors and other playground staff.
- The actions must never be static; they should be reviewed and built upon in the light of experience in an attempt to achieve a better school culture.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

CHILDREN MAY:

- Be frightened of walking to and from school.
- Be unwilling to attend school, making various excuses for not going.
- Plead to be accompanied or driven to school.
- Go to school by a different route each day.
- Have declining work standards.
- Have books/clothing/equipment/money torn or broken or go missing.
- Arrive at home hungry due to theft of money.
- Become introspective or withdrawn.
- Start stammering.
- Become moody/hitting other children.

- Start excessive dieting or have an obsession with cleanliness.
- Have stress related headaches/stomach ache.
- Cry at bedtime.
- Wet the bed.
- Have bad dreams.
- Have unexplained injuries.
- Ask for or steal money.
- Refuse to say what is wrong or give unlikely explanations for any of the above.

FIVE STAGES OF INVESTIGATION

Here is a procedure which you can use to investigate bullying incidents.

STAGE ONE

A student, parent/carer or member of staff reports bullying.

STAGE TWO

The person to whom the report was made either investigates the incident or reports it to someone else. In any case, they will need to make careful and accurate written notes at the time of the report and update the SIMS behaviour module.

STAGE THREE

The investigator gathers information by interviewing all involved parties separately. Make sure that witness(s) wait separately to be interviewed. The investigator may need to consult student records and consult staff who were on duty at the time. There could be a delay while this takes place; if so, it is important to explain the delay in case the credibility of the procedure is put in jeopardy.

STAGE FOUR

The investigator then weighs the evidence, reaches a conclusion, and discusses the findings with all the parties, including relevant staff and parents of bullies and bullied. A full decision must be given for unjustified as well as justified complaints.

STAGE FIVE

The school then applies appropriate sanctions to those found guilty of bullying, to reinforce the message that bullying can harm and will NOT be condoned. Sanctions can involve a progressive withdrawal from school activities, e.g. from breaks and during lunchtime, and may lead ultimately to exclusion.