

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Statement

Bullying, in any form, is unacceptable at The Queen's School. This policy also covers the Early Years Foundation Stage pupils in this school.

Aims

The Anti-Bullying policy is designed to create a safe and secure environment with an atmosphere of mutual trust where every person feels comfortable and is able to work to fulfil her potential.

Objective

To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of their responsibilities in creating a bully-free environment and the procedures to follow whenever bullying is suspected or reported.

Definition

Bullying can be defined as the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone on a regular basis. Pupils are bullied for a variety of reasons – and for no reason. Bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyberbullying methods.

The key points here are that it is;

- Intentional
- Hurtful
- Repeated

“Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self esteem; and destroys their sense of security. Bullying impacts on its victims’ attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people’s lives. At worst, bullying has been a factor in pupil suicide.” (Safe to learn – DCFS 2008)

Bullying can take many forms but falls mainly into four categories:

1. **physical** – any form of violence to the individual or their property including pushing, kicking, hitting or unwanted sexual advances.
2. **verbal** – spoken or written: name-calling, repeatedly teasing in a nasty way, spreading rumours, making racist, sexual or homophobic comments, making comments about religious beliefs, cultural background, learning difficulties or disabilities or physical features.
3. **emotional** – being isolated or deliberately left out of groups of classmates, having possessions taken, hidden or destroyed, being subjected to extortion

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4. cyber – is the use of information technology (IT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. Although most cyber-bullying takes place on home computers and mobile phones, it has an effect on students' behaviour and relationships within school. A school is under the same duty of care to tackle this particular form of bullying as with any other form.

We recognise that there are many reasons why someone might be bullied and these can include, but are not restricted to, bullying motivated by prejudice against certain groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special education needs and disability and family circumstances such as adoption or care.

Ongoing prevention of bullying

- We believe that every girl has the right to enjoy a happy and fulfilling life and to benefit from the opportunities offered at The Queen's School. The aim of our Positive Behaviour Policy is to foster a caring, supportive and purposeful atmosphere within the school to ensure that this right is enjoyed by all. This is primarily based upon courtesy and respect for each other.
- The school aims to maintain a safe and caring environment where girls can talk to someone they trust, be listened to and be given appropriate support in any sensitive situation. (The Queen's School Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy)
- The PSHE and PSED (EYFS) schemes of work address all aspects of bullying and related issues of assertiveness and self-esteem.
- Positive self-image and appropriate behaviour are promoted through assemblies, curriculum work and co-curricular activities.
- Pupils are encouraged to take an active stand and not be a bystander to bullying by not allowing someone to be deliberately left out of a group, not smiling or laughing when someone is being bullied, telling the bullying pupil to stop, showing the bullying pupil they disapprove of her actions and reporting any incidences of bullying to a member of staff.
- We seek to raise staff awareness of bullying by discussion of concerns and procedures for dealing with concerns at form staff meetings, Head of Year meetings, Heads of Key Stage meetings, staff briefings and Safeguarding/Child Protection training.
- Staff are expected to play a prominent role in ensuring that the Anti-bullying Policy is respected by all members of the school community.
- Key staff receive training in online child protection. This information is disseminated to all staff via the meetings mentioned above.
- Heads of Key Stage keep notes of all incidents that could be described as 'bullying' in 3Sys notes. They regularly assess the information to determine whether patterns of behaviour can be identified and dealt with.

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- We have a committee of pupils, nominated by Heads of Year, called the Respect Committee. They meet regularly to discuss issues regarding peer relationships and consult with pastoral leaders (see appendix)
- The school does not tolerate or dismiss any bullying behaviours as 'banter', 'part of growing up' or 'having a laugh'.

Peer-on-Peer abuse

- We recognise that peer-on peer abuse may take place between children as young as primary age and staff are trained to identify signs of peer-on-peer abuse and potential 'blind spots' where children may be able to hide.
- For older pupils, peer-on-peer abuse may take several forms: sexual violence, sexual harassment, physical abuse, sexting (youth-produced sexual imagery), initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- This policy outlines how allegations of peer-on-peer abuse will be recorded and dealt with in conjunction with the school's safeguarding policy.

Advice for pupils

- Never suffer in silence. Report all incidences of bullying immediately. This can be done either by approaching any member of staff that you find easy to talk to, or using the drop a note system in one of the white post boxes located in the library and pastoral hub. You can also complete a Can we Chat? Form on Firefly to alert a member of staff. At The Lower School girls can leave a note in the Listening Bee box.
- Organisations which can help include
The Anti-Bullying Alliance – www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Kidscape – www.kidscape.org.uk
- If you are being bullied or you suspect or observe bullying be encouraged to :
 - Talk to any adult you trust
 - Talk to a prefect
 - Be confident that action will be taken to stop the bullying
 - Be a good friend, above all when it is known that someone is unhappy or lonely, and remember to include everyone in your class especially where group work is concerned

If you are being bullied the following responses should help;

1. Try and explain to the bully that her words/actions are upsetting; she may not be aware of this. Be firm, look them in the eye and tell them to stop. However, if the bullying continues try not to show your feelings.
2. Walk away quietly and confidently, even if you don't feel that way inside.
3. It might be useful to jot down a few notes about what has happened, to keep it clear in your mind. How often has it happened? Who was involved? Who witnessed what was happening? Where did it happen? What have you done about it?

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Policies Master folder/Whole School (inc EYFS)/Inspection Policies – WS/Welfare & Equality - WS

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4. Try and stay in a group as often as possible.
5. Keep away from the 'trouble' spots.
6. The bully will not stop if she thinks she can get away with such behaviour. Give the situation some thought and if it's serious tell a member of staff or ask your friends to tell a member of staff on your behalf.
7. You can always take a friend with you to talk to someone about it.
8. Talk to your parents, let them know what's going on.

- Everyone can help to stop bullying

1. If the girl being bullied is in any danger, get help. If she isn't, stay with her; your presence may ease the situation.
2. Always show that you and your friends disapprove of bullying.
3. Give sympathy and support to girls who are being bullied –If you know of any bullying – tell someone. The victim may be too scared or lonely to tell.

- If you are the victim of cyber-bullying:

1. tell a teacher or parent about the bullying
2. do not reply to bullying messages
3. do not retaliate by sending unpleasant messages back
4. switch off your phone – it's the most effective way to block the texting bully
5. use the blocking and reporting facilities of social networking sites
6. if necessary, change your contact details such as your instant messaging identity or your mobile phone number
7. save the evidence. Keep printed copies, screen shots, records and dates of offensive messages, pictures and online conversations. If you do not want to take a screen shot because it may alert the bully that you are taking action, you can use another phone or camera to record the bullying message or image. Refer to the 'BBB locked' section of www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/how-to-report/index.html to learn how to do this.

Further advice to pupils in Senior School is given through the work of the Respect Committee, in tutor time and assemblies.

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Procedure for staff following an allegation NB This details the 'no blame' approach which will be followed as far as possible. We recognise that a problem-solving approach, which avoids blaming, can be much more effective in clarifying the situation and achieving a change in behaviour.

- Write notes and record evidence on 3sys as soon as possible after the disclosure is made
- Email or speak with the form teacher, Head of Year or Key Stage or a member of the SLT as soon as possible.

Procedure for investigating an allegation

- A designated member of the Pastoral team will investigate the allegation. This may include;
 1. Questioning again the pupil making the allegation
 2. Questioning all parties
 3. Taking individual written statements from all parties and witnesses
 4. Speak to members of staff
 5. Speaking to parents
- In conducting an investigation, the responsible member of staff is trying to determine if the action is;
 1. Intentional
 2. Hurtful
 3. Repeated
- A written record of the investigation will be kept on 3sys as a bullying record
- All cases are reviewed in Pastoral team meetings
- Whilst the pastoral team will always endeavour to conduct conversations outside of lesson time, this is not always practical and there may be occasions where a pupil might need to be discreetly removed from a lesson or activity in order for the investigation to take place in a timely manner.
- Sanctions may be applied in accordance with the school's behaviour policy. These may include;
 - Verbal apology given to the victim
 - A verbal reprimand and reminder of expected behaviour
 - Loss of free time
 - Written letter of apology
 - Loss of responsibility or being banned from taking part in a trip, club, fixture or activity

A serious or repeated incident will involve the Head of Year, the Head of Key Stage, the Deputy Head or the Headmistress (or both Deputy Head and Head at the Lower School) who may take action in line with the School's Positive behaviour policy.

- Parents of both parties will be involved in serious or repeated incidents.

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- If the bullying is deemed sufficiently serious, external agencies such as the PCSO or Police may be involved.
- Pupils who are consistently the victims of bullying will be given support to develop positive strategies and self-assertion. Pupils found guilty of bullying will be given support to change their behaviour. This can be through a variety of processes such as access to the school counsellor, regular one-one time with their form tutor or Head of Key Stage or providing a mentor in the form of an older girl such as a sixth form mentor.
- Reference may be made to external support, for example, Childline runs an excellent supportline on 0800 11 11
- Other children affected by the incident/incidents will be given appropriate support by their Head of Key Stage, Head of Year or Form Tutor.
- In serious cases, temporary or permanent exclusion of the bully will be considered. This is led by the Headmistress as part of the exclusion procedure detailed in the Positive behaviour policy.

Staff will follow up with the victims, perpetrators and witnesses of bullying at regular intervals, for as long as is deemed appropriate, and note the information on 3sys. The record will be closed on 3sys once it is deemed that the bullying has stopped. Cases can be reopened and ongoing monitoring will take place. The Head of Pastoral will review all cases on a regular basis with Pastoral leaders and regularly analyse trends so that interventions might be planned as necessary.

Pupils with SEND and disabilities

The school recognises that some pupils with SEND/disabilities may need additional or alternative forms of support when bullying has occurred. We also recognise that good practice with dealing with bullying for some of these pupils will reflect good practice for the whole school. This is a duty under the Equality Act 2010.

Pastoral leaders will seek the support of the SENCO in managing specific instances of bullying involving SEND/disabled pupils.

Further to the procedure outlined above, the SENCO or another member of staff who has a good relationship with the pupil, may be asked for input or to attend any meetings.

Further advice for teachers can be found;

<https://senmagazine.co.uk/articles/articles/senarticles/how-can-we-tackle-bullying-of-children-with-sen>

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

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A procedure for parents

If you are concerned about your child being bullied the facts of the situation are vital as, without these, it is hard to take action.

1. calmly talk to your daughter about the experience;
2. make a note of what is said, particularly names, places, times, how often and the form the bullying takes.
3. reassure your daughter that she has done the right thing. She should not feel guilty.
4. explain to your daughter that any further incidents should be reported immediately to a member of staff;
5. do not hesitate to contact the school via telephone or email to make an appointment to speak with a member of the Pastoral team, so that bullying can be dealt with appropriately.
6. read the notes on cyber-bullying above. Evidence will be needed by the school for intervention to be effective and this evidence may also be needed by internet service providers and mobile phone companies. If the cyber-bullying breaks the law, the evidence may be needed by the police for an investigation. Please note that internet service providers will only remove text or photos if they break the law or the company's own terms and conditions.

If your daughter is involved in bullying it is important to work with the school to modify the patterns of behaviour, which are causing your daughter to bully. Do not panic or blame yourself; these things do happen and the School has mechanisms in place to deal with the issue. It is helpful to recognise some of the reasons why pupils behave in this way from time to time.

Sometimes girls bully others because :

- They are not aware of how hurtful it is
- They are copying the behaviour of older siblings or people they admire
- They have a temporary difficulty integrating in their peer group
- They are encouraged to do so by friends
- They are going through a difficult time personally
- To stop your daughter from bullying others
- Help her to understand that what she is doing is unacceptable
- Liaise with the School
- Make time to talk about how things are going at School
- Ensure your daughter has identified an adult at School to whom she can talk

The government has advice for parents and carers about how to address cyberbullying:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf

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Guidance is also available from

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/advice-parents>

<https://www.bullying.co.uk/advice-for-parents/>

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/kids.html>

Bullying of staff

Any incident of bullying where a member of staff is the victim should be reported immediately to a member of the SLT. If the Headmistress is the alleged bully the incident should be reported in writing to the Chair of Governors. You may also wish to refer to your union for advice. See the Whistleblowing policy and procedure for further details.

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Appendix Respect Committee

Who we are?

We were nominated by Heads of Year to form a committee to support and advise the Pastoral Leaders within the school. We are known as Respect Ambassadors. There are ambassadors in every year group but you can speak with any of us. We will have a drop in session soon where you can come and chat to us.

What do we do?

We meet weekly and discuss issues affecting peer relationships. We make suggestions to the pastoral leaders about strategy and initiatives to deal with these issues, for example, promoting positive relationships, supporting girls with friendships, improving relationships within and between forms and anti-bullying. We suggest actions that might help to tackle some of the issues.

How can we help you?

We are YOUR Respect Ambassadors. You can talk to any of us about issues that are affecting per relationships in school and your ideas on how they can be improved. We can liaise with the pastoral team on your behalf. However, we are not able to deal with specific issues but we can help you to make contact with someone who can help.

See Firefly/Pupils/Form time for resources