

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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PRIORY ACADEMY

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. A bully may be described as a person (or group) behaving in a way which might meet needs for excitement, status, material gain or group process and does not recognise or meet the needs and rights of the person being harmed by the behaviour. A victim is a person who is harmed by the behaviour of others and who does not have the resources, status, skill or ability to counteract or stop the harmful behaviour.

Bullying can be:

- *Emotional* being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- *Physical* pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- *Racist* racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- *Sexual* unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- *Homophobic* because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- *Verbal* name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, threats
- *Cyber* All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging and calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities
- *Extortion* Demand for money or favours
- *Exclusion* Leaving someone out of group activities

Bullying could most easily be described by the term 'STOP': **S**everal **T**imes **O**n **P**urpose. This helps us to distinguish between one-off behaviours and genuine bullying.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

We all have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Prevention

The following measures are implemented to try and reduce the occurrence of bullying within the school:

- Effective supervision of the school environment.
- Visible reminders around the school to promote anti bullying measures.
- Students are made aware that the school cares about bullying and will take reports of bullying seriously by responding to reported incidents as soon as possible.
- The students are encouraged to talk to staff and break down the code of secrecy.
- Particularly vulnerable children may be referred for intervention and included in decision making and assertiveness skills sessions (if appropriate and subject to parental approval).
- Peer mentors in each year group will act as a peer support for students and is run by a member of staff who is 'championing' the anti-bullying campaign.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go come to school by bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- is late, frequently absent, or truants
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries a lot
- frequently complains of feeling unwell
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- comes home hungry (money / lunch has been stolen)

- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and must be investigated

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to staff (form tutors – Year Leaders).
2. In some cases where the bullying has occurred across year groups, it may be necessary to involve more than one form tutor or a more senior member of staff. No single approach will be successful for every incident but use of the 'no blame' approach should be considered in the first instance (see Appendix).
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, the school police liaison officer will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
7. In genuine cases of bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff on the Student Behaviour Log.

Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place (e.g. lunch or after school detentions).
2. If possible, the students will be reconciled through a restorative justice approach.
3. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
4. In serious cases, internal, fixed term or permanent exclusion will be considered.

APPENDIX

THE “NO BLAME” APPROACH TO BULLYING

Step 1 – Talk with the victim

The absence of blame

A facilitator trained in the approach talks to the victim to establish the impact that the bullying has had on them. It is not designed to gather “facts” about who said or did what to who. The victim will be encouraged to suggest the names of people to form a group who should help solve the problem. These will include those involved, colluders and perhaps friends of the victim. The victim is also asked to produce a piece of writing or a picture to express how the bullying is affecting them.

Step 2 – Convene a meeting of the group

The facilitator gathers the group together ensuring that there is a balance between helpful and reliable students and those whose behaviour has been causing a problem.

Step 3 – Explain the problem

The encouragement of empathy

The facilitator explains that there is a problem and that “Sarah” is experiencing certain difficulties. Without discussing specific incidents or accusations the facilitator explains how “Sarah” is feeling using the piece of writing from the victim to illustrate this.

Step 4 – Share responsibility

The facilitator points out that no one is going to be punished and that the group has been convened to help solve the problem because there is a shared responsibility for “Sarah’s” happiness.

Step 5 – Ask for ideas

Problem solving

The facilitator asks the group to suggest ways that they may be able to alleviate the suffering felt by the victim. Members of the group are encouraged to use “I” language (I will sit next to her in lessons, I will walk to school with her etc) so that they take ownership of the solutions. These ideas are not imposed on the group by the facilitator.

Step 6 – Leave it up to them

The facilitator ends the meeting by passing responsibility for the problem over to the group, thanks them for their support and arranges a meeting to see how things are going.

Step 7 – Meet them again

The facilitator meets each of the group individually a week later to see how things are going.