

Sydenham School Anti-Bullying Policy

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Anti -Bullying Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Equal Opportunities policies.

Our anti-bullying vision

We want our young people to learn and socialise in an inclusive school community, where they value each other's differences, support one another, treat each other with respect, empathy and compassion and refrain from bullying other people.

Our aims

Our anti-bullying aims are:

1. To reduce and deal effectively with bullying
2. To support young people's ability to deal with bullying and to strengthen their emotional resilience
3. To create a culture at Sydenham where students and staff see bullying as unacceptable and challenge it whenever it occurs

Rationale

This school is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment. Bullying at school can have a profound effect on children's lives and can have a lasting effect on them into adulthood. It can undermine their self-confidence and self-esteem and can sometimes result in them finding difficulties in managing their relationships with others. The policy on Anti-Bullying has been drawn up within the school's ethos of promoting positive behaviour.

What do we mean by Bullying?

Bullying is the intentional (physical or emotional) hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It is usually repetitive or persistent, although some one-off attacks can have a continuing harmful effect on the victim.

Bullying is an act of aggression, causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to someone. It can take a number of forms; physical, verbal, making gestures, extortion and exclusion. It is an abuse of power. It can be planned and organised, or it may be unintentional. It may be perpetrated by individuals or by groups of pupils.

Definition of bullying

The DFE states –

Bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- Repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, e.g. because of race, religion, gender, ability or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyber bullying (social networks, email, messenger)

Bullying is not:

- teasing and banter between friends without intention to cause hurt
- falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement
- behaviour that all parties have consented to and enjoy

Definition of cyber bullying

Cyber bullying can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

Bullying Behaviour

There are two types of bullying behaviour – direct and indirect. Direct bullying takes place between the victim and the wrongdoer(s). Indirect bullying is often associated with social rejection by a wider peer group, harmful messages through gossip, sending or spreading messages and images through mobile phones and the internet, deliberate exclusion from social activity and isolation.

How do we deal with Bullying? - Principles

Sydenham uses a range of strategies to deal with incidents of bullying which can be divided into 4 main areas:

The ethos promoted by the school – This sets a climate in which bullying behaviour is seen as unacceptable and there is an emphasis on respect for others. Sydenham is a Rights Respecting School and all our policies are underpinned by our commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We use a restorative approach to dealing with poor behaviour.

The curriculum – Work on bullying is done in PSE, specifically in Year 7 but in other years too where it is felt it is appropriate. Other areas also address the issue of bullying for example, English and Drama. The year 7 pastoral curriculum also addresses issues of difference and belonging and there are regular assemblies supporting students to understand what bullying is and how to deal with it.

Peer Support – The school constantly seeks ways of developing and promoting student responsibility. Sydenham has a prefect system and trains older students as Peer Mediators so they can support younger students in managing their friendship difficulties. Peer Mediators are trained in mediation so they are able to model the approach used by staff to resolve conflicts.

Dealing with identified bullies – When a student is identified and found to have engaged in bullying behaviour, action is taken. The sanctions implemented correspond to the disciplinary guidelines laid down in the whole school good behaviour policy. However, the school also recognises that in some cases extra support and counselling may need to be given to both the bullies and the victims and endeavours to provide this where a need is identified. It is vital that any student who is being bullied, feels sufficiently confident and empowered to report the incident. Students must know how they can do this, who they should talk to and also feel safe that any report made will be taken seriously and that they will be listened to and the report investigated. It is vital that that students or parents of students who feel they are being bullied should know that their concerns will be listened to and acted upon. Every case must be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated. We should take allegations of bullying just as seriously as allegations of abuse.

This is an important safeguarding issue for students and all staff must know that action must be taken within the context that “the safety of the child is paramount”.

From policy to practice

Staff should deal with any incident following the guidelines below.

1 The incident / report of bullying

- 1.1 Students may report incidents of bullying to any member of staff or to a peer supporter or mediator. The Inclusion team also run breakfast, break and lunch clubs which provide a supportive, informal setting for students to raise concerns. Parents may all raise concerns regarding bullying to any member of staff by phone or email.
- 1.2 Incidents of bullying must be taken seriously. If a student reports an incident it is important to act quickly but objectively.
- 1.3 It is the policy of the school in cases of any sort of unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour that statements are taken. The same procedure is undertaken in cases of bullying. Students affected by bullying, accused of bullying or witness to the bullying should complete an Incident Report form. The teacher investigating should then discuss these with their line manager to ascertain whether bullying has taken place and if so, who is being bullied and by whom.
- 1.4 Further action will be dependent upon the nature and seriousness of the bullying. It is vital that any incidents are investigated thoroughly and that action is not initiated until it is certain that a full picture of the incident has been achieved.
- 1.5 Parents/Carers of the victim should be contacted as soon as possible after the report is received, told that the incident is being investigated and kept informed throughout.

2 Reassurance of the victim

- 2.1 The victim of any bullying behaviour must be reassured and made to feel safe, in some cases this will mean a referral to the Inclusion team for immediate support. Students who are being bullied often feel that things will be made worse if they report what is happening. It is therefore vital that all students who go to a member of staff feel that they will be helped, taken seriously and feel confident to explain exactly what has been happening to them.

3 Help / support for the victim

- 3.1 The help and support for the victim will depend on the nature of the bullying incident and the student involved. Types of support might include:

- Organising a circle of friends for a student isolated within their tutor group
 - Encouraging and supporting the student to find out about and attend lunchtime clubs and activities
 - Referral to social skills/self-esteem intervention
 - Organising and facilitating restorative meetings
- 3.2 If bullying has been long term or severe, it is important to recognise that for some, a greater degree of support may be needed. Students may be also be referred for support to outside agencies or to counselling provision.
- 3.3 It must always be emphasised to a victim that should any further incident occur, that they report it immediately

4 Dealing with the bully

- 4.1 It is important that any student accused of bullying is dealt with fairly and objectively. A statement will therefore be obtained from them and their view of events listened to.
- 4.2 If it is felt a student behaved in a way that was bullying it is important to stress that this is unacceptable behaviour and explain the impact on the victim.
- 4.3 It may be felt that the bully should be sanctioned. If so, this should be done cautiously, clearly outlining why it is felt a sanction is needed and what it should be. Staff should follow the guidelines in the Behaviour Policy, and in serious cases, the Headteacher may consider an internal, fixed-term or permanent exclusion, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.
- 4.4 It should be remembered, that often a student who bullies has significant problems and needs help and support. Referral to other staff and agencies may therefore be necessary.
- 4.5 Following investigation into a serious incident the bully will be required to sign an Anti-Bullying contract which will be placed on her school file.
- 4.6 If the bullying behaviour has occurred before and the Anti-bullying contract has not been adhered to then the consequences will be decided by the Leadership Team but are likely to be serious.

5 Recording and Involvement of other staff

- 5.1 When an incident of bullying has occurred it must be recorded on SIMS. Accurate recording will enable the YLC to monitor incidents of bullying in their year group and for the Senior Leadership Team to monitor the extent of bullying across the school and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's Anti-Bullying policy.
- 5.2 The Form Tutors of both the victim and the bully should be informed by email and where incidents involve students from different year groups the Year Learning Co-ordinators and /or relevant Leadership Team staff will need to be kept informed and work together to resolve the issue.
- 5.3 Complex incidents should always be discussed and where appropriate involve other staff. If there is any uncertainty on how to proceed, the appropriate line manager should be consulted. This is particularly so where very serious incidents have been uncovered or if a student is being persistently bullied.

6 Contact with home

- 6.1 Contact with home should always be made where an incident has occurred – both with the parents/carers of the victim and the bully, even if the investigation is inconclusive.
- 6.2 All letters home dealing with serious issues of bullying should be written by the YLC and checked by the Senior Management Line Manager.
- 6.3 Formal warnings and anti-bullying contracts should be drawn up by YLC but issued by Heads of Key Stage or other Senior Leaders.

7 Advice to parents

- 7.1 It is important that the school communicates to parents its' position regarding bullying. Parents should know that the school has an Anti-Bullying Policy and where to find it on the school website.
- 7.2 Guidance should be given to parents on what action to take if an incident of bullying occurs. A parents' guide to bullying is given to all new parents.



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Anti-Bullying Contract

Name:

Tutor Group:

Date:

Present:

The above named student has agreed to sign this contract following an incident of bullying behaviour which occurred on:

This behaviour took the form of:

-
-
-
-

By signing this contract the above named student has agreed not to become involved in any further incidents of bullying behaviour towards other members of the school community. This applies to times outside of school hours as well as in school.

Student signature:

Date:

Sydenham School

A Science, Mathematics and Technology School



Anti-Bullying Policy Parents' Guide

At Sydenham School we want young people to live, learn, socialise and work in an inclusive school, where they value each other's differences, support one another, treat each other with respect, empathy and compassion and refrain from bullying others. We strongly believe in empowering students and providing guidance and intervention to ensure their safety.

Our Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the repeated intentional (physical or emotional) hurting of one person or group by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Cyber bullying can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

The Ethos Promoted by the School

1. To reduce and deal effectively with bullying
2. To support students' ability to deal with bullying and to strengthen their emotional resilience
3. To develop and strengthen our capacity to address bullying

Sydenham School is a place where young people and adults:

- respect themselves and others
- value their relationships with others
- take responsibility for their actions
- have the skills and support to put things right when they go wrong

These key values and skills help to develop cultures where bullying is unacceptable. We have preventative anti-bullying approaches and clear strategies for intervention.

Developing Emotional Literacy through the Curriculum

Our holistic and inclusive approach to diversity encourages students to develop a sense of belonging and commitment to the school community which aims to reduce the extent to which bullying takes place. Awareness is raised across the curriculum and specifically in PSHE, Drama, English, tutor activities, assemblies, 'Anti-bullying week' and the use of Restorative Approaches to resolve issues of conflict.

Emotional Support and Building Resilience

Victims, perpetrators and bystanders may all need emotional support, this can help students contextualise and explore the options available to them, and to identify strategies for dealing with the effects of being involved. The support enables them to express their thoughts and feelings about how the bullying has affected them.

Dealing with Incidents of Bullying

All incidents of bullying are investigated and appropriate action taken. This sometimes includes a sanction, but we mainly use 'restorative approaches' to heal any harm created by an incident. This provides a framework for making any sanctions more meaningful as everyone is involved in the decision-making process.

Restorative interventions are based on a series of questions:

- What has happened?
- What have you been thinking and feeling since?
- Who else has been affected? How?
- What needs to happen to put things right?
- What have you learnt?
- What could you do differently in the future?

These questions can be used by anyone to promote meaningful conversations about very minor incidents that may occur regularly. We have Peer Mediators, Peer Supporters and all staff who use this approach to resolving conflict. However the use of 'Restorative Approaches' for more serious incidents requires further training and so a number of staff have had this.

What should you do if your daughter reports that she is being bullied?

Talk to Your Daughter

Determine whether it is bullying rather than an argument or falling out between friends. If possible, find out:

- The name of the bully
- Where and when the bullying occurs
- What exactly happens

Contact a Member of Staff

Encourage your daughter to talk to her form tutor, a Peer Mediator (or Peer Supporter) or her YLC about the bullying. If necessary, you can contact your daughter's Form Tutor or YLC to explain the situation.

Reassure Your Daughter

Talk through with her the possible strategies that will help. For example:

- Explain that the school has a zero tolerance to bullying and that we will work with your daughter and you, to stop any bullying.
- Reinforce to her that she must seek help **immediately** should anything further occur.
- Any cyber-bullying or unpleasant communications should be saved or screen-shot, and discussed with you and if necessary brought to the attention the YLC as soon as possible.
- Plan with your daughter what she is going to do at school the next day - who to tell, how to tell her story clearly or encourage her to write it down. It may also be best to avoid interacting with the identified student.
- Ensure that your daughter feels safe until this is resolved ie travelling with a friend to and from school, spending break and lunch-times with her friends away from the bully or to go to 'Step-by Step' clubs in G.1.011.

- To help avoid bullying, have regular conversations with your daughter about her friendships online and offline and inform her that you will monitor her accounts sporadically for her safety and for your peace of mind.