

# Brine Leas School

## An Academy

# STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

We are committed to ensuring that our children & young people stay safe. Our aim is that children and young people should be confident that they will:-

- not be bullied, discriminated against, harassed or otherwise abused
- know what to do if such a problem arises and how to minimise the likelihood of being bullied, harassed or otherwise abused
- know that it is not acceptable to participate in bullying, discriminatory behaviour or harassment of any kind

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- to reduce the number of bullying, discriminatory, harassment or related incidents.
- to reduce the impact of bullying & increase confidence in addressing and reporting incidents.
- to establish a culture where bullying in all its forms, discrimination and harassment is unacceptable
- to promote a positive and safe environment that nurtures emotional health, good behaviour and well being in the children and young people.

## WHY IS AN ANTI-BULLYING POLICY NECESSARY?

The School believes that its students have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. All institutions, both large and small, contain some numbers of students with the potential to display bullying behaviour.

If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. The School promotes good citizenship and it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour.

## WHAT IS BULLYING?

**Definition: Bullying:** Any wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone (physically, verbally or emotionally) repeatedly over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying isn't when children and young people of similar age and size find themselves in conflict, without an imbalance of power or use of intimidation.

Brine Leas School defines bullying as any incident, which is perceived to be such by the victim or any other person. It is any words or actions that are meant to hurt a person or their feelings and which are repeated over time and are difficult to deal with.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive students can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No student should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a student best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at School.

The list below gives different types of bullying:-

1. **Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures). Including exclusion of anyone new to a school or group, or exclusion of a child because of the action/behaviour of their parent.
2. **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
3. **Verbal:** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, or personality, etc.
4. **Racist:** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
5. **Sexual:** This is bullying that a specific sexual dimension or a sexual dynamic and it may be physical, verbal or non-verbal/psychological.
6. **Sexist:** this is bullying based on sexist attitudes that when expressed demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender
7. **Homophobic:** This is teasing people for being gay or for being perceived as gay, calling them anti-gay names, **even in jest**, spreading rumours about people's sexual orientation for the purpose of making fun of them, hitting, intimidation, and isolating people who are believed to be gay.
8. **Cyber:** This includes sending malicious letters, e-mails, text messages and e-mailing photographs using mobile phones
9. **Faith based bullying** because of religious faith
10. **Young people with a disability** can be bullied everywhere they go, including at school, in the park, on the bus, in the street and at out-of-school clubs. They are more likely to be bullied by other children because they are seen as 'different' and as 'easy targets' by bullies.
11. **Transphobic:** This stems from a hatred or fear of people who are transgender. Transgender is an umbrella term that describes people whose sense of their gender or gender identity is seen as being different to typical gender norms.
12. **Indirect bullying:** Spreading of rumours, excluding someone from social groups

We will take all instances related to any of the above types of bullying seriously, and treat each case individually, analysing each incident and take appropriate action. We will 'follow up' on each case.

### **ADVICE TO STUDENTS IF THEY ARE BEING BULLIED**

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is **WRONG!**
- b) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- e) Be assertive - shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- f) Fighting back may make things worse.

- g) It is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.

Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies.

### **IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED**

- a) TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- b) If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Adults have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- c) Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

### **ADVICE TO PARENTS IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED**

- a) Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may take unusual absences, become shy, nervous, feign illness, truant from school, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- b) Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc.
- c) If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the School IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- d) It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- e) Tell your own son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
- f) Make sure your child is fully aware of the School policy concerning bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.

### **AS A SCHOOL**

#### **We:-**

- a) use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. Citizenship and Drama, Assemblies;
- b) deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary;
- c) do not use teaching materials or equipment which give a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc;
- d) encourage students to treat everyone with respect;
- e) Will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school;
- f) have a peer mentoring scheme through our Safeguarding Ambassadors. They have also developed a referral button on the website for support from this group;
- g) have a governor who is responsible for bullying issues;
- h) have Progress Tutors, Progress Managers and an Assistant Headteacher (Student Support) who have responsibility for bullying issues;
- i) ensure staff are trained in dealing with bullying issues;
- j) monitor incidents of bullying via the Student Services Team;
- k) challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination; verbal and physical; and promote equality and good relationships;
- l) work in partnership with parents and the wider community to challenge prejudice and discrimination and establish, promote and disseminate good practices;
- m) work to develop an understanding of the importance of the diversity and difference;
- n) we will complete and record bullying incidents via a bullying incident report sheet.

## **AS GOVERNORS**

### **We:-**

- a) ensure that the school complies with all relevant legislation;
- b) ensure that the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

## **ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED**

### **A MODEL OF INTERVENTION**

If bullying is suspected the following action will be taken:-

1. **Investigate.** Investigate every incident as soon as possible. Interview all parties individually at first to avoid intimidation and to produce an accurate report.
2. **Record.** Record every incident in a manner which reinforces the organisation's anti-bullying policy.
3. Bullies will be dealt with according to the Positive Schooling Policy.
4. A careful eye will be kept on all involved and follow up meeting will occur.

We support the **victims** in the following ways:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their form tutor, or another teacher/adult if they choose.
- Informing the victims' parents/guardians.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- By arranging for them to be escorted to and from the School premises.
- By offering restorative justice as a mediation service
- By taking one or more of the ten disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying

We also discipline, yet try to help the **bullies** in the following ways:

- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- Informing the bullies' parents/guardians.
- By taking one or more of the ten disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

## **DISCIPLINARY STEPS**

1. They will be warned officially to stop offending.
2. Informing the bullies' parents/guardians.
3. They may be excluded from the School premises at break and/or lunch times.
4. They may serve a detention
5. We may arrange for them to be escorted to and from the School premises.
6. If they do not stop bullying they will be given a fixed term exclusion (one or two days) and/or be placed on bullying report
7. If they then carry on they will be recommended for exclusion for a major fixed period (up to five days) or an indefinite period.
8. If they will not end such behaviour, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion.
9. Restorative justice may be offered as an alternative when appropriate as a means of mediation.
10. Peer mentors help might be offered through the Safeguarding Ambassadors.

This Policy is linked to BFL Positive Schooling Code and Equal Opportunity Policy, Healthy school agenda, ECM, Emotional health and well being, SEN and disability, Racial equality, LSCB recommendations, 2004 Children's Act 2006 Children's Plan and the Inclusion agenda

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