

St Edmund's School Canterbury

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying has been defined as:

- The wilful, conscious desire to hurt, frighten or threaten another.
- Intentionally causing hurt or unhappiness - physical, verbal or emotional - and that hurt being unprovoked and often repeated.

Actions which can be construed as bullying include:

- Taunting and name-calling, including the use of nicknames by staff or pupils if the recipient is not happy with the name.
- Personal comments or sarcasm designed to belittle or make the recipient look a fool - by staff or pupils.
- Personal comments regarding family, appearance, abilities, habits, religion or culture, sexual/sexist, sexual orientation, disability.
- Intimidating behaviour such as pushing, barging, queue jumping and a general disregard for the recipient.
- The use of electronic means to cause hurt (i.e. cyber-bullying) e.g. social networking websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs, video, and email.
- Possessions being hidden or interfered with, even as a so-called joke or trick.
- Deliberate interference in learning activities with a view to diminishing progress.
- Exclusion, teasing and general denigration.
- Physical violence in all forms.
- Anything which attempts to make the recipient act against their own will or better judgement.
- Bullying can take place anywhere in school as well as in non-school settings. Potential danger areas include changing rooms, lavatories, queues, corridors, unsupervised classrooms.
- Verbal and emotional bullying can even occur during lessons if the teacher is not alert to the possibility of distress caused to a pupil by the attitude and reactions of others for whatever reason.
- It is important to realise that bullying affects more people than the recipient and the bully. Often bullies try to recruit others and weaker characters can be drawn in.

Ultimately, the school atmosphere can be seriously damaged.

How can bullying be identified?

It is important for staff to be alert to early signs of distress which may be caused by bullying.

These might include one or a number of the following:

- Deterioration of work
- Change of personality
- Loss of appetite
- Seeking of adult company
- Growing frequency of illness or absence
- Signs of withdrawal and/or isolation from peers
- Clothes and property damaged or missing.

Parents might identify some of these signs in addition:

- Request for parental accompaniment to school when not a usual habit
- Crying, nightmares, bedwetting
- Requests for extra money or stealing it.

SCHOOL POLICY AND CODE ON BULLYING

1. This school does not tolerate bullying nor does it accept bullying as an inevitable part of school life. Bullying is very serious and can be the cause of psychological damage and, in some cases, suicide.
2. All teaching staff, non-teaching staff and pupils are expected to be alert to the possibility of bullying occurring, to try to prevent it, and deal with it (staff) or report it (pupils) if it does happen. It should be recognised that both the victim and the bully need help and attention. Staff will have awareness raised through training.
3. The procedure for dealing with bullying is set out below.
4. Every pupil has the right to enjoy his or her learning and leisure time free from intimidation.
5. The school community will not tolerate unkind actions or remarks even when these were not intended to hurt.
6. To stand by when someone else is being bullied is to support bullying.
7. Pupils should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying to a member of staff or a responsible senior Prefect.
8. Bullying will always be taken seriously.

The prevention of bullying:

- Staff, pupils and parents should be made aware that bullying is unacceptable.

- Housemasters, Tutors and Houseparents should regularly make it clear to pupils what bullying is and what to do if they suffer it or identify it.
- Bullying will be included in the PSHE programme and mentioned in both Lines and curriculum-based lessons.
- Pupils should be encouraged to report bullying to someone in authority.
- Staff must show pupils and parents that they care and are prepared to take reports of bullying seriously by acting upon complaints rapidly and appropriately.
- Standards of patrolling and supervision by staff out of the classroom must be thorough. The recognised “danger areas” will be supervised or patrolled especially rigorously.
- Staff will be alert to the signs of possible bullying (see above).

Procedures for dealing with alleged cases of bullying:

- Treat all incidents or reports of incidents seriously.
- Act as rapidly as possible.
- Report the possibility of bullying to Housemasters and Houseparents of the bullied and the bully, who will liaise with the Headmaster as necessary.
- The bullied pupil will be interviewed and reassured.
- The alleged bully(ies) will be interviewed.
- Written statements may be asked for.
- At every stage, support will be provided for both the victim and the bully.
- Staff must remain objective, taking neither side. It is important to establish the truth.
- Where appropriate, bully and bullied may be brought together to clarify the facts.
- In minor cases the implications might be discussed with both parties: the bully told how the recipient feels, possible solutions, imposition of sanctions if appropriate.
- A report will be written for the Headmaster with copies for relevant staff.
- In major cases, being dealt with by the Headmaster, parents of participants will be informed.
- All sanctions will be considered depending on the particular case and may range from admonition/counselling to expulsion (for severe and persistent cases of bullying).
- In extreme cases outside agencies such as the Police or the Social Services Department may need to be involved.
- The follow-up is vital. Housemasters and Houseparents must monitor the participants to ensure that things are improved.

REMEMBER, DO NOT ...

- be over-protective
- be biased
- keep the incident a secret
- turn a blind eye.

ALWAYS TAKE ACTION ... ALWAYS REPORT.

NEVER SUFFER IN SILENCE.

JMG-st-bully/18/09/2009

Signed: _____
Chairman of Governors

Date: _____

Review Date (annually):