

THE STUDY ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

At The Study Preparatory School all staff are committed to Every Child Matters. We recognise that the following five outcomes are key to well-being in childhood and later life:

- Being Healthy
- Staying Safe
- Enjoying and Achieving
- Making a Positive Contribution
- Achieving Economic Well-Being

This policy has been compiled with reference to the DCSF Publication Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools and the Every Child Matters framework.

It applies to all children including those in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

INTRODUCTION

The Study values everyone equally and is committed to ensuring the school is a happy and caring community. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. Everyone should recognise that no one deserves to be bullied and should know that if bullying does occur it will be dealt with quickly.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

- To define what we understand as bullying.
- To prevent bullying as far as possible.
- To ensure that, where bullying does occur, all pupils, staff and parents know clearly what procedures to follow.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is a widespread and perpetual problem which cannot be eliminated entirely. It happens in the context of children growing up and learning how to get on with each other. Being bullied can interfere with children's mental and physical health and their educational development.

Bullying can be:

Physical: hitting, kicking, pinching, grabbing an individual etc.

Verbal: name calling, teasing, sarcasm, spreading rumours, insults, including racist taunts.

Emotional: excluding, tormenting, being unfriendly or threatening, including taking belongings.

Intellectual: making someone feel uncomfortable regarding academic, intellectual performance or ability.

Cyber: the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) - particularly mobile phones and the internet - deliberately to upset someone else. Cyberbullying can include a wide range of unacceptable behaviours, including harassment, threats and insults, and, like face-to-face bullying, is designed to cause distress and harm.

In girls' schools, if bullying occurs, it normally takes the form of name calling, or exclusion from groups or friendships. This should not be confused with the "falling out", and "making up the next day" that frequently happens between girls of this age. For this reason, bullying can be defined as the repeated unkindness by individuals or groups.

Vulnerable Children

Some children may be more vulnerable to bullying than others. For example:

- Children who are 'different' in some way.
- Children who have recently suffered bereavement.
- Children with irritating habits.

Some children may be more likely than others to become bullies. For example:

- Children who don't 'fit in' with others.
- Children who may have been 'spoiled'.
- Children who may themselves have been bullied e.g. by adults or older siblings.
- Children under great pressure to succeed.
- Children who have no sense of achievement.
- Children who have recently suffered a 'traumatic' event e.g. parental divorce, birth of a new baby.

PREVENTION/STRATEGIES TO MINIMISE BULLYING

Promote a culture of kindness and consideration

The best way to cut down on bullying within a school is to promote a culture of consideration. Pupils should all learn to be kind and respectful of each other's needs. The behaviour of adults must serve as a role model. This culture should be promoted at all times in school - as well as being highlighted specifically in circle time, class discussion time, PSHE lessons, assemblies etc. - and not just introduced when there is a perceived need. The culture must involve everyone working within the school – all pupils and all adults.

Promote a culture of 'telling'

It is also important to encourage a culture of 'telling' so that pupils understand the importance of 'telling' when they, or one of their peers, is being made unhappy by the behaviour of others. However, pupils will only tell if they know that within this school telling is acceptable and that it is telling to improve the situation and not to get others into trouble.

Build self-esteem and promote good social skills

Both girls who bully, and those who are bullied, frequently have low self-esteem or poor social skills. Building self-esteem is essential. At every opportunity staff should give pupils (and the whole class) positive comments and lots of compliments, and cut down on moans! Staff should try always to be positive and approach problems from a "What do you think we should do to help?" rather than an "I think you should" perspective. Pupils should be encouraged to make their own decisions and be given a voice in how to run the classroom/playground etc.

Strategies:

- Close supervision of pupils within the school – especially in the playground.
- Classes write their own classroom rules/codes of behaviour.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to discuss feelings of vulnerability.
- School Council acts as a 'pupils' voice', enabling pupils to feel involved/empowered.
- Friendship Bench at Wilberforce House to be used for children who are lonely.
- Staff always available to talk to pupils.
- Motivate peer pressure so that pupils take an active stand against bullying behaviour.

DEALING WITH BULLYING

Staff

If you see bullying, or a problem is reported, normally the incident should be referred to the form teacher and/or deputy head to deal with. They will:

- 1) Find out the facts:
 - Consult with relevant staff.

- Talk first to the girl who is being bullied. Make her feel at ease, give her time to explain the situation, make notes, pass no immediate judgement, make it clear that the problems will be treated seriously and looked into as a matter of urgency.
- Talk to the bully/bullies/other girls involved (e.g. passive by-standers). Listen to her/their side; try to get them to understand how the girl being bullied is feeling; make it clear that the bullying behaviour must stop immediately; encourage them to make their own suggestions as to what they can do to help. When talking be firm but be careful not to use bullying techniques yourself (i.e. don't threaten or humiliate).
- Check the pupils' individual files for previous incidents and consult with colleagues to find out relevant history/background – it may be appropriate to do this before speaking with the pupils.

2) Take appropriate measures

- Depending on the situation, normally it is appropriate to get the girls concerned together so the bully can apologise and the pupils can be reconciled. Clear expectations should be laid down e.g. expected behaviour and attitudes. Both bullied/bullies should know that the situation will be monitored by the teacher concerned. Arrange a follow-up session to see how things are going.
- Always inform the Head/Deputy.
- Take any practical measures which you feel are necessary e.g. change seating in class, etc.
- Inform the parents (in certain circumstances it may be more appropriate for the Head or Deputy to do this).
- All staff should be made aware of the situation at the weekly briefing, or sooner if necessary.
- Make notes of interviews and action taken and give to the Head. These will then be filed in the individual pupils' files and copies passed to the Deputy for the pastoral care folder.

3) Monitor the situation

The situation should be monitored until everyone is satisfied there is no further problem.

Parents

Parents who suspect that a child is either the victim or the perpetrator of bullying should discuss the matter with the form teacher as soon as possible, or in her absence, the deputy or head. Often it is difficult to detect bullying and so it is important that parents should inform a member of staff if they are concerned.

Pupils

- Children who are victims of bullying should tell someone – this may be a friend, a teacher or a parent. They should know that whoever they tell about the problem will then do something to help. They should know that they will not get into trouble for 'telling' and that the adult will do something about the problem.
- Children who know that bullying is happening should always tell an adult who will then do something about the problem.
- Children who see bullying taking place should intervene if this is sensible, and tell an adult the details of the incident as soon as possible.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

All staff are responsible for monitoring and dealing with bullying behaviour within the school. The Deputy Head maintains records to assist with the evaluation of this policy.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

Behaviour Policy Child Protection Policy	PSHE Policy	Equal Opportunities Policy
Updated: September 2009		Next Review: Autumn 2010