

## **Katharine Lady Berkeley's School**

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

#### **Introduction**

Katharine Lady Berkeley's School (the "**School**") expects all of the school community to treat other people with courtesy and respect. Everyone has the right to a safe environment where education is the primary focus. The School regards bullying as unacceptable and all allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and pursued.

This Anti-Bullying policy is compliant with:

- The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 as amended
- The Department for Education's "Preventing and tackling bullying" guidance (July 2017)
- The Department for Education's "*Cyberbullying: advice for head teachers and school staff*" guidance (November 2014)

The School aims:

- to educate pupils through the lesson-based curriculum and in their wider school life that bullying is socially unacceptable
- to ensure that all members of the School community, staff, parents and pupils, are aware of the kinds of behaviour which form bullying
- to establish a culture in which all members of the School community consider bullying to be unacceptable and take responsibility for tackling it
- to ensure that those who consider themselves to be victims of bullying feel confident to tell someone about it without fear of making the problem worse. Victims should not 'suffer in silence'
- to ensure that the School's response to bullying will be considered and proportionate to the behaviour of the perpetrator and the effects on the victim. The principal aim of the response will be to stop any further bullying

#### **What is bullying?**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group repeated over time that intentionally hurts another either physically or emotionally. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities.

Bullying may constitute:

- physical bullying, including fighting, damaging someone's property, or initiation ceremonies
- emotional or psychological bullying, including social isolation, spreading rumours, or being deliberately unfriendly
- verbal bullying, including negative remarks about a person's race, home circumstances or personal appearance

- sexual harassment, including making inappropriate comments about attractiveness, uninvited propositions, or uninvited touching
- cyber-bullying: the use of information and communications technology, particularly mobile phones, email, social websites, text messages, cameras, and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else

Bullying causes fear and distress for the victim and may distract them from their school work. It may also affect other pupils who witness it and it can harm the atmosphere in the entire School.

The School recognises that bullying sometimes takes place and considers it to be totally unacceptable and in conflict with the aims of the School. There is no 'hierarchy' of bullying — all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. All members of the School community are expected to work towards the prevention of bullying.

### **Signs of bullying**

It is not always easy to tell whether someone is being bullied. Pupils who feel under pressure may find it hard to talk but there may be changes in behaviour, such as nervousness or demands for attention. Pupils may also be unwilling to attend school or change their route to the School. They may also have their possessions go 'missing', ask for money or begin stealing money, or go home regularly with clothes or books damaged or destroyed.

Pupils who are perpetrators of bullying may have access to more money than usual, openly express negative comments and feelings about individual people or groups, have new or different belongings they didn't buy, with unlikely reasons for having them, or become more secretive particularly involving communication technology, which could hold images or text of their behaviour.

### **Vulnerable pupils**

Bullying may particularly affect the most vulnerable pupils which includes those with special educational needs and children in care. The School has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to pupils with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The School is committed to complying with this duty and supporting its pupils to prevent and address any incidents of bullying. The School recognises that bullying someone because of their disability, transgender-identity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation are hate crimes and can be reported to the police.

## **Responsibilities**

Staff, pupils and parents have a responsibility to show that any form of bullying is unacceptable and to set a good example. The School will teach pupils that bullying is wrong by addressing the issue with pupils in lessons and assemblies. Positive values of mutual respect will be promoted within the School in a wide range of contexts.

Staff are always on duty when pupils are not in class and walk around the school site at break times.

The School expects staff, pupils, and parents to:

- treat other people with respect
- be sensitive to the fact that what may seem fun to some may seem much more threatening to others
- show kindness to those who appear unhappy or vulnerable
- make a stand against those who go against these aims

## **Reporting bullying**

Everyone should help to create an atmosphere in which bullying will be taken seriously. A pupil who is being bullied should tell their parents and a teacher. A pupil may seek advice from pastoral staff. It is important that any cases of bullying are reported to someone whom the victim feels able to talk to.

Any person who suspects bullying should report it to a teacher. Parents who are concerned that a pupil (whether their own child or another pupil) may be being bullied should always report it to a teacher. Members of staff who identify or suspect bullying must complete Class Charts log and refer to the Head of Year or SLT.

## **Tackling bullying**

The School will take measures to tackle bullying and these may include the following:

- raising the awareness of staff through anti bullying training at induction and on an on-going basis.
- involving parents to ensure that they are clear that the School does not tolerate bullying and ensuring that parents are aware of who to contact if they believe that their child is being bullied
- using the curriculum to promote positive relationships
- implementing an Acceptable Use of Technology Policy. It is not acceptable for pupils to bully anyone either on the School's computers or at home. The School monitors its network and pupils are educated in the safe use of digital technologies
- the School will implement disciplinary sanctions for bullying behaviour in accordance with its Behaviour and Discipline Policy. Disciplinary sanctions will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably. Staff may discipline pupils for misbehaving in School and where reasonable outside School premises. Disciplinary sanctions may extend to exclusion in the most serious cases. Staff will consider the reasons behind bullying to establish whether the perpetrator may themselves need support
- staff have search powers to seize and confiscate prohibited items. Staff can search for and delete inappropriate images on electronic devices (see Searching and Confiscation Policy)

- the School will offer support for pupils who are bullied. This may include asking the pastoral team to provide support, providing counselling, or making a referral to relevant external agencies. The School may also offer counselling to the perpetrator where appropriate to seek to change their behaviour
- the School will do all it can to ensure that bullied pupils continue to attend School. This may include using separate on-site provision that provides respite for bullied pupils whilst maintaining their education
- the School will work with the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and/or where a criminal offence may have been committed. A bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this is the case, staff must discuss this with the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead and concerns will be reported to Gloucestershire local authority's children's social care in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy
- in some circumstances the consequences of bullying may lead to a pupil experiencing pronounced social, emotional or mental health difficulties. If bullying leads to persistent, long-lasting difficulties that cause the pupil to have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age, the School will consider whether the pupil will benefit from being assessed for special educational needs.

A wide range of strategies will be used in order to ensure that all members of the school community are aware of the kinds of behaviour which can constitute bullying. The strategies used to maintain this awareness will include:

- use of assembly time
- reinforcement work over a longer period of time through work in tutor time and in appropriate subjects such as Art, English, Drama and PSHE
- the use of external agencies, for example professional Drama groups
- a launch event early in Year 7 so that all are aware of: the nature of bullying, strategies to avoid bullying, what to do if they are aware of bullying taking place, and which staff to see
- posters around the School which are regularly renewed
- use of INSET days for the teaching and non-teaching staff so that they recognise the various forms of bullying, are fully aware of the School's Anti-Bullying policy and have strategies for dealing with bullying

The School's response to reports of bullying are set out in Appendix 1.

### **Criminal law**

Bullying is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, however, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour could be a criminal offence. Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender. If staff believe that an offence may have been committed they should contact the police.

## **Records**

A confidential record is kept by the Head teacher of all bullying incidents. This record will be made available to the Board of Trustees to enable the trustees to monitor the number of incidents and identify any patterns to assist the senior leadership team in making improvements.

Reviewed by: Community and Wellbeing

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Next review: July 2024

## Appendix 1

### Response to a report of bullying

There are five stages to the School's actions in response to incidents of bullying. In most cases, the response at Stage 1 will be sufficient to prevent further bullying. When a pupil is placed on one of the bullying response stages, this will be reviewed at the end of the academic year or after six months, whichever is the sooner. At a review, it may be considered appropriate to move a pupil to a lower stage or take them off the bullying stages completely.

#### Stage 1

If staff are made aware of an incident of bullying and it is the first time that the perpetrator has been involved in such behaviour, the following initial approach is used. In general, the actions described below will be actioned by the relevant Head of Year, Pastoral Assistant or a senior member of staff. In some cases, the tutor may carry out the action. Other members of staff who become aware of behaviour which may constitute bullying should refer the case to the relevant Head of Year who will know if there is any background to the observed or reported behaviour.

This approach works by providing an opportunity for the bully and any colluding bystanders to consider the actions and appreciate their effect. In most cases, this causes the bully to stop their intimidating, aggressive or otherwise hurtful behaviour in which case no further action needs to be taken. The details of this response are as follows:

1. The pupil being bullied is interviewed with an emphasis on how the bullying has made him or her feel
2. The teacher takes notes and agrees with the victim that the perpetrator and any others colluding will be spoken to
3. A meeting is held by the teacher with the perpetrator, any others colluding and possibly any bystanders. The meeting will seek to make clear the effects of the bullying actions and ask the individual or group for ideas as to how the problem can be resolved
4. Approximately a week later, the perpetrators and the victim are seen again individually in order to find out whether the bullying has stopped

This approach is used as, in many cases, the perpetrator of bullying may not appreciate the effect of their actions. Evidence shows that punishing such perpetrators may have a temporary effect on a particular situation, but it is unlikely to permanently stop bullying behaviour whereas this approach is more likely to provide a permanent solution. Also, punishment is more likely to result in the perpetrator wishing to get their own back on the victim. Victims, fearing retribution, will therefore be discouraged from telling anyone about their plight. Clearly in those cases where this approach does not work, sanctions such as those described below must be used.

At this stage, in most cases, the parents of the victim and the perpetrator will be informed of the situation. If the parent is informed by telephone, this should be supported in writing. In some cases, the professional judgement of the staff may be that this is not appropriate although account should be taken of the way in which this may be regarded by the parents if the case progresses to Stage 2.

## Stage 2

Sometimes the bullying continues, or a perpetrator moves to another victim. In this case, the parents of the perpetrator would be asked to attend a meeting at the School with the relevant Head of Year or another senior member of staff. In parallel with a meeting with the parents of the perpetrator, a sanction set out in the School's Behaviour and Sanctions policy, such as one or more detentions, is likely to be used. The sanction(s) used will be proportionate to the action of the perpetrator.

## Stage 3

If the perpetrator continues their bullying behaviour, one or more fixed term exclusions will be used together with further meetings with the parents of the perpetrator.

## Stage 4

At this stage, longer fixed term exclusions will be used and it is likely that a Pastoral Support Plan for the bully should be set up. The Trustees' Discipline Committee may also be involved at this stage. Consideration should also be given to an assessment of the perpetrator by the school's Educational Psychologist or other relevant agencies.

## Stage 5

If all of the above have been used and the perpetrator continues their behaviour, precluding one or more victims from enjoying the emotionally and physically safe environment to which they are entitled, permanent exclusion from the School is likely to result. At any stage, if the bullying actions include physical assault or otherwise cause serious harm to the victim, the school reserves the right to use the sanctions which are appropriate to the level of aggression or intimidation.