

Bullying

All students have a right to learn in a safe and secure environment. Any repeated unwanted behaviour is considered to be bullying. Bullying prevents students from progressing academically and socially and may be verbal e.g. teasing or name calling, physical, isolation of another student, or cyber. Behaviour such as this is not tolerated by the school in any form whatsoever and we take action whenever we are informed. If a student is a victim of bullying, or if they observe incidents involving others, they must inform a member of staff immediately so a possible small issue can be stopped before it grows. We cannot take action if we do not know. Therefore the message to all students is that “it is ok to tell us”. Students must not feel that they are in the wrong and parents should feel confident that we will take their concerns seriously. If a student bullies another person he/she will be addressed and a parent conference may be called for. If a student continues to engage in bullying behaviour he/she will face school disciplinary action. Both the victim and the perpetrator will be offered behaviour management support from the school counsellor.

[Appendix 4: Anti- Bullying Policy](#)

Appendix 4: Anti- Bullying Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

1.0 Aims

1. To foster an environment which promotes tolerance and acceptance of others regardless of colour, race or religious background and in so doing establish a true spirit of internationalism.
2. To foster an environment where students can feel confident, safe and secure.

2.0 Definition of Bullying

2.1 Bullying is any on-going, or one off serious incident that has a potential to be repeated, deliberate behaviour which causes others to feel uncomfortable, threatened and unsafe. It differentiates from a conflict / quarrel in that there is an imbalance of power with the target of bullying not doing anything to cause the bullying. Examples of bullying include:

- Physical Bullying – hitting, kicking, tripping, spitting, hiding, stealing or damaging a person’s property
- Verbal Bullying – verbal threats, name calling, crude language and comments/slurs, malicious rumours
- Cyber-Bullying – posting / circulating unkind texts / messages / pictures / videos / inappropriate communication via email, chat rooms, instant messaging and social media platforms, revealing private information about a person to embarrass them.
- Social Bullying – Isolation of another person, deliberate gestures of an unfriendly nature, deliberate exclusion of a person from a group/activity, malicious gossip, spreading rumours and lies, telling peers not to be friends with someone, continuous teasing, slurs, taunting.
- Sexual Bullying – crude language or unkind comments/slurs and inappropriate touching, inappropriate advances, passing inappropriate sexual comments
- Prejudicial Bullying – discrimination against someone’s nationality, culture, gender and special needs.

2.2 Adults need to be aware that they may engage in or reinforce bullying behaviour by:

- Directing sarcastic remarks towards a student about his/her appearance/voice or his/her involvement in school incidents
- Humiliating a student in front of his/her peers by highlighting negative aspects about his/her academic ability or quality of work

3.0 Possible signs of Bullying

4.0

- Students who are being bullied may appear withdrawn or nervous. They may be isolated by others whilst in class or in the playground
- Bullied students may display a sudden unexplained drop in standard of his/her work. A sudden lack of interest in academic work is often evident.
- Levels of self-esteem and bullying are linked. Recipients of bullying can lose their self-esteem because of bullying
- Victims of bullying may also request to use the bathroom more frequently and a pattern of absenteeism from school may develop

5.0 The role of the school in creating and maintaining a safe and respectful environment

- Parents have access to the school’s Anti-Bullying policy in the Parent/Student handbook
- Regular communication between Deputy Heads, Head of Year, form teacher and school counsellor
- Ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of their responsibility to foster a safe and secure environment.
- Promote an environment in which students feel confident to report incidents to members of staff
- Ensure procedures in place for logging incidents and informing parents
- Foster an environment that places an emphasis on the promotion of positive behaviour
- Have a program and assemblies that increases student awareness of types of bullying and how such behaviour is unacceptable

- Communicate regularly that staff, students and parents have a shared responsibility in assisting in the development and promotion of strategies to counteract bullying.
- Ensure that the pastoral programme includes work to help students improve their social skills and self-esteem and to help them develop the confidence to reject inappropriate behaviour
- Students are introduced to attitudes, values and skills that reject bullying as an unwanted behaviour. This can be achieved through the pastoral programme and also in the academic programme e.g. in poetry/drama/role-play
- Counselling is used to support the bullied and to try to change the behaviour of the perpetrator
- Staff report all incidents defined by this policy and deal with bullying incidents not turning a blind eye to inappropriate comments / behaviour. Accurate reports are kept of all incidents and parents are informed
- School sanctions are applied to students who are found to be instigating or promoting bullying behaviour, inclusive of bystanders. School sanctions may include but are not limited to suspending students from teams, preventing them from participating/ representing the school in games, tournaments, competitions in-and-out-of-school suspension, exclusion from school.
- Outdoor areas, corridors and playground areas are regularly supervised especially during first and second break
- The school bus, school activities, field trips, extra-curricular activities are also regularly supervised by qualified staff

6.0 **Helping your child with Respect to Bullying**

If you discover that your child is being or has been bullied

- Let your child know you are always willing to listen
- Avoid being judgmental
- Encourage your child to talk about his/her feelings
- Build confidence in your child by not over-reacting and by praising him/her for being open about the problem
- Explore with your child whether the incident is a one off or repeated behaviour which your child is experiencing
- Explore strategies to deal with bullying. For example encourage him/her to practice saying 'no' and 'walking confidently'. Tell him/her 'do not slouch', 'do not hang your head', 'pretend not to be upset', 'ignore the bully'
- Should the situation not be resolved then you should make contact with your child's Head of Year, Form Tutor, and Counsellor

If you discover that your child is bullying or has been bullying other students

- Do not be judgmental. Encourage your child to describe what has happened.
- Talk your child through the behaviour he/she has been displaying and discuss the implications of this behaviour.
- Discuss reasons behind the behaviour and suggest strategies to resolve the situation.
- Ask your child to consider how he/she would feel if this same behaviour was directed towards him/her.
- Discuss how your child's behaviour makes the victim feel.
- Do not label your child as a bully; instead make it clear that his/her actions were wrong.
- Together try to investigate ways to stop the negative behaviour.
- Explain that the behaviour is an example of bullying. Help your child to understand that the situation could become much worse if he/she does not modify his/her behaviour.
- Look for good behaviour in your child and make sure to praise him/her.
- Over a period of time work on improving social skills- e.g. how not to react when he/she feels angry, tolerance and acceptance of others from different cultural and religious backgrounds, how to build lasting friendships.
- Make it clear that you will not tolerate bullying behaviour. Make sure that your child is aware of sanctions such as no TV/loss of privileges at home should he/she engage in anti-social behaviour.
- Reach out to your child's counsellor for help

If you discover that your child is witnessing or has witnessed the bullying of other students:

- Do not be judgmental. Encourage your child to describe what happened
- Praise your child for sharing with you the details of the incident they witnessed, and provide him/her with reassurance
- Talk to your child about the difference between snitching and reporting
- Acknowledge and talk to your child about his/her feelings and fears
- Talk to your child about what it means to be a bystander and discuss the implications of his/her response
- Explore with your child the different ways to respond when he/she witnesses bullying. For example, encourage your child to “walk away discreetly and seek out an adult”, “avoid joining in or laughing”, “support the person who is being bullied”
- Encourage your child to seek out the support of his/her Form Tutor, Head of Year or counsellor