

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. AIM

- 1.1. We Strive to create a culture based on our core values of Care, Respect, Empower, Trust and Integrity. Students must feel safe and respected if they are to learn effectively. Since we are a school which sets high standards for our students it is important that we create an atmosphere in which bullying cannot thrive and in which no student has to suffer from harassment of any kind.
- 1.2. Because bullying happens in all societies, at all levels, it is important that we make our students knowledgeable about bullying and teach them strategies that enable them to stand up for themselves without resorting to retaliation in any form.
- 1.3. Because bullying is in the news and is a form of real anxiety for parents, it is important that we inform parents fully about our approach to dealing with bullying, so that parents are able to distinguish between what is bullying and what is not.

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2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy applies to Cygnet Schools.
- 2.2. It is the agreed Policy and any deviation by staff from following this policy and supporting procedures and documents may be subject to disciplinary procedures.
- 2.3. Links to supporting Policy, documents and references are in Section **10**.

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3. PRINCIPLES

- 3.1. In this paragraph "members of the school community" refers to students, staff, parents and wider stakeholders involved with the school.
- 3.2. Every member of our school community:
 - Has the **RIGHT** to feel secure and happy at the school. Our school will not tolerate any unkind actions or remarks.
 - Has a **RESPONSIBILITY** to ensure that bullying is not tolerated.
 - Is **ENTITLED** to the respect of others.
 - Are expected to report all forms of bullying.
- 3.3. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.
- 3.4. Staff guarantee to take the matter seriously and deal with each incident appropriately and discreetly.

4. WHAT IS BULLYING?

- 4.1. There is no legal definition of bullying, however our schools definition of bullying is:- "Repetitive intentional hurting of one person or a group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online."
- 4.2. Bullying can be (but is not limited to):
 - Verbal e.g. name-calling, making offensive comments, taunting.
 - Physical e.g. kicking, hitting.
 - Emotional e.g. spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours, excluding people from groups.
 - Cyber e.g. inappropriate texting/emailing, inappropriate use of MSN/Facebook e.g. sexting.
 - Written e.g. ridicule through drawings and writing e.g. on planners/PC's.
 - Incitement e.g. encouraging others to bully.
 - Extortion e.g. demands for money or personal property.
 - Damage to Property e.g. theft of bags, tearing clothes, ripping books.
- 4.3. Cyber bullying can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.
- 4.4. Research into the extent of cyberbullying indicates that it is a feature of many young people's lives. It also affects members of school staff and other adults; there are examples of staff being ridiculed, threatened and otherwise abused online by students.

5. CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING

Some possible impacts of bullying

- 5.1. Research confirms the destructive effects of bullying on the lives of young people. Some of the effects are:
 - Poor school attendance.

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- Lower academic achievement.
- Low self-esteem and poor self-worth.
- Lack of confidence.
- Anxiety.
- Loss of identity.
- Feelings of guilt.
- Long term mental health difficulties.

Some indicators that a student is being bullied

5.2. Young people are affected by bullying in different ways, however, some examples are:

- Reluctance to attend school.
- Poor school performance.
- Behaving out of character.
- Missing or damaged belongings.
- Self-harm.
- Increased episodes of illness (real / imaginary).

5.3. These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and investigated.

Possible reasons that people are bullied

5.4. Some of the reasons students may be bullied link to the above areas covered by the **Equalities Act 2010** and are as follows:

- Race, religion or culture.
- Special Education Needs or disability.
- Appearance e.g. being over-weight or health conditions.
- Home circumstances and lifestyles including young carers and looked after children.
- Sexist or sexual bullying.
- Gender.
- Sexual orientation / Homophobic Bullying.
- Transgender status / Transphobic bullying.

5.5. Cygnet school staff are aware that Children with SEN or disabilities can often lack the social or communication skills to report bullying incidents so it is important that staff are alert to the potential bullying this group faces and that their mechanisms for reporting are accessible to all.

6. PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH CASES OF BULLYING

How to deal with bullying and what to do

6.1. If students feel like they are being bullied they should:

- let the perpetrator know that they do not like what is happening to them and ask them to stop (if they feel able to);
- If the bullying doesn't stop, tell any member of staff in school who will initiate action to sort out the problem.
- Use the anonymous feedback box to report your concerns discreetly if necessary (this will be checked at the end of each day).

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- 6.2. If parents or carers have concerns regarding bullying behaviour in school, this should be reported to the headteacher either directly, or through a link member of staff e.g. education officer.
- 6.3. Where bullying outside school (in the home community, on ward, online etc.) is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on by the same process as outlined here.
- 6.4. Where students, staff or parents feel that they are subject to any form of hate crime they should use the following link: http://report-it.org.uk/your_police_force

Investigation

- 6.5. The member of staff whom bullying is reported to will be expected in the first instance, to discuss any issues and suggest possible solutions.
- 6.6. If this is ineffective or they feel they need support in resolving the situation, they must refer it to the headteacher. An investigation into a complaint of bullying will be carried out and this will be done alongside hospital care teams.
- 6.7. If we are to deal with incidents fairly, we must gather as much evidence as possible in order to establish what really happened.

Working with the victims of bullying

- 6.8. The school will always:
- Ensure that there are easy/clear pathways for reporting bullying.
 - Ensure that victims are listened to and reported incidents are acted upon.
 - Ensure that strategies are put in place to support individual needs.
 - Ensure victims are consulted, and kept involved and informed.

Working with those accused of bullying

- 6.9. The school will always:
- Ensure that perpetrators are listened to acknowledging that they are sometimes themselves victims of bullying and abuse.
 - Ensure that strategies are put in place to support individual needs.
 - Ensure perpetrators are consulted, and kept involved and informed.
 - Implement appropriate sanctions and learning programmes for example:
 - Counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving
 - Bespoke PSHE/RSE mini-unit delivery
 - Rewards/positive reinforcement for students in order to promote change and bring unacceptable behaviour under control
 - Adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this is safe for the victim)
 - In some cases, on-ward education sessions away from the school may be put in place to allow further mentoring. This will be reviewed periodically.
 - Any other approaches outlined within our behavior policy or wider CAMHS policies and procedures.

Co-operating with parents and guardians

- 6.10. The school will work with parents and guardians in dealing with bullying. Bullying in school is everyone's problem. All staff, students and parents should be aware

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that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the school a happier place for everyone.

- 6.11. The school will ensure that parents are aware of the school's anti-bullying policy by making the policy available on the school website and involving them in policy review.
- 6.12. The school will encourage parents and guardians who suspect that a student is being bullied to immediately contact the school to discuss the matter.
- 6.13. Common physical symptoms that a victim may present as a consequence of bullying include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability.
- 6.14. Parents and guardians will be informed of incidents and involved in discussions. The school will discuss with parents how they can work together to stop the bullying.
- 6.15. In the case of cyber bullying, parents/guardians will be informed to ascertain if more stringent monitoring of mobile phone and/or internet use is feasible.

Recording incidents

- 6.16. All incidents of bullying and discussions with the students involved will be recorded, along with the school's response.
- 6.17. A report of the details of the incident, and of the way it has been resolved, should be made by the headteacher/ staff member in writing and this information should be available to colleagues in the school.

7. PREVENTING BULLYING

- 7.1. As a school we take bullying seriously. We use a range of proactive strategies to prevent bullying and these include:
 - Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
 - Use of curriculum opportunities, in particular PSHCE/RSE classes where issues of diversity are discussed and anti-bullying messages are drawn out.
 - Use of enrichment opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying e.g. Anti-Bullying Week.
 - Use of SMSC & British values activities to improve students' awareness and appreciation of the different groups and protected characteristics in our societies.
 - Provision of resources e.g. library books that are educational in promoting inclusion and/or dealing with bullying themes.
 - Pupil surveys.
 - Poster campaigns.
 - Improved supervision in potential problem areas.
 - Peer mentoring and Buddy Schemes.
 - Review of general and specific staff induction and continuing professional development to ensure staff training reflects the anti-bullying policy and practice of the school.

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8. ACCOUNTABILITY

- 8.1. This policy is regularly monitored by the Headteacher to ensure that it is working as effectively as possible.

9. STANDARD FORMS, LETTERS AND REFERENCES

Linked Policy

- 9.1. Schools Behaviour Policy (8-06)
9.2. Safeguarding in Schools Policy (4-17) (SH03)
9.3. CAMHs Safeguarding Policy (4-23).