



ST HELEN'S SCHOOL

POLICY FOR THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING

Bullying is any behaviour that can be defined as a physical, psychological, social or verbal attack on those who are powerless to resist, causing distress. It includes racist, sexist and homophobic behaviour.

RATIONALE

St. Helen's School believes that every person in the school community has the right to be safe, happy and protected whilst at school. Bullying is always unacceptable. The aims of this policy are:

- To create an environment where bullying is never acceptable.
- To establish the importance of caring supportive relationships between members of the school community.
- To encourage every girl to act with integrity, responsibility and concern for others.
- To promote mutual understanding and respect.

OBJECTIVES

The anti-bullying policy will work to achieve the above aims through the promotion of:

- (i) positive attitudes towards individuals
- (ii) an understanding of the sensitivities of others in the community
- (iii) a sense of personal safety in school
- (iv) assertiveness, self esteem and self confidence
- (v) self discipline
- (vi) an appreciation of the abilities and limitations of all

3. SUCCESS CRITERIA

The policy will be deemed to be successful if:

1. There is a decrease in bullying
2. Incidents are dealt with effectively
3. Everyone is aware at all times of actions that can cause someone to feel that they are being bullied
4. By raising awareness of bullying and its consequences

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Implementation

The Deputy Head with responsibility for the Pastoral System is responsible for the implementation of the policy by negotiating with members of staff to address anti-bullying in the following areas:

1. Heads of Section and their Deputies are responsible for elements of anti-bullying education through the PSHCE programmes and the pastoral care system. Within the PSHCE Programme modules may address friendship, peer pressure, self-confidence, self-esteem, conflict, assertiveness, bullying and interactive behaviour.
2. The Form Tutor (and Assistant Tutor in Senior School) deliver the PSHCE programme and provide the first line of contact when an incident occurs and may discuss issues which are relevant to their group in tutor sessions.
3. Within lessons, teaching staff will address anti-bullying issues through specific subject content to reinforce the delivery of the anti-bullying programme. For example:
 - English - using works of literature dealing with various aspects of bullying, conflict and intimidation.
 - Drama - experience of situations in which conflict arises are dealt with through role-play, extempore and formal drama.
 - Religious Studies - opportunities for discussion and debate on many personal and moral issues, including bullying.
 - P.E. - group dynamics within team and individual sports allow pupils to develop their awareness of others that may not be amongst their friends.
 - The Assembly programme - Whole School, Year, House and Form assemblies all are opportunities to reinforce the school ethos of understanding and tolerance.
 - School Council is a valuable forum for the discussion of issues raised by the girls.
 - Extra-curricular activities - these can engender an understanding of others and involve staff and girls in differing situations.

4.2 Monitoring

The Deputy Head with responsibility for the Pastoral System is responsible for monitoring the policy by:

- making sure all staff are aware of actions that can cause someone to feel that they are being bullied.
- monitoring the behaviour of the girls with the Heads of Section and their Deputies.
- devising strategies for monitoring the handling of individual cases with the Heads of Section and their Deputies in accordance with the specific needs of those involved.
- reviewing and revising the PSHCE Programme to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the girls.
- setting up appropriate INSET.
- observing the programme of extra-curricular activities to ensure sound group dynamics.

5. EVALUATION

The Deputy Head with responsibility for the Pastoral System will be responsible for assessing the effectiveness of this policy by:

1. Evaluating the PSHCE programme of study with the Heads of Section and their Deputies and by incorporating the views of the pupils where applicable.
2. Discussion with the School Council to identify areas of concern to the girls.
3. Reviewing the procedures with each Head of Section after any incidents during the year.

6. REVIEW

The Deputy Head with responsibility for the Pastoral System and the Pastoral Team will review this policy annually.

Reviewed: Spring 09

Next Review Date: Spring 2011

APPENDIX

ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR TEACHERS

Staff must be aware at all times of behaviour which causes distress to others, not only in lessons, but also particularly in the informal areas of school life. Staff should watch for the early signs of distress in pupils – for example:

- (a) deterioration in work
- (b) spurious illness
- (c) isolation
- (d) the desire to remain with adults
- (e) erratic attendance
- (f) becoming shy and nervous
- (g) lack of concentration
- (h) over-anxious behaviour
- (i) feelings of worthlessness and comments re not wanting to carry on/suicide

Such behaviour may be symptomatic of other problems but it might also be the earliest signs of bullying. When staff suspect someone is being bullied or in distress, take action as quickly as possible. Never assume it is anyone else's responsibility. It is important to create an atmosphere in the school where students feel that those bullied can find a sympathetic ear and that action will be taken swiftly. Those bullied should understand that to remain secretive gives bullies the message that they can continue and that others may be put at risk. Use all your pupils as a positive resource in countering bullying; for example, ask reliable pupils to help shy pupils or newcomers feel welcome and accepted.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

If staff have to deal with a bullying incident the following actions should be taken:

1. The girls should be separated before being spoken to by staff, who should speak first to the pupil(s) who has/have reported the incident.
2. The account of the incident by the bullied pupil(s) should be recorded in writing. Re-assure them, offer them immediate support, and don't make them feel inadequate or foolish. Help them to understand that revenge is not appropriate.
3. The account of the incident by the girl/s accused of bullying should also be recorded in writing. At this stage do not apportion blame, but encourage her/them to see the other person's point of view and acknowledge the impact of this behaviour on others.
4. If staff feel able to deal with the incident, they should do so using one or a combination of the strategies listed overleaf. All written records, including action taken, should be sent to the Head of Section. Punish the girls accused of bullying only if it is appropriate, but avoid reacting emotionally, aggressively or punitively

as this gives the message of power to them. Always explain the punishment and why it is being given. Counselling for the girls accused of bullying should continue even if sanctions are used.

5. Always inform the Head of Section or Deputy Head with responsibility for the Pastoral System as soon as possible of any incidents that you have dealt with and any actions that you have taken. The Head of Section will consider further action and counselling for the victim and girl accused of bullying. If the incident is serious, staff should see the Head of Section or Deputy Head with responsibility for the Pastoral System as soon as possible to discuss the most appropriate action to be taken in the circumstances.
6. The Head of Section will ensure that a summary of the incident is recorded in both the files of the victim/s and the perpetrator/s in the Head's Office. It will also be entered into a central log so that the overall number of such incidents can be monitored.

St. Helen's employs a range of strategies to prevent or to reduce bullying. These are detailed in the DfEE Anti-Bullying Pack "Don't Suffer In Silence" and include:

- (i) LSH playground monitors
- (ii) co-operative group work;
- (iii) circle time;
- (iv) circles of friends;
- (v) befriending/friendship monitors/online friendship monitors;
- (vi) school watch and in particular, the use of quiet/friendship areas;
- (vii) the use of support groups;
- (viii) mediation by adults or by peers;
- (ix) active listening/counselling;
- (x) quality circles.

As the list is descended the strategies become more suitable for older students.



ANTI-BULLYING CODE

***“Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour.
It may be physical, verbal or indirect”***

Bullying is unacceptable in any form and will not be tolerated at St. Helen's.

If you are being bullied, or you suspect or observe bullying – **YOU MUST ACT**
Don't Suffer in Silence

When you are being bullied:

- ❑ be firm and clear – look them in the eye and tell them to stop;
- ❑ get away from the situation as quickly as possible;
- ❑ tell an adult what has happened straight away.

After you have been bullied:

- ❑ tell a teacher or another adult in your school;
- ❑ tell your family;
- ❑ if you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you;
- ❑ keep on speaking up until someone listens;
- ❑ don't blame yourself for what has happened.

When you are talking about bullying with an adult, be clear about:

- ❑ what has happened to you;
- ❑ how often it has happened;
- ❑ who was involved;
- ❑ who saw what was happening;
- ❑ where it happened;
- ❑ what you have done about it already.

DEALING WITH A BULLYING INCIDENT

- Listen to the account of the incident by the bullied girl(s), non-judgementally – make a record on a Yellow Pupil Info Sheet available in the Resources Room or by e mail.
- Listen to the account of the incident by the girl(s) accused, once again without making any judgements at this stage – add this to the same Yellow Info Sheet
- Discuss the incident with the Head of Section who will advise you on how to deal with it using one or a combination of the strategies listed in the Anti-Bullying Policy. Record the action taken on the Yellow Info Sheet
- If sufficiently serious the Head of Section will involve the Deputy Head with responsibility for the Pastoral System
- The Head of Section will ensure that a summary of the incident is recorded in the files of all the girls involved and an entry is made in the central log

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