

## **Oliver House Preparatory School Anti-Bullying Policy**

(see also Behaviour & Discipline)

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1** It is a Government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (“DCSF”) published a guidance for schools in 2007 under the heading: *Safe to Learn – Embedding anti-bullying work in schools*. This policy reflects these guidance notes, as well as those set out in the ‘Every Child Matters’ framework.
- 1.2** Bullying affects the whole school community: pupils, their families, teachers, support staff and governors. Primarily it threatens the safety and happiness of the pupils and may undermine their educational achievement. Bullying is defined as a specific unacceptable behaviour and as such is totally alien to our school ethos and aims. By raising awareness and working together, according to the guidelines laid down in this policy, we can hope to deal with bullying effectively and send a clear message to all concerned that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated at Oliver House. Our success will be tested not by the absence of problems but by the way we deal with them when they arise.
- 1.3** Bullying can be defined as actions that are meant to be hurtful and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (for example, being ignored, rumour spreading, being excluded deliberately or not spoken to). Bullying includes issues related to racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, homophobic, disability and cyber (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email) matters.
- 1.4** Bullying can cause psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

### **2 Aims and objectives**

- 2.1** Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- 2.2** We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying. Essentially we wish to establish a climate of trust and respect for all.
- 2.3** This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- 2.4** We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying and we make clear each person’s responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

### **3 Bullying**

- 3.1** Bullying is not confined solely to relationships between young people. Verbal and emotional bullying in particular may occur between staff or staff and parents, staff

and children, or parents and children. All members of the school community have a responsibility to prevent such occurrences of bullying.

- 3.2** A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. If someone is concerned and becomes aware of any of the following, they should ask if anyone is threatening or bullying the child.

Children of primary school age may:

- Be unwilling to go to school
- Be doing poorly in their school work
- Come home regularly with clothes or books destroyed
- Become withdrawn, start stammering
- Become distressed, stop eating
- Cry themselves to sleep
- Have nightmares and call out 'leave me alone'
- Have unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts
- Have their possessions go 'missing'
- Refuse to say what's wrong
- Give improbable excuses to explain any of the above

## **4 Supporting victims of bullying**

- 4.1** Children who are being bullied are often too frightened to tell others. However they are encouraged to inform their class teacher, tutor or one of the Child Protection Officers if they feel that they are being victimised or bullied in any way.
- 4.2** Children should be encouraged to speak openly by showing that we are concerned and want to help and support them. Promises should not be made to keep anything secret but the child should be reassured that we will help them sort out the problem.
- 4.3** If a child is a perpetual 'victim' of bullying by different groups or individuals we will try to observe the child's reactions to others when talking or playing to see if they are being bullied for any specific 'bad' habits. We will help them to change this behaviour and develop better social skills and confidence.
- 4.4** Other ways everyone within the school community can help include; encouraging a child's self-esteem, giving them responsibilities to help them feel valued and important, encouraging them to do things they are good at and by praising their achievements.

## **5 Raising awareness of bullying**

- 5.1** Implementing classroom strategies:
- During 'carpet time' the teacher encourages the children to raise issues concerning bullying and talk about them, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour.
  - This time is also used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.
  - Raising awareness of bullying and behaviour as an issue through brain-storming, role-play, drama, stories, projects and historical events.
  - Using Character Development & PSHE lesson time for general discussions about bullying.

**5.2** Implementing whole school strategies:

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils and report any such behaviour to the child's class teacher or to one of the Child Protection Officers.
- Whole school agreement, clarity of approach, strong home/school links.
- Assemblies dealing with these issues.
- Staff to receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.
- Staff to be informed about how to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely.

**5.3** Introducing children to strategies they can use to protect themselves from bullying e.g. by staying calm, being firm and walking away from a situation and encouraging children to tell an adult or a friend what has happened.

**6 School Procedure**

**6.1** The Head or Deputy Head should immediately be made aware of any bullying problems by the class teachers and/or support staff. Similarly, parents should inform their child's class teacher and/or Head immediately if they have any concerns.

**6.2** The class teacher should record any incidences of a significant nature in their Daily Planner and in the Incidents log book in the Head's office in the Pre-prep or in the School Office in the Prep school.

**6.3** Depending on the nature of the incident, the class teacher or Head/Deputy Head will talk to all children involved. They may then be interviewed separately and witnesses obtained if necessary. The children may be asked to record their own account of events.

**6.4** The children will be told that the matter will be taken seriously and will be dealt with as soon as possible.

**6.5** According to the nature of the incident, parents may be informed on an informal or formal basis.

**6.6** An apology will be obtained from the bully/ies to the victim.

**6.7** All staff will be informed and asked to be extra vigilant at break times and report back to the class teacher or Head/Deputy Head if further conflict occurs.

**6.8** 'Bullying child' to go on report and system of rewards and sanctions introduced in line with behaviour targets. Exclusion will only be considered in extreme cases of severe and persistent bullying.

**6.9** The situation will be monitored, progress will be recorded and reviewed at a later date.

**7 The role of staff**

**7.1** All the staff in our school take every form of bullying seriously and seek to prevent it from taking place.

**7.2** If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will usually investigate it themselves first. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied.

If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Head, the teacher informs the child's parents.

- 7.3** When any bullying is seen or reported taking place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. Time is spent talking to the child who has bullied: explaining why their action was wrong and that child is encouraged to change their behaviour in future. Tutors are encouraged to be actively involved in this. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, or depending on the seriousness of the offence, the Head or Deputy Head will be informed.
- 7.4** It is the responsibility of the Head to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying.
- 7.5** The Head and Deputy Head ensure that all children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. They draw the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, they may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished. The teaching of PSHE also helps to raise awareness of bullying.
- 7.6** The Head and Deputy Head set the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

## **8 The role of parents**

- 8.1** Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Head. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's procedure, as detailed in the Complaints Policy.
- 8.2** Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school community.

## **9 Monitoring and review**

- 9.1** This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Head and Deputy Head.
- 9.2** This policy is the responsibility of the PACT governing body, and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by discussion with the Head at a meeting of the governing body.
- 9.3** This policy will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary

**Signed: C Candia**

**Date: 10 September 2009**