

ATKINSON HOUSE SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a supportive, caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere without fear of being bullied. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

This policy focuses on bullying in relation to pupils. As a school we are equally committed to ensuring a working environment for staff where they are exempt from harassment and bullying. Our commitment and systems are documented under the following policies contained within LMS Manual of Personnel Practice and Procedure. "Dignity at Work" Appendix C25, "Dignity at Work Management Guidelines" Appendix C26 and "Whistleblowing Policy" Appendix C29.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is any action or behaviour that the recipient find unacceptable. Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet ,such as email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

Procedures - School

1. Report bullying incidents to staff. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
2. Form tutors will be kept informed of all incidents of bullying where a member of their tutor group is involved, either as the bully or the victim
3. In cases of serious bullying, the incident(s) will be recorded by staff
4. In more serious cases of bullying members of the senior staff will be involved
5. In serious cases the **parents of the victim** will be contacted and they will be provided with an account of how the school is dealing with the matter
6. In serious cases the **parents of the bully** will be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
7. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
8. Punitive measures will be used as appropriate
9. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
10. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

BESPOKE SCHOOL PROCEDURE

Preamble

As with many schools we were faced with an ongoing issue regarding the extent of bullying and how to deal with it fairly for both the bully and the victim.

Previously bullies were dealt with within the regular sanctions of the school – detentions, loss of points etc. as outlined in the schools Behaviour policy.

It was felt that the procedures were ineffective, having little impact on the level or degree of bullying in the school. Equally staff felt that the profile of anti-bullying was not high enough within the school. Some issues that we had were:

- Pupils denying bullying behaviour because a common understanding of what constituted bullying did not exist.
- The sanction system was not proportionate or effective.
- The nature of much bullying meant that staff often did not directly observe the bullying so pupils felt that staff didn't have "proof"

Procedure

After research and discussion with staff a Bespoke Anti-Bullying system was introduced. Arriving at a common understanding of what constituted bullying was achieved by the production of three A4 posters. These were used by tutors to explain what constituted bullying. These posters are displayed around the school as a prompt / reminder.

The system was based upon colour (blue, yellow and pink) which represent three stages of bullying '**suspected**' (blue), '**confirmed**' (yellow) and '**continuous**' (pink). If students were suspected of bullying they will take a blue sheet around school and any bullying incidents will be recorded by staff. The issue of proof and responsibility was solved as at this stage it was up to the suspected bully to prove they were not involved in bullying behaviour.

If at this first stage any bullying behaviour is recorded on the blue sheet the student moves from a suspected to a confirmed bully and moves to the second stage – a yellow sheet – with sanctions or removal of privileges included. * see Appendix 1.

The third stage of the system – a pink sheet – is introduced if further bullying takes place – this stage is known as 'continuous' and being on a pink sheet has further sanctions and loss of privileges associated with it.

The system has evolved over the years via consultation and many tweaks and changes have taken place to enhance the Atkinson House Anti-Bullying Policy. Bullying incidents are now recorded on SIMS and more appropriate / new sanctions have been added.

Staff felt that certain bullies who were repeat offenders were not being suitably dealt with within the system. A fourth level – **Red Sheet** was introduced and tougher sanctions and removal of **all** privileges was linked to this level. Isolation for example is one of the more extreme punishments associated with this final level of bullying behaviour.

Outcomes – Those Who Have Been Bullied

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- 1) being offered an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choosing
- 2) being reassured that the school takes the matter seriously
- 3) reassuring the pupil
- 4) offering strategies and continuous support
- 5) restoring self-esteem and confidence

- 6) If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
- 7) After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Outcomes – Those Who Have Bullied

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- 1) discussing what happened
- 2) discovering why the pupil became involved
- 3) establishing the wrong doing and the need to change
- 4) provided with strategies to help them deal with situations in which they bully
- 5) informing parents or carers to help change the attitude of the pupil

The Following Disciplinary Steps Can Be Taken

(This is not an exhaustive or definitive list)

- 1) implement “Bespoke School Procedure”
- 2) make the reduction / stopping of bullying a behavioural IEP target
- 3) official warnings to cease bullying
- 4) failure to earn points for Friday Rewards
- 5) for significant incident, not getting Friday Reward even if points for the rest of the week warrant it
- 6) detention(s)
- 7) exclusion from certain areas of the school premises, school mini-bus or home to school transport
- 8) short term time limited exclusion
- 9) long term time limited exclusion
- 10) permanent exclusion

Model anti-bullying policies produced by Kidscape, Teachernet and NAHT guidance papers have helped inform this specific policy.

Adopted : This policy was adopted March 2017.

* *Appendix 1 – Bullying System Flow Chart*

* *Appendix 2 – Further Sources of Information*

* *Appendix 3 – Specialist organisations*

Further sources of information

www.DfE.gov.uk

Cyberbullying: *advice for head teachers and school staff*

DfE Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance

Supporting children and young people who are bullied: *advice for schools*
Counselling in schools a blueprint for the future: advice for school leaders and counsellors

Legislative links

*Schools' duty to promote good behaviour: Section 89 Education and Inspections Act 2006
and Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010
Power to tackle poor behaviour outside school The Equality Act 2010*

Specialist organisations

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance ABA)

<http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/advice/support-from-the-sector/>.

Kidscape:

Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it.

The Diana Award: *Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviour of their peers towards bullying.*

The BIG Award: *The Bullying Intervention Group (BIG) offer a national scheme and award for schools to tackle bullying effectively.*

Restorative Justice Council: *Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011. 10*

Cyber-bullying

ChildNet International: *Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves*

Think U Know: *resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.*

Digizen: *provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.*
Advice on Child Internet Safety 1.0: *The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has produced universal guidelines for providers on keeping children safe online.*

LGBT

EACH: *(Educational Action Challenging Homophobia): provides a national freephone Actionline for targets of homophobic or transphobic bullying and training to schools on sexual orientation, gender identity matters and cyberhomophobia.*

SEND

Mencap: *Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.*

Changing Faces: *Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.*

Racism

Show Racism the Red Card: *Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.*

Kick it Out: *Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools.*