



## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

*School Mission Statement:*

***“Learning and growing in  
the light of the gospel”***

### **WITHIN THE POLICY:**

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## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

We are a Catholic School and the faith of the school is central to its Mission, as such, the welfare of pupils is paramount. This is the core principle which drives this policy.

The aim of the policy is to prevent bullying of any sort and to ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the community, including Trustees, governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and be familiar with the School policy on bullying; therefore the aim of the policy is to help members of the School community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly, to prevent it. Bullying is an antisocial behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in the community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously.

This policy is made available to parents of all new pupils, on the School website and on request from the School Office. It is available to the staff at the School from the School website, in the Staff Handbook (electronic) and on request from the School Office. Content of this policy is directly discussed with new staff upon induction into the School.

### **BULLYING AND GRACE DIEU**

**This is a whole-School policy and relates to Early Years, as well as Key Stages 1 and 2.**

Bullying occurs in all schools to a greater or lesser degree, and so there is no room for complacency in this key area.

This policy must be seen in the context of the fact that bullying causes serious psychological damage and although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

Proven bullying behaviour that takes place off site will be taken just as seriously as any bullying incident that happens in School.

Any form of bullying is unacceptable at Grace Dieu, where we believe that all children have the right to come to School without the fear of intimidation. As a Catholic School, governors and staff take very seriously the challenge of protecting and supporting the vulnerable within our community. This policy has been designed taking into account the DfES pack, **'Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence'(2002)**, the range of material produced by the **Anti-Bullying Alliance (2005)**, the **Department for Education's "Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti-bullying Work in Schools" (2007)** and the **Department for Education's 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies (May 2012 and updated in July 2013 and again in October 2014)**, as well as the **Department for Education's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Sept. 2016)** and seeks to comply with **The Independent School Standards Regulations (Jan. 2015)** which states that the proprietor of an independent School is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented.

## **AIMS OF THE POLICY**

- To demonstrate that the School takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated in EYFS, Pre-Prep (KSI) or Junior Prep (KS2);
- To take measures to prevent bullying in the School, and on off-site activities;
- To support everyone in their attempts to identify and protect those who might be bullied;
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying;
- To promote an environment where it is acceptable to tell someone about bullying.

## **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

Bullying is the *deliberate and repetitive* intention to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. It may take place through physical, verbal, emotional or silent means. It can be perpetrated by individuals, or by groups of people. A playground argument does not necessarily constitute bullying. The repetitive and deliberate element is key. Bullying might be motivated by actual differences between children or perceived differences. Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group in a way that is intended to upset others, and any form of bullying occurring outside School will be treated and investigated as though it had taken place on site.

Kidscape helpfully suggests that the following factors are usually involved in bullying:

- Deliberate aggression
- Unequal power relationship
- Resulting pain and distress
- Persistence

**The following would constitute bullying if they happened persistently:-**

### PHYSICAL (such as)

- Kicking;
- Hitting;
- Punching;
- Pushing;
- Pinching;
- Extortion;
- Stealing, or persistent interference with an individual(s) property;

### VERBAL (such as)

- Persistent name calling;
- Repeated teasing, mimicking;
- Denigrating remarks of a racist, religious, sexist/sexual, gender-based or cultural nature;
- Denigrating remarks of a homophobic nature;
- Persistent insults, possibly relating to special educational needs and/or disability;
- Insults that may be related to the fact that a child is adopted or is a carer;
- Verbal intimidation and threats;
- “Indirect verbal bullying” via Cyber-technology (social websites), or cyber-misuse, via emails or text messages, or social networking sites, via mobile phones or via photograph, video technology deliberately to cause offence, torment or spread rumours.

INDIRECT (such as):

- Spreading rumours;
- Persuading others to “gang up” on individuals;
- Organised and persistent exclusion from friendship groups;
- Making others feel unwelcome;

Bullying is normally seen as part of a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident. Such incidents normally have three things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour of physical or emotional nature;
- It is repeated over a period of time;
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves;

Bullying hurts and can do lasting psychological harm, on rare occasions even leading to suicide. Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving.

## **HOW CAN WE PREVENT BULLYING?**

### MEASURES TO PREVENT BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Signs of Harassment/Bullying:

Pupils who are being harassed/bullied may show changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, a lack of concentration, or truancy. All members of Grace Dieu should be aware of these possibilities and must promptly report any suspicions of bullying to a Form Tutor, Mrs Dexter, Mrs Tallett, Sister Alderman, Mrs Kewell or another member of Staff.

Reporting bullying is a positive action and will always be treated as such.

There are essentially two strands to the Grace Dieu Policy:

- I. Prevention – the whole School approach to awareness and prevention
- II. Dealing with Incidents

#### **I. Prevention: “Prevention is better than cure!”**

##### **Create an Ethos of Respect:**

- Our ethos must be one in which all pupils are valued by all staff members and by their peers and this is in keeping with our Mission Statement;
- The way in which all members of the Grace Dieu community treat each other must reflect this ethos;
- It is the responsibility of the staff to be vigilant, observant and to speak to any member of the SMT should they have any concerns whatsoever.

## **Implementation & Monitoring:**

- The whole community is educated in the Christian ideal of mutual service, rather than privilege and status. Power should not be the issue, but rather the service of others. *Assemblies, Tutor times, the School's Code of Conduct, the Student Council are examples of the School meeting this aim.*
- The policy needs to be known and implemented; and it needs to be reviewed annually;
- All adults at Grace Dieu must be positive role models – it is the core of our Christian foundation.
- Our assemblies have become excellent vehicles for a range of educational themes – bullying will sometimes feature in these;
- Visiting groups have led drama workshops to focus upon the topic of bullying (e.g. Ten Ten Theatre Group and Anti-Bullying Roadshow);
- We encourage discussion on the topic of anti-bullying strategies;
- The various aspects of bullying (including cyberbullying through Internet Safety Day - February) are addressed each year as part of the PSHCE syllabus. It is addressed in Week 9/10 (that is National Anti-Bullying Week) of this syllabus in each academic year, but it may also be returned to as and when required;
- The School approaches the issue of bullying on a regular basis by means of confidential “happiness” questionnaires within year groups and Pupil Interviews about lesson satisfaction.
- Free and full communication between children and staff is essential, and we encourage this wholeheartedly. The bully only survives where there is a culture of silence about such matters, and everything is done to foster a spirit of openness;
- Let children know that bullying off-site will be investigated and, where necessary, it will be acted upon by School staff;
- Staff appreciate that it is an important aspect of their pastoral rôle to monitor pupil behaviour and interaction;
- The Headmistress keeps an Anti-Bullying log so as to identify pattern, cause or nature of bullying, but also what we as a School can learn of incidents of bullying.

## **HOW DO WE RECOGNISE POSSIBLE SIGNS OF BULLYING?**

- Reluctance to come to School, perhaps on certain days or for certain activities;
- Avoiding other children;
- Periods of self-imposed isolation;
- Clinging to adults;
- Mystery non-specific illness (perhaps feigned);
- Personality change: Withdrawn, temper tantrums, inability to concentrate; sudden lack of confidence; sudden greater shyness and nervousness;
- Unexplained damage to clothing and property (property “going missing”);
- Unexpected under-achievement, changes in work patterns;

All staff will be aware of the above and will report any suspicions of bullying to the Deputy Head and Headmistress who have responsibility for pastoral care.

## **2.Dealing with Incidents:**

### **WHO HAS RESPONSIBILITIES?**

#### **THE HEADMISTRESS will:**

- Fulfil his/her legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998 (Section 61 1-7) to draw up a policy and procedures to help prevent bullying among pupils;
- Ensure that bullying as a topic is raised regularly at staff meetings, and that strategies are in place to make it hard for the bully to operate;
- Ensure that the Deputy Head is aware of his/her responsibilities in this regard and is sensibly regular in his/her administration of pupil questionnaires, and is fully aware of the great need to have a culture in which it is good to talk about bullying;
- Promote staff training in this key area;
- Ensure that procedures are brought to the attention of staff, parents and pupils and that new members of staff are made aware through the induction process;
- Communicate with the Chair of Governors if a serious case of bullying occurs;

#### **THE DEPUTY HEAD will:**

- Be responsible for the day to day management of the Anti-Bullying Policy in School;
- Work closely with Form Tutors and Class Teachers in the prevention of and dealing with incidents of bullying and liaising with the Lead Teacher in Years 3 & 4;
- Interview pupils to establish the truth of a situation, using the help of other staff if scribing is needed;
- Take statements from alleged victim and bully;
- Be particularly vigilant in the observation of children day to day, and to administer a pattern of pupil questionnaires so that the children feel they can communicate in confidence in writing if they find approaching a member of staff difficult;
- Administer and maintain all necessary paperwork (3sys and hard copies as appropriate from interviews with children/children's own written accounts) and records to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted or to enable patterns to be identified of incidents of bullying, and provide details for the Headmistress' Anti-Bullying File for ISI Compliance;
- Ensure that there are positive strategies in place to help both the bullied and the bully (for whom we also have a duty of care);
- Keep the Headmistress informed of all incidents of bullying, and will contact the parents if this is agreed with the Headmistress to be the best thing at that moment. (Parents of the bullying party will not always be contacted if it is the first incident of this type. Sometimes, it may be judged by the Headmistress that a child has the right to make a mistake in School without reference to parents);



- In consultation with the Headmistress, determine how best and when to involve parents in the solution of individual problems;
- Be aware of the parts of the PSHCE programme which deal with anti-bullying and how this can further develop the School's anti-bullying programme;
- As the person who arranges School assemblies, the Deputy Head must ensure that bullying arises as a theme with regularity or ensure that visiting groups address the theme.

**THE HEAD OF THE PRE-PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT will:**

- Keep the Deputy Head informed of any difficulties in that area and will complete and keep any necessary records;

**THE FORM TUTOR/CLASS TEACHERS will:**

- Be responsible for liaising with the Deputy Head immediately over all incidents of bullying involving pupils in their class;
- Be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution;
- Be punctilious about the careful delivery of the anti-bullying programme contained in the School's PSHCE programme, and to make suggestions to the PSHCE Co-ordinator and/or Deputy Head about improving that programme where appropriate;

**ALL STAFF will:**

- Know this policy and procedures;
- Deal with incidents according to the policy;
- Be aware of the importance of the bullying content in the PSHCE programme;
- Include bullying as a theme in class time (liaise with the Deputy Head in this regard);
- Act as positive and respectful role models in their relationships with pupils and colleagues;
- Be vigilant and observant, and to ask pupils what is happening to them
- **Never allow any incidents of (potential) bullying pass unreported, whether in School or on an off-site activity**
- Always provide the Deputy Head with a brief emailed report of what has been observed/reported; this is always essential for record keeping even if a conversation has been had with staff;
- Have discussions with pupils in places where the child is at ease;
- Be aware that confidentiality cannot be assured if the bullying is to be addressed;
- Move *swiftly* to report suspected bullying to the Deputy Head who will then liaise with the Form Tutor. This swift action allows the victim to feel supported, respected and valued, but it is also vital for the establishment of the facts;
- Take into account the needs of both the victim and the bully;
- Bear in mind that no case is ever the same and each deserves an individual response and consideration;

- Sanctions may not be the first response on the part of the School – a careful and measured approach must be adopted, and consultation with the Deputy Head is required. **Staff should not act on their own** – the incident observed or reported may be part of a bigger picture of which only the Deputy Head is aware;

### **ALL PUPILS will:**

- Treat all members of the School community with respect;
- Not take part in any form of bullying and be aware that, as passive bystanders, they may be allowing bullying to take place and they must bear some blame for that;
- Not put up with any form of bullying;
- Report any incidents of bullying that they see;
- Work with others to help stop bullying;
- Know of someone they can go to in the event of a bullying situation

### **STAFF PROCEDURES IF BULLYING IS SUSPECTED OR ALLEGATIONS ARE MADE**

- The member of staff involved will report the matter via email to the Deputy Head and will discuss the matter with him/her;
- The Deputy Head will decide if he/she or the Form Tutor is to conduct interviews and take written statements from the alleged victim and the alleged bully;
- It may be that the matter can be easily resolved through discussion/negotiation and mediation, and that, if this is a one-off incidence of bullying, then the Deputy Head and Headmistress may decide not to inform parents;
- Full notes will be kept and filed by the Deputy Head for future reference, should that be necessary;
- The reporting of bullying may not always lead to direct punishment of the accused. The School is aware that this can give confusing messages, but there are occasions when punishment is not the appropriate response;
- The School is well aware that both the victim and the perpetrator need care and support and this resonates very clearly with the School's Catholic/Christian ethos of forgiveness and "getting back on track" after failing to show consideration for others;
- If complaints are shown to be well-founded and the behaviour continues, parents will certainly be involved and the full range of School sanctions are available to the Deputy Head and the Headmistress, as per the Behaviour Policy;
- Any disciplinary measure applied must be fair and consistent and take reasonable account of any special educational needs/disability;
- It is also important to try to fathom the motivations behind the bullying behaviour and whether the behaviour exhibited reveals other concerns, perhaps about the safety of the perpetrator; he/she may need support too;

- It has to be noted here that pupils who find it impossible to rectify their bullying behaviour – after every effort has been made to modify the tendency - may be suspended and may, in the end, have to leave the School;
- Governors will be informed by the Deputy Head at each termly pastoral sub-committee meeting of any matters involving serious bullying;
- The Headmistress will inform the Chair of Governors if a serious incidence of bullying takes place. **A bullying incident will be treated as a Safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.**

### **As a pupil what can you do if you are being bullied?**

- Remember that silence is the bully's greatest weapon!
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is WRONG!
- Seek help from your Form Tutor, School Nurse, Mrs Tallett, Mrs Kewell or any other adult whom you feel comfortable talking to.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive – shout "No!" Walk confidently away.
- Teachers and other members of staff will take you seriously and will support you.

### **If you know someone is being bullied:**

- TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

### **Further References:**

- Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff, DFE, 2014
- [www.cyberbullying.org](http://www.cyberbullying.org)
- Childline: 0800 1111: <http://www.childline.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>
- [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

Reviewed August 2017 by MK

(Ratified by the School Council)

Pupil Representatives (Head Boy/Girl) .....

Date.....

Reviewed August 2017 (MK)