

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

The philosophy underlying South Wirral High School's behaviour policy is respect. It emphasises rewarding positive behaviour and a concern to support all members of our community.

### **Aims:**

1. To continue to introduce practical measure to reduce the incidence of bullying in and around school.
2. To create an atmosphere in which students can safely disclose incidents of bullying, have their disclosure taken seriously and rely upon appropriate actions being taken.
3. To establish procedures to deal with incidents of bullying in an effective and consistent manner.
4. To foster an atmosphere in which bullying is seen as unacceptable behaviour.
5. To develop preventative approaches to bullying through the curriculum.
6. To provide support to the victims of bullying.

### **What do we mean by bullying?**

- Bullying is behaviour which is deliberately hurtful, repeated over a period of time and which the victims find it difficult to defend themselves against. (Not all acts of aggression are bullying.)
- This may take the form of harassment defined as repeated unwanted conduct, related to gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, religion, belief or sexual orientation, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for that person.

There are different types of bullying, the main ones being:

**Physical:** hitting, kicking or other physical, inappropriate contact, making gestures, taking or hiding belongings.

**Verbal:** name-calling, teasing, taunts, insulting remarks, graffiti, unkind messages – verbal, written or cyber, including all areas of the Internet such as email and social media misuse. Threats from mobile phone text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities (Malicious communications Act 1988)

**Emotional:** being unfriendly, unwanted physical contact, comments focusing on the issue of sexuality including homophobic language, gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, religion, belief or sexual orientation, excluding, tormenting, and spreading rumours, looks, intimidating or threatening behaviour.

This school identifies bullying as “any action verbal abuse or threat, intended to cause fear or distress, which is repeated over a period of time, against someone who is unable to fight back”.

It is recognised that bullying will take many different forms and have a greater or lesser effect depending upon the individual's circumstances.

Tackling bullying in school matters because bullying makes people unhappy. Although some can shrug it off, bullying can produce feelings of powerlessness, isolation from others, undermine

self-esteem and sometimes convince individuals that they are at fault. It can affect attitudes to and performance in school. If as a school community we do not challenge bullying, we are not valuing each person in school.

## **Strategies for Prevention of Bullying**

### **1. Reducing the incidence of bullying**

- ii) Identify and carefully police high risk locations in school.
- iii) A quiet area for use at lunchtime in the Learning Base.
- iv) A homework room for lunchtime.
- v) Acknowledging and dealing with the presence of an incidence of cyber bullying (see Appendix 1).

### **2. Creating a safe atmosphere for the disclosure of bullying. (See Reporting of Bullying).**

### **3. Establish Procedures to Deal with Bullying. (See Responding to Bullying).**

### **4. Fostering an anti-bullying atmosphere**

- i) Acknowledging kind and considerate behaviour in students.
- ii) Through house assemblies and school assemblies encourage the bystander to act to prevent and assist in resolving incidents.
- iii) To develop the role of the senior students through their training programme to ensure that they foster good behaviour amongst students by their example in carrying out their duties.
- iv) Efficient patrolling by staff of the school site. Review staff duty areas regularly.
- v) All students sign an electronic Anti-bullying contract each half term (see Appendix 2).

### **5. Developing Preventative Approaches Through the Curriculum**

- ii) A planned approach to the issues connected with bullying within the Life Studies programme and raise awareness with staff so that other curriculum areas e.g. Drama, English etc. can consider the topic where appropriate opportunities arise.
- iii) Sessions can allow students to explore issues of equality, discrimination and oppressive behaviour.
- iv) Students can be shown how to develop the skills attitudes and knowledge to question behaviour that disadvantages individuals or groups.
- v) Teachers use conflict of opinion and values to further the learning of students.
- vi) Teachers encourage students to listen and empathise with others and to be appropriately assertive.

### **6. Provide Support for Victims**

- i) Peer Counselling: Volunteers from the senior end of school offer a support and help network to victims of bullying. Training of senior students has helped them recognise and deal with situation.
- ii) Individual staff may act as support counsellors - where students have disclosed to them or where it has been recognised that a link exists.

- iii) Learning Mentors are often a first point of support and counselling for students who may disclose bullying. Within their role Learning Mentors can provide great support to those students who are victims.

### **Reporting of Bullying**

- i) Students are encouraged to disclose that they are being bullied (knowing that the systems in place minimise the risk of making things worse) to any member of staff that they feel comfortable with.
- ii) Students who witness bullying incidents are encouraged to report these incidents to any member of staff.
- iii) A record of bullying incidents involving students as victims will be kept so that analysis of patterns, of students involved, type, location or time, can inform policy and practice.

All incidents of bullying should be notified to the appropriate Head of House in writing or email with a brief outline of what has been reported.

### **Responding to Bullying**

Any student who has 'been bullied' should feel that their situation is listened to sympathetically by the staff involved.

As bullying takes so many forms each incident should be treated by the response that is appropriate. Where staff feel the incident is sufficiently serious they should pass it on or seek advice from the appropriate Head/Deputy Head of House or Bullying Co-ordinator – Mrs Holgate.

If the teacher dealing with an incident feels the bullying is not a minor incident and cannot be readily resolved by his/her intervention or if the resolution is rejected, the matter should be referred to members of the Pastoral Staff (Head of House, Asst. Head of House). The following procedure may then be helpful.

1. The member of staff speaks to the student being bullied. Other witnesses may be interviewed to provide supporting information. A written summary is completed. In serious incidents, written statements may be advisable. It may also be appropriate to make copies of any on-line communication e.g. Facebook, Twitter, AskFM, Instagram etc.
2. The person accused is interviewed separately and confronted with an accurate statement of the incident.
3. Sanctions may be applied. Depending on the nature and seriousness of the offence, parents of the bully and the bullied will be informed by letter or 'phone.
4. As soon as is appropriate the bully should meet with the victim with a member of staff. Discussion should clearly and fairly state the hurt inflicted. An apology to the victim is also appropriate and they should both be informed that a record will be placed on their file. If necessary, restorative justice should be used, focusing on the needs of the victims and the offenders, as well as the involved community, instead of punishing the offender. Victims take an active role in the process, while offenders are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, to repair the harm they've done—by apologizing, returning stolen money, or community service.

5. Other long term strategies may be considered, including changing teaching groups of students concerned, referral to external agencies for support.
6. If a serious incident occurs especially out of school, it may be necessary to involve the police.
7. A decision will then be made as to the course of action. Parents may be contacted depending on the extent and seriousness of the incident, after appropriate measures have been taken

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- i) All staff - teaching, ancillary, office and support staff have a role to play in the prevention of bullying.
- ii) Where incidents are sufficiently serious they must be referred to HoH/Deputy and appropriate measure taken.
- iii) Very serious incidents may be referred to the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator.
- iv) Anti-Bullying Buddies may be used in appropriate circumstances.

### **Monitoring, Maintenance and Evaluation**

All bullying incidents should be recorded and put into pupils' records. Records should include.

- i) Who was involved (or alleged)
- ii) Where and when it happened
- iii) What happened
- iv) What action was taken
- v) How it was followed up.

This Anti-Bullying Policy is a long term commitment and to maintain its effectiveness staff and students need to be regularly reminded of it through:

- i) Posters/Artwork
- ii) Assemblies/Visiting Drama Groups
- iii) Life Studies work
- iv) Mention in newsletters, new staff induction meetings, Welcome Evening, Open Evening, Governors' Meetings and Parents' Association Meetings.

“Crucially, the schools that dealt with bullying effectively kept the policy alive. They communicated it widely, referred to it regularly, for example in assemblies and tutor time; they reviewed it from time to time; and they made it clear that pursuing the policy was a matter of general practice and not of simply reacting to reported incidents”

*OFSTED Bullying: effective action in secondary schools.*

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated informally throughout the year and formally on a regular basis with pastoral staff, Senior Leadership Team and Governors' recommendations taken into account.

Reviewed Spring 2015

## Appendix 1

South Wirral High School recognises that technology plays an important and positive role in everyone's lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the school community to understand both the benefits and the risks, and to equip children with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly.

### Aims

The aims of the E-Safety policy are:

- to safeguard the pupils in the real and virtual world
- to educate students, staff and parents to understand what cyberbullying is and what its consequences can be
- to put policies and procedures in place to prevent incidents of cyberbullying in school or within the school community
- to have effective measures to deal effectively with cases of cyberbullying
- to monitor the effectiveness of prevention measures

**Definition :** "Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology"  
(<http://www.stopbullying.gov>)

## PREVENTING CYBERBULLYING

### Understanding and discussion

- Staff will receive training in identifying cyberbullying and understanding their responsibilities in developing e-safety. In this training all staff will be helped to keep up to date with the technologies that children are using.
- Pupils will be educated about cyberbullying through a variety of means: assemblies, conferences, Anti-bullying Week, projects in Computing lessons in years 7,8 and 9
- Pupils will sign an Acceptable Use Policy before they are allowed to use school computer equipment and the internet in school.

### Promoting the Positive use of Technology – Staff will

- Make positive use of technology across the curriculum
- Use training opportunities to develop their practice creatively and support pupils in safe and responsible use
- Ensure all staff and children understand the importance of password security and the need to log out of accounts.

### Responding to Cyberbullying

- **Most cases of cyberbullying will be dealt with through the school's existing Anti-bullying Policy and this must remain the framework within which incidents of bullying are investigated.** However, some features of cyberbullying differ from other forms of bullying and may prompt a particular response. The key differences are:
  - impact: the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than other forms of bullying
  - targets and perpetrators: the people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets
  - location: the 24/7 and anywhere nature of cyberbullying
  - anonymity: the person being bullied will not always know who is bullying them
  - motivation: some pupils may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying
  - evidence: unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence

### Support for the person being bullied

- Advise the person not to retaliate or reply. Instead, keep the evidence and take it to their parent or a member of staff (in the case of staff they should take it to their line manager)
- Advise the person to consider what information they have in the public domain
- Unless the victim sees it as a punishment, they may be advised to change eg mobile phone number
- If hurtful or embarrassing content is being distributed, try to get it removed from the web. If the person who posted it is known, ensure they understand why it is wrong and ask them to remove it. Alternatively, contact the host provider and make a report to get the content taken down
- In some cases, the person being bullied may be able to block the person bullying from their sites and services.

## APPENDIX 2

### Anti-Bullying Contract

I understand that bullying is behaviour that:

- Is on purpose - somebody intends to hurt you deliberately;
- Can be by one or more people;
- Is repeated over a period of time;
- And is done to cause you stress or upset.

Bullying can take many forms but the four main types are:

- **Physical** (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft using physical aggression to you)
- **Verbal** (e.g. about someone's disability or gender, racist or homophobic remarks, about somebody being different, threats, name calling to your face)
- **Emotional/Indirect** (e.g. Staring, glaring, leaving you out, making up stories about you or spreading rumours) isolating you from the activities or from your friends, spreading rumours

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- **Technological/cyber** (e.g. using technology to hurt a person, text messages, internet, social networks, video hosting sites etc. Remember technological/cyber bullying does not have to be done on the internet)

I promise that if I am bullied or if I see or hear about anybody being bullied I will tell an adult.

I understand that there are many people in school I could tell if I was being bullied or if I have seen anybody being bullied. These include:

- Head of House / Assistant Head of House
- Form Tutor
- Learning Mentors
- Mrs Holgate
- Mr McLoughlin
- Teaching Assistants
- Support Staff
- Teachers
- Anti-Bullying Buddies
- Sixth Formers
- Other Students

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_