



Anti-Bullying Strategy

Bolton School Boys' Division

1. Reference and Guidance

This policy has regard to the DfE advice, *Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017, Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff* and to the *Equality Act 2010*. When using this policy consideration under the Equality Act 2010 should be made, including issues related to pupils with special educational needs/disabilities and how reasonable adjustments are made for these pupils.

2. Scope of policy

This policy applies to all Senior Boys and the Sixth Form at Bolton School Boys' Division.

3. The aims of this policy are to:

- a) contribute to creating a climate of prevention of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct associated but not exclusively with age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation;
- b) give clear guidelines to pupils, staff and parents and to clarify the roles of all involved in the school when a case of bullying is suspected;
- c) create a climate of openness and support;
- d) enable teachers to maintain a consistent approach;
- e) provide clear procedures for involving parents;
- f) demonstrate that as a school we do not tolerate bullying;
- g) provide a mechanism for reviewing the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy, and
- h) ensure that the school has a clear picture of bullying incidents throughout the school.

4. Introduction

The School works to support victims of bullying and adopts a robust approach to those who bully others. All cases of reported bullying are recorded and investigated including those where it is clear that bullying has not in fact occurred.

We recognise that we are dealing with young people who make mistakes and may be at different stages of emotional maturity. While bullies should expect to be dealt with robustly we normally seek to reintegrate them quickly and to address their needs as appropriate. We take our duty to all pupils entrusted to our care seriously and take all reasonable steps to address the needs of every pupil.

We encourage pupils to report bullying both of themselves and of others as soon as possible. We are committed to taking such reports seriously and to responding to them quickly, appropriately and effectively. We encourage parents to contact us as soon as possible if they have concerns about bullying.

We are committed to investigating and resolving bullying which occurs in school and out of school and will cooperate with partner agencies if a complaint of bullying is made about one of our pupils against a pupil who does not attend our school.

5. What is 'bullying'?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, directly or through cyber-technology). It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on the grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. Whatever form the bullying takes or by whatever method the school takes such reports seriously.

Examples are:

- Physical bullying such as hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting; or taking, damaging or hiding possessions.
- Verbal bullying – name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting, demanding money or possessions, any remarks which take advantage of a pupil's race, religion, culture, sexuality, gender, special needs or disability, because the child is adopted or a carer.
- Exclusionary behaviour – intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group.
- Using any electronic facility including the use of cyber technology (social websites, mobile phones, photographs and email) in a way that upsets or intimidates others in the school.
- Homophobic Biphobic and Transphobic (HBT) bullying is behaviour or language which makes a person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, whether actual or perceived, or because of their association with people who are, or perceived to be gay, bisexual or transgender (e.g. children of same –sex couples). HBT bullying affects students who are LGBT, have friends and family who are LGBT, don't conform to gender stereotypes e.g. pupils who like to dance or are just perceived to be different.

Signs of bullying

- Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:
- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Nurse or Welfare Room with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying will, with the support of parents, be investigated.

6. Cyberbullying

This involves the use of ICT to support deliberate, hostile behaviour by an individual or group, which is intended to upset and harm others. This can include mobile text messaging and telephone calls, mobile telephone pictures and video clips, e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging and websites such as social networking sites. **For further useful guidance please refer to the Esafety policy.**

7. Bolton School Anti-Bullying awareness raising

Through the course of Pastoral Curriculum, assemblies and other activities such as the annual Anti-Bullying Week, pupils are made aware of the school's stand on bullying and what to do if they are being bullied or witness others being bullied. Staff are regularly made aware of their responsibility. Although bullying is more likely to take place in some parts of the school than others, the school recognises that bullying can take place anywhere at any time. **Staff involved in investigating allegations of bullying have appropriate training.**

8. Record keeping

It is extremely important that thorough investigations into bullying incidents are carried out and documented.

- A CPOMS log must be opened as soon as a report of bullying is made and before it has been substantiated or otherwise.
- The incident should be fully investigated, usually by the Head of Year or Head of School. An 'investigation pack' must be assembled including:
 - Pupil Accounts and
 - any other evidence such as screen shots from computers or mobile phones etc.
- The investigation pack must be attached to the CPOMS log.
- If bullying is substantiated then the investigation pack will then be held in the Bullying File held by the DSL.
- A log of all bullying incidents must be kept and made available to the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

9. Monitoring and review

The DSL will monitor the implementation of this policy and write an annual report on bullying.

This policy will be reviewed annually or owing to:

- publication of new guidance from the DfE
- publication of new ISI regulations
- bullying annual report
- bullying audits
- complaints/concerns from parents

Senior School including Sixth Form

1. Advice for pupils who are experiencing or witnessing bullying

If you are being bullied, or if you are aware of someone else being bullied, then you should tell your Form Tutor as soon as possible. If you feel unable to tell your Form Tutor, then you should tell your Head of School/Year, or any other member of staff; you should also tell your parents. You should be prepared to give details of who the bullies are, when and where the bullying takes place and if there are any other victims.

2. Advice to parents

We encourage parents to contact the school if they have any concerns regarding bullying. We recognise that bullying incidents can be extremely upsetting for parents and you can expect your concern to be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner.

If your son discloses to you that he is being bullied then you should try to get as much detailed information from them as possible. You should then contact your son Head of Year/School as soon as possible. The school will investigate the allegation and will keep you informed of the progress of the investigation. Even after the problem has been resolved your son's Head of Year/School will continue to monitor the situation to ensure that there are no recurrences. If bullying is substantiated, you can expect the investigation to result in reasonable and proportionate sanctions. If at any time you are unhappy with the way in which the school has handled the investigation then you should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

3. Procedure in a case of reported bullying: advice to staff

The way that we deal with bullying will have an impact on the confidence of pupils and their parents to report bullying. It is important that we demonstrate that the bullying of any member of the school community will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively. Pupils may be reluctant to report bullying for fear of harm or because they feel that nothing can be done. We must show that we can support pupils to prevent harm, that bullying is not tolerated and that there are solutions that work.

At all times investigations must be handled sensitively. Clearly each case is different but unless there is a good reason not to do so, information provided by witnesses should be regarded as confidential to prevent against intimidation.

- a) Any actual or suspected incidences of bullying must be referred to the appropriate Head of School/Year immediately, who in turn will inform the DSL that he/she is dealing with the incident. Depending on the severity of the bullying the parents of both victim and offender may be informed. If there is reasonable cause to suspect that, as a result of bullying, a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the school will refer its concerns to the Bolton Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

If the allegation is of sibling bullying the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed and the matter will be dealt with in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

- b) When an allegation of bullying is made, it must always be treated seriously. Even if bullying is not substantiated there will often be other issues which need to be addressed.
- c) **Official recording of bullying must not occur until there is clear evidence of bullying by applying the definition bullying at paragraph 5.**
- d) We must ensure that when dealing with victims we take careful note of their fears, allegations and complaints; victims should be encouraged to talk about their difficulties. Pupils who are bullied at school will not always be prepared to tell those in authority. Clearly trust is very important. It is perhaps not appropriate to have a rigid structure whereby pupils see one of the staff mentioned in a) above. Pupils should be encouraged to confide in whichever person they feel most comfortable with.

- e) All investigations into bullying incidents should be thorough and involve the bully/bullies and the victim(s). Bullies and victims must be interviewed separately. In particularly serious cases at least two members of staff must be present during the interview.
- f) Hearsay accounts should be taken seriously but they cannot subsequently be used as evidence. Evidence must be gathered. Witness statements should be obtained from individuals who actually saw or heard the events and these must be dated and signed. These should ideally be written by the investigating member of staff to ensure that the evidence is clearly and logically set out.
- g) Incidents of cyber-bullying should be discussed with a member of IT Services to ensure that vital evidence is not lost through lack of familiarity with **electronic** means of communication.
- h) When dealing with bullies we must ensure we do not exacerbate the problem. Bullies should be helped to recognise their unsociable behaviour and offered support to modify it. They should accept responsibility for the harm caused to their victim(s) and others (eg friends and family). They should be encouraged to take actions to begin to repair the harm caused and these should be monitored for an agreed period of time afterwards. **A restorative justice approach in cases of minor bullying is recommended if all parties agree and as an alternative to further sanctions – see Appendix A.**

Where restorative justice for minor bullying has not worked or in cases of more severe bullying, the bully will be dealt with robustly. It is probably unhelpful to specify specific punishments for specific types of bullying because circumstances differ from case to case; but where pupils do not respond to strategies to combat bullying the school will apply harsher sanctions fairly and consistently to deal with persistent and/or violent bullying. Such sanctions might include:

- Removal from the group (in class)
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- Detention
- Withholding participation in school trips or sports events
- Suspension from school for a specified period
- Permanent exclusion in serious cases or persistent bullying

Appendix A: RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – CONFERENCE SCRIPT EXAMPLE

STEP 1	<p>Welcome, as you know my name is xx and I have been asked to facilitate this meeting. <i>(Introduce participants if necessary)</i>. I have spoken to all of you about the incident <i>(briefly outline what happened)</i> xxxx <i>(wrongdoer name)</i> has admitted their part. I remind you that you are here to discuss what happened, not the character of anyone involved. I will invite you all in turn to talk about how you and others may have been affected by what happened. This will help everyone understand what needs to be done to help put things right.</p>
STEP 2	<p>START WITH WRONGDOER(S) – I would like to start by asking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell us about what happened and how you became involved OR what happened? • What happened next OR what else? <i>(ask this until their story unfolds)</i> • What were you thinking at the time? • What have your thoughts been since? • How has this affected/upset you and others? • What's been the hardest thing for you?
STEP 3	<p>TURN TO HARMED PERSON(S) – I would like to start by asking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell us about what happened and how you became involved OR what happened? • What happened next OR what else? <i>(ask this until their story unfolds)</i> • What were you thinking at the time? • What have your thoughts been since? • How has this affected/upset you and others? • What's been the hardest thing for you?
STEP 4	<p>THEN ASK REMAINING PARTICIPANTS IN TURN THE SAME QUESTIONS <i>(if necessary theme in views of those not present)</i></p>
STEP 5	<p>GO BACK TO THE WRONGDOER(S) – you have just heard how xxxx and others have been affected by what you did</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you all see that harm/upset that has been caused? • Is there anything you want to say at this stage? • Do you think that something needs to be done to repair that harm/put it right?
STEP 6	<p>GO BACK TO THE HARMED PERSON – What do you think needs to happen?</p>
STEP 7	<p>GO BACK TO THE WRONGDOER(S) – What do you think of what xxxx has suggested?</p>
STEP 8	<p>RETURN TO PERSON HARMED AND THEN OTHER SUPPORTERS – What do you think/feel about what has been said? – What would you like to see come out of today's meeting?</p>
STEP 9	<p>RETURN TO WRONGDOER – What do you think/feel about what has been said?</p>
STEP 10	<p style="text-align: center;">MAKE CONTRACT</p>
STEP 11	<p>OPTIONAL QUESTIONS – Would you do anything differently now?/What other choices could you have made?/What have you learned from the meeting?</p>
STEP 12	<p>FINAL INVITATIONS TO SPEAK – before I close the meeting is there anyone else who wishes to say or ask something?</p>
STEP 13	<p>CLOSING THE MEETING – Thank you for participating in this meeting, I hope that your time together has helped you deal with this matter.</p>