



## Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures

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***This policy has been written and implemented in accordance with the School's dedication to its Christian values. These are underpinned in the Stopfordian ethos and the message and example of Jesus Christ.***

## **CONTEXT**

Bishop Stopford's School is recognisable by the quality of its community within which Christian principles are fostered, both within the curriculum and through the relationships which exist between students, parents, teachers, support staff, governors, and the wider community. It strives to be a welcoming place offering the support necessary for individuals to develop and achieve fully their potential. Such a positive and caring ethos demands an active anti-bullying policy.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

It follows that, within Bishop Stopford's any behaviour which is the abuse of power and results in hurting others is totally unacceptable. Students and their parents must be confident that such bullying behaviour will be dealt with seriously.

## **RATIONALE (REASONS FOR HAVING A BULLYING POLICY)**

Bishop Stopford's School can tackle bullying successfully, it can have a significant impact on the emotional health and wellbeing of individual children and young people. Being emotionally well is just as important as being physically fit. In the same way as keeping fit physically can help to prevent illness, being emotionally resilient helps prevent emotional difficulties and mental illness, and it can increase the capacity of a child or young person to learn. (Anti-Bullying Guidance for Schools – National Healthy Schools Programme)

- 1.1 All students have a right to an education free from bullying. All students must feel confident that reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and acted upon speedily.
- 1.2 No member of staff, or of the wider school community, should ever ignore a report of bullying.
- 1.3 Tackling bullying in School matters because:
  - bullying makes people unhappy;
  - people who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their school work;
  - some people avoid being bullied by not going to school;

- being bullied at school may lead to depression and damaged self-esteem in adulthood;
- people who do not see bullying challenged are likely either to copy the anti-social behaviour or take unacceptable action to deal with it themselves;
- schools which do take action against bullying build reputations as effective, caring schools;
- it enables identification of the need for support among students who show bullying behaviour;
- it enables us to educate students on how to interact with others in a positive and considerate way;
- everyone has the right to feel safe and happy in the school environment.

### **AIM OF OUR POLICY**

To create, within Bishop Stopford's School, an environment which is as free from bullying behaviour as is possible. To strive to prevent bullying and minimise its incidence on every level.

### **DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Although there is no legal definition, the DFE (2020) defines bullying as follows:

Behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

At Bishop Stopford's we would add that bullying is when a student or group of students repeatedly:

- use social media, text, phone, email or any other technology in a hurtful way.
- order someone to do something they don't want to do;
- say hurtful things to someone else;
- hit, kick or push someone else;
- spread nasty rumours about someone else;
- send someone hurtful notes;
- stop someone joining in;
- repeatedly ignore someone;
- threaten someone;
- tease or laugh at someone in a hurtful way;
- destroy someone's property;
- take any action which belittles or undermines others or causes them hurt or pain in any way.

Racist, sexist or homophobic taunts or comments are also totally unacceptable and may be part of bullying behaviour. If such things happen frequently it is difficult for a student to deal with them in a way which does not make the situation worse.

Bullying can involve a lack of understanding and respect for difference and is something which aims to undermine others. It can be used by one individual or a group to exert power over another student or students.

Someone who is a willing bystander to incidents of bullying may be seen to be supporting the bullying behaviour also.

### **ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAW**

Bishop Stopford's also follows anti-discrimination law. Our staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school. It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of the following protected characteristics:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

## **PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE**

Everyone who is part of the Bishop Stopford's School family has a responsibility to make our environment safe and happy for all other members. To tackle the issue of bullying we will work together to prevent bullying incidents as much as possible and take appropriate action should an issue of bullying occur.

### **Dealing with reported incidents of bullying**

#### **School**

The following steps are taken when dealing with bullying incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident is dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- A clear account of the incident and collected statements are recorded on BROMCOM and an Incident Report is completed and given to the Head of Year, Subject Leader, or Senior Member of Staff.
- Relevant staff such as Form Tutors, mentors etc are made aware of the incident as appropriate.
- Parents are informed of the incident and any necessary follow up.
- Sanctions are used as appropriate in accordance with the Student Behaviour Policy and in consultation with all parties concerned.
- Restorative Justice Meetings may be used to support both the victim and perpetrator.
- Mentoring input may be implemented as appropriate to support both the victim and the perpetrator.

#### **Students**

Students who have been bullied are supported by:

- Being offered the opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff
- Being listened to and given reassurance and guidance on how to deal with issues of bullying
- Continuous support from school and home
- Referral to support services as appropriate. This may be internal support such as learning or peer mentors or alternatively external support such as the Secondary Support Service or CAMHS.
- Development of self-esteem and confidence using all/any of the steps identified above

Students who have bullied others are sanctioned though they are also offered support in order to help modify their behaviour. These students are supported by:

- Being offered the opportunity to discuss what happened,
- Considering and exploring the reasons why they became involved.
- Being encouraged to think about the incident and the steps needed in order to change.
- The school informing parents or guardians to ensure that they too can offer guidance on how such behaviour should be modified

- Referral to support services as appropriate. This may be internal support such as learning or peer mentors or alternatively external support such as the Secondary Support Service or CAMHS.

### Parents

- When and if a parent has a concern that their child is being bullied they should contact their child's Head of Year immediately. They can do this either via the school's mainline phone on 020 8804 1906, letter or the Head of Year's email. If the Head of Year is unavailable parents should contact the member of the senior leadership team attached to the year group.
- Once a concern has been raised the school will investigate the matter, take action (if necessary) and report back to the parent who reported the matter in the first instance.
- Parents will be supported and are asked to give the school adequate time to investigate the reported incident. In these matters it is important that investigation is thorough and action taken is considered in light of the evidence. The school will always seek action most appropriate to each individual case.
- Under no circumstances should parents/carers take action against other students of the school
- If for whatever reason a parent is unhappy with the actions of the school they have the option to raise a complaint as set out in the school's complaints policy available on the school website.

### School Action

- **In less serious cases**, a no-blame, problem-solving approach may be used. This is where the adult tries to remain neutral and deliberately avoids direct, closed questions which may be seen as accusatory or interrogational in style. The aim is to focus on helping the students involved to find a solution and stop the bullying recurring.
- **Where more serious bullying behaviour is clearly proven, or repeated**, sanctions must be used. The sanction used must depend upon the circumstances and the behaviour record of the students involved.
- **Incidents which result in damage to a person or property or serious distress** must result in serious sanctions. Teachers must discuss the incident with the Head of Year of the students concerned. The parents of the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s) will be informed and involved as appropriate. Exclusion may be an appropriate sanction in certain circumstances; a permanent exclusion may be used as a last resort. The family of the bullied student may wish to involve the Police by charging the bullying student with harassment or assault. This is their right. It is vital that the Head of Year ensures that accurate records are kept to assist with such proceedings as necessary.
- While bullies should be punished for their bullying they must also be helped to ensure that they recognise that what they have done is wrong. They should be supported to ensure that they make the right choices and interact with others more positively in the future.

## **Record keeping**

- Incidents of bullying are recorded and kept on the school central bullying file and recorded in BROMCOM. A formal warning for bullying is also kept as a document on the student's file.
- All reported incidents are investigated and student's statements are taken. These are kept and filed to enable patterns to be identified.
- Students who feel they are being bullied are provided with log books/journals and asked to keep a detailed record of incidents.

## **Bullying Outside School Premises**

Sometimes bullying incidents may occur outside of the school premises. Such incidents are treated in the same way as those which occur in school.

Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives headteachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff.

- This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, in the community or via mobile phones and the internet.
- As such, bullying incidents that occur outside of school can and may be dealt with and sanctioned as detailed in this document and our whole school behaviour policy

## **Current Intervention to Educate and Reduce Bullying**

- Taking steps to prevent bullying is crucial to any school that wishes to eradicate this kind of behaviour. Being proactive enables us to prevent negative incidents before they occur.
- Within the curriculum the school raises the awareness of the nature and impact of bullying through Form Time and Assemblies in an attempt to eradicate this behaviour. The issue is also covered via our PSHE curriculum in Years 7-10.
- Following a whole school project, an **Anti-bullying campaign** was launched in 2013 by the staff and the students in order to highlight the importance of eradicating and preventing bullying. This campaign is revisited every November as part of the National Anti-Bullying week, to reinforce the school's vision and anti-bullying message.
- Themed weeks designed to reinforce the school message against bullying and discrimination will take place every year focusing on raising awareness and understanding of issues such as diversity, equality, mental health and unity.
- The school's new form time programme also reinforces our 'Strive for Five' ethos and encourages students to challenge those issues that go against our ethos such as bullying and discrimination.
- Our anti-bullying message is clearly displayed around school with the principles of the Stopfordian ethos/Strive for Five campaign and the importance of 'Respect, Diversity and Friendship' shown in corridors and classrooms across the school.
- The Stopfordian Ethos was devised by the school council in 2013 and launched in May 2014. The ethos was further simplified in 2018 and again in 2019 in line with our

school vision and focuses on the core principles and values of our school. As part of our 'Strive for Five Campaign' our ethos expects students at Bishop Stopford's School to: Be Respectful, Be Considerate, Be Successful, Be Responsible and Be Loyal. This ethos highlights the importance of respect and consideration of others and reminds students of the basic expectations of our school community.

- A **peer mentoring system** has been implemented to support students who are experiencing a range of problems including bullying. Peer mentors are trained in this area and are supported by our Learning Mentor.
- Students can also be referred to the **Learning Mentor** by their tutor or Head of Year who support students with any issue that may be having a negative impact on their school life.
- **Student surveys** are taken to monitor and assess the level/incidence of bullying within the school. This is used to determine future action and policy that may be needed to further educate and guide our students.
- Guidance on internet safety and issues regarding the responsible use of social media are on display in classrooms and around school.
- All students have had Online safety training each year and this is supported by an external training provider ECP.
- Intervention extends into our 6<sup>th</sup> form also.

#### **The school's anti-bullying principles are also publicised via**

- Displays and information regarding ways of seeking help.
- The school Bullying Intervention Charter is available to students in addition to the Stopfordian Ethos which outlines general expectations.
- A **leaflet** is distributed to students and is available to parents at parents' evenings to further raise awareness regarding responsible use of social media and the internet. The information provided changes with new developments and is pertinent to the needs and possible risks pupils could be exposed to.

### **The School Anti-Bullying Intervention Charter**

REMEMBER: a bully is only successful if the person they are bullying feels powerless.

If I see bullying behaviour I should ...

- let an adult I trust know

If I am being bullied I should....

- let an adult I trust know or request to speak to a peer mentor
- keep a diary to record the 5 W's: who, what, when, where, witnesses.
- be prepared to say who is behaving like a bully

If I am behaving like a bully, I should...

- think about why I have behaved in this way
- put myself in the other person's shoes
- let an adult I trust know. Together we will come up with strategies to help me change my behaviour and show that I can take responsibility for my actions and learn from my mistakes.

**REMEMBER:**

- **Stay away from bullies**
- **Tell someone**
- **Avoid bad situations**
- **Make friends**
- **Project confidence OUT BULLYING!**
- **“STAND TOGETHER, BEAT BULLYING”**

**Other sources of support for children and parents:**

Childline 0800 1111

Kidscape 0171 730 3300 [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

Parentline 01702 559900

Advisory Centre for Education 0171 354 8321

Anti – Bullying Alliance [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org)

Bullying online (advice and information about bullying) [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Bullying: Don't suffer in silence (DfES guidance) [www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying)

Confidential online advice service for teenagers: [www.there4me.com](http://www.there4me.com)

<http://www.childline.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>

NSPCC [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

**Legislative links:**

Schools' duty to promote good behaviour (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 89)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/89>

Power to tackle poor behaviour outside school (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 89(5)) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/89>

The Equality Act 2010 <http://homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/>

**Specialist Organisations:**

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues. <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Beatbullying: A bullying prevention charity with an emphasis on working directly with children and young people. In addition to lesson plans and resources for parents, Beatbullying have developed the Cybermentors peer support programme for young people affected by cyberbullying. <http://www.beatbullying.org/>

Kidscape: Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection. Advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people. <http://www.kidscape.org.uk/index.shtml>

Restorative Justice Council: Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011. <http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/>

### **Cyberbullying:**

ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves. <http://childnet-int.org/>

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/> - A website that provides advice and guidance to parents and young people about staying safe on the internet.