



## **Bury St Edmunds County Upper School**

### **Bullying (including Child Abuse and Safeguarding)**

#### Principles

County Upper School sets out to be a community and the basis of its rules and procedures is that all members show courtesy and consideration to others and their property.

The school's Equal Opportunities policy states that the ethos and environment of the school will provide a friendly, supportive and secure atmosphere for all.

The whole staff accepts that bullying is contrary to these aims and undermines their implementation. Accordingly, all staff are alert to signs of bullying, deal firmly with such behaviour and encourage students to talk about incidents of which they are aware.

The guidelines below are to enable all staff to undertake consistent preventive, corrective and supportive work with bullies and victims within the context of the wider code of behaviour.

#### Helpful Definitions

1. Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else.
2. Bullying is a way of depriving others of their freedom and well-being by intimidation and victimisation. It happens when someone picks on someone else either mentally, emotionally, physically or verbally to get what they want and to scare the victims.

#### Preventive Action

1. Positive rules of social behaviour are clearly established.
2. Curricular work, particularly in Guidance and Drama, addresses the issues.
3. Victims and bullies often have a poor self image. An effective and achievable rewards system is accessible to raise the self esteem of all students.
4. The intention to remove bullying is declared in assemblies.
5. As with all graffiti, that which makes harmful or unkind comments about individuals, is removed as soon as it appears.
6. Attendance is monitored carefully to highlight actual and potential victims.
7. There are effective duty teams at all social times in the day. The positioning of the teams is regularly reviewed and responds to reports of areas where bullying may occur.
8. Many students are supervised and actively involved at the times when bullying can occur. As examples, a full extra-curricular programme is available to all and SEN students have some access to their rooms during free time.

### Corrective Action

1. A speedy, consistent response is given on all occasions by all adults.
2. No mixed messages are given - strong disapproval is always expressed with care given to where, when and with whom it should be carried out.
3. Every incident is recorded and monitored.
4. Alternative modes of behaviour are discussed.
5. Parents are involved in a constructive way.
6. The victim is kept informed throughout and consulted about possible courses of action. The aim is always to try and re-establish positive contact between the victim and the bully.

### Supportive Action

1. The bully is not totally rejected; as in all disciplinary situations, the behaviour is punished, the child is supported and ways of raising his/her self- esteem are found.
2. Both the victim and the bully receive appropriate support within academic situations if required.
3. The victim can be counselled, particularly if there is reason for the bullying (eg. hygiene.)
4. Reports of bullying are taken seriously and seen to be taken seriously so that students feel comfortable about reporting incidents.
5. Photos of all students are available from year tutors to help victims identify their bullies.
6. Both victims and bullies are prepared for the likelihood of peers being curious and asking about what happened. The answers to anticipated questions are rehearsed so that the matter can end quickly.

## Appendix 1. Immediate responses to bullying

If any member of staff is confronted by bullying, the following strategies may be helpful:

- remain calm; you are in charge. Reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun.
- take action as quickly as possible; think hard about whether this action needs to be private or public. At this stage, take only that action which is necessary to resolve the immediate situation; blame can only be apportioned after investigation, if at all.
- reassure the victim(s), don't make them feel inadequate or foolish.
- inform the appropriate pastoral staff as soon as possible and seek advice when you need it.
- never promise a victim total confidentiality since some colleagues will always need to know, but reinforce that the victim will be consulted about what action is taken.

## Appendix 2: **Cyber Bullying**

Cyber Bulling is bullying by:

- e-mail;
- text;
- 'phone messages;
- chatrooms;
- instant messaging *or*
- via the web.

### **Advice to students**

- don't put up with it. Always tell your Mum, Dad, teacher or friend who can help you find ways of stopping it;
- always be careful who you give your mobile 'phone number or e-mail address out to. If you start being bullied through your 'phone number or computer your mobile phone or internet service provider can help you by changing your number or address;
- if you receive messages that upset or frighten you, make a record of the times and dates you received them and report them to a teacher or, if appropriate, the police;
- don't respond to abusive e-mails or messages – simply log-off or switch off.

### **School Action**

- school to focus on cyber-bullying thorough assemblies and PHSE lessons to inform and educate both students and staff about the misuse of the technology;
- school will treat cyber bullying in the same way as other forms of bullying in line with the Bullying Policy.

#### **Useful Websites for Students/Staff on Cyber-Bullying**

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

[www.coastkid.org](http://www.coastkid.org)

[www.bullyonline.org](http://www.bullyonline.org).

*an excellent site for information and links  
information and interactive site for students  
site set up by the bullies*

### Appendix 3. Appropriate punishments for bullying

- where possible, discuss and agree punishment with the student; whatever the outcome, it is important that the student is involved in this way.
- a piece of written work on the theme of bullying may make the student think through the consequences of his/her action. This can often be completed in a detention.
- a reprimand, backed by explanation of why bullying is so unacceptable, may be judged enough in a first instance.
- loss of break and lunchtimes may be appropriate and reinforce the need to build trust in the student's ability to behave reasonably in free time.'
- severe or prolonged bullying may attract formal exclusion.
- beware being aggressive to the bully yourself as this sends a mixed message and try to end on a positive note for the sake of both bully and victim.

#### Appendix 4. Warning signs

Any of the following may be indicators that a child is the victim of bullying. The list is not exhaustive, and perhaps one of the best signs is **Change**: in behaviour, routines, progress at school or in social groupings.

##### a. Attendance:-

- frequent small illnesses without obvious external symptoms eg. headaches, stomach aches, feeling dizzy, feeling sick but not being sick.
- excuses for not going to school/excuses to delay departure.
- afraid of walking to school.
- persistent requests to be driven to school.
- avoidance of 'missing' the school bus.
- truancy or lateness to or from school.
- changing route to/from school.
- hanging around after school.
- trying to stay indoors/excessively 'helpful.'

##### b. Academic:-

- underachievement.
- withdrawal from oral activities.
- avoidance of certain lessons eg. sick.
- work, equipment lost or destroyed.
- spend hours doing 'extra' homework: for example, homework for the bully.

##### c. Social:-

- withdrawal from school/class activities.
- alone.
- abusive language.
- temper flare-ups.
- hitting out at others.
- personality change.
- touch taboo/flinching.
- becomes uncommunicative.
- hanging around adults - weak excuses.
- loss of confidence.

##### d. Physical:-

- cuts, bruises.
- torn clothes, damaged property.
- stammering.
- refusal to eat.
- obsessive cleanliness.
- nightmares, bed wetting, sleep walking, fear of dark.
- hunger - lunch money taken.
- nail biting.

##### e. Other:-

- losing pocket money.
- regularly asking for extra money.
- unlikely explanations for behaviour changes.
- running away.
- attempting suicide.

## Appendix 5. Child Abuse

Essentially this constitutes bullying by adults. All staff must act as follows if a student discloses information about incidents:-

- do not promise confidentiality; at the earliest possible stage, and preferably before any disclosure, ensure that the student understands that you have to pass the information on to the named person in the school (currently Mrs Neale or Mr McWilliam, acting on her behalf).
- during a disclosure, listen and support the student but take care not to "put words in his/her mouth"; don't push the student to say more than he/she wants to at this stage. don't ask to see marks which are not already visible.
- after a disclosure, offer the student options for the transfer of the information. These can include your seeing the named person on the student's behalf or with the student. Explain that the named person will want to talk to the student directly, even if you make the initial contact alone.
- see the named person yourself as soon as possible and certainly in the same session of the school day.
- make a written statement of the information given to you by the student and any marks which are visible.

All subsequent action will be taken by the named person who will report back to you and offer advice if the student wishes to have further contact with you.

## Appendix 6. Staff Conduct

In order to follow current Child Protection procedures and to minimize the likelihood of a student making an allegation against a member of staff, staff are required to ensure the following:

- that they remember at all times that our duty of care to sixth form students is identical to that for years nine to eleven and act accordingly;
- when seeing individual students, particularly of the opposite sex, they leave the door open. If the topic is likely to be sensitive or they have concerns about the possible student response they should inform a colleague of the interview beforehand so that the details and intentions are known in advance to another member of staff. In some cases it may be best to have a second colleague present. **ALWAYS** err on the side of caution and seek advice in **advance**;
- avoid discussing matters of a personal nature with students of the opposite sex, particularly where the intention could be misconstrued. This is especially relevant with older students. For example, it would be inappropriate for a male tutor to discuss strappy tops and short skirts with a sixth form student.

Staff should also familiarise themselves with:

- the code of conduct for the use of ICT;
- the Suffolk policy, adopted by the governing body entitled “Whole School Policy For Safeguarding Children” which is available on the Suffolk Schools’ Portal.