

SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

RATIONALE

The community of Southend High School for Boys considers bullying in all its forms intolerable.

Bullying must be addressed because:

- it is wrong;
- it makes individuals unhappy;
- it can destroy an individual's self esteem;
- individuals who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their work and achieve success;
- individuals may try to avoid being bullied by not attending school;
- individuals who observe unchallenged bullying behaviour may copy this anti-social behaviour;
- bullying behaviour runs contrary to the ethos of the school.

This policy explains:

- the school's attitude to bullying behaviour;
- its aim to establish a caring and supportive ethos within the school;
- the procedures to be followed when bullying has taken place.

This policy also acknowledges that as well as bullying amongst pupils, bullying can take place between children and adults, and amongst adults. This policy applies to all such situations, with the understanding that if there is an allegation of bullying by a member of staff towards a pupil, then this policy provides the necessary guidance for the care of the pupil, but the management of the staff member will be subject to appropriate HR procedures. Guidance is given separately to staff regarding pupil behaviour management, classroom relationships and the use of awards and sanctions.

The Headteacher has a duty to do all that is reasonable to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees and so action will also be taken to prevent bullying occurring in the workplace.

AIM

Southend High School for Boys promotes an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form. The aim of this policy is to outline the measures that we take to ensure that all members of the school feel supported and safe within our environment.

At Southend High School for Boys, we:

- encourage a caring, tolerant community;
- protect the safety and happiness of pupils and staff;
- raise awareness of bullying behaviour so that all members of the community are alert to the signs of bullying, and know what to do should an issue arise;
- challenge all bullying behaviour;
- have clear procedures in place to deal with bullying behaviour;
- promote the school's '2020 Vision', which rejects bullying behaviour and encourages co-operative

- behaviour;
- enable pupils to develop their individual talents and abilities in a safe and tolerant community.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is defined as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally. Bullying involves the abuse of *power* (for example, power related to size, age, number, intellect etc), it *is persistent* and it *is personal* to the individual. A one-off act of random aggression or abuse against an individual, whilst clearly unacceptable, may not be part of a bullying scenario.

Bullying may be:

Physical: pushing and shoving, kicking, tripping up, hitting, pinching, any form of violence, threats, taking belongings.

Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.

Emotional: tormenting, name calling, threatening ridicule, spreading nasty stories, humiliation, exclusion from groups or activities.

Racial: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, exclusion from groups or activities.

Sexual: unwanted physical contact, abusive comments, 'homophobic' taunting.

Cyber: involving any of the above via social media, e-mail, chat rooms, text/voice messaging, doctoring of picture or video.

Driven by prejudice: This might be homophobia, racism, or victimising those who have special needs or disabilities. It may be, for example, picking on a pupil because they are cared for away from home or it may be picking on a pupil who cares for a sick relative.

Three common characteristics of bullying behaviour are:

- it is deliberately hurtful behaviour
- it is repeated often over a period of time
- it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

CREATING A CARING AND SUPPORTIVE ETHOS

The school aims to foster a positive set of values, such as integrity, tolerance and compassion for others. Various school policies and systems, including the '2020 Vision' statement, the Behaviour Policy and the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme, underpin the right of every individual to be free from bullying and help promote an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

It is important that we create an atmosphere in the school where pupils who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns.

Individuals must be encouraged to come forward and tell of any bullying which they have experienced or observed. An open and frank atmosphere within tutor groups is one effective way of enabling this to happen. Pupils can be advised to speak to an appropriate older person, rather than staff, in the first instance if they would prefer this.

SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN PUPILS

Despite attempts to encourage openness, pupils who are being bullied will not always be prepared to tell those in authority. Staff and others should be alert to the following signs in a pupil, which ***might*** indicate that bullying is taking place:

- unwillingness to come to school;
- withdrawn, isolated behaviour or a desire to remain with adults;
- decrease in confidence or self-esteem;
- changes to usual routine;
- complaining about missing possessions;
- refusal to talk about a problem;
- becomes easily distressed, or more aggressive or disruptive;
- damaged or incomplete work;
- physical signs such as bruising.

Staff need to take special note if these difficulties are associated with a pupil who may have particular special needs, a pupil from a minority racial group or cultural background, or where there may be other indications of sexual harassment.

WHERE BULLYING IS SUSPECTED TOWARDS A PUPIL

Each case will be treated individually and depending on circumstances, one or more of the following strategies will be employed:

- If a member of staff receives an allegation of bullying, he/she should take the matter seriously and offer immediate support.
- If the matter appears of minor proportions, the member of staff could try to resolve the problem by mediating with the pupils involved, for example helping two pupils to find their own solution to a minor disagreement. This issue should then be reported to the Form Tutor/ Year Leader/Pastoral Administrator to ensure that the issue is logged appropriately. It is important to check whether this is an isolated event or part of a pattern. In all cases, appropriate follow-up checks will then be made.
- If the issue is more serious, the member of staff should immediately inform the Year Leader/Director of Key Stage. It is important that a serious allegation is thoroughly and properly investigated. The Year Leader should decide who is to carry out that investigation. The pupils (both antagonist and victim) should then be interviewed and asked to provide short, written accounts. Any witnesses should also be asked to provide a written statement.
- The Year Leader, in liaison with the Director of Key Stage and, if appropriate, Deputy Head (Pastoral), should then decide upon the appropriate course of action.

TAKING APPROPRIATE ACTION

It is important to make it clear to:

- the victim, that revenge is not appropriate;
- the antagonist, that the bullying behaviour is unacceptable.

A judgement will be taken as to appropriate action. This could include:

- seeking an apology from the antagonist (this may be a written apology with an undertaking that bullying will not recur);

- informing the parents of the victim and the antagonist;
 - giving a detention to the antagonist;
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- recommending to the Headteacher an exclusion of the antagonist for an appropriate amount of time;
 - providing support, perhaps mentoring, for the victim of the bullying;
 - providing support, perhaps counselling, for the antagonist;
 - monitoring the situation over subsequent weeks;
 - ensuring the victim knows how to deal with any further incidents in the meantime.

All incidents should be recorded on the central anti-bullying record, and the 'check in' procedure outlined below adopted.

RECORDING INCIDENTS OF BULLYING TOWARDS PUPILS

The Year Leader, or the person investigating the bullying incident, should ensure that the information is passed to the administrator with oversight of the central record.

From this point, monthly check-ins with both the victim and antagonist will be made and the outcome recorded centrally.

The issue will be marked as 'closed' once 6 months have passed without further incident. At this point, a letter will be sent to the parents of both parties highlighting that whilst the issue is marked as closed, both students should let the school know of any further issues.

The incident will remain on the log even when marked as closed. This is to enable future reference to be made if necessary.

COMBATING BULLYING IN THE WORK-PLACE

Various school policies - the Code of Conduct, the Whistleblowing Policy, the Equalities & Diversity Policy - should reduce the possibility of bullying amongst teaching and support staff.

However, staff who feel that they are the victims of bullying by their colleagues, by management, or by students, should be encouraged to speak to a senior member of staff in the first instance. If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, resort to the school's grievance procedures may be necessary.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE EXTENT OF BULLYING WITHIN THE SCHOOL AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL'S ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The number of logged incidents will be reviewed termly by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and subsequently reported to the Governors' Curriculum and Pupil Matters Committee.

The effectiveness of this Anti-bullying Policy will be regularly reviewed by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Curriculum and Pupil Matters Committee (and, if relevant, at the Personnel Committee).