

Primary Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

At BSG, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to focus on prevention. However, if incidents do occur we have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Defining Bullying

Bullying is a wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone.

Bullying is

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated over a period of time (though one-off incidents can be equally traumatic!)
- Difficult for individuals to defend themselves against

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Objectives of this Policy

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents will know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- Pupils and parents will be assured that they will be supported if bullying is reported.
- The message needs to be clear: **Bullying is too important not to report. Bullying will not be tolerated.**

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

Prevention

Prevention is the most important tool in combatting bullying. The following strategies, which are both proactive and supportive, will be used:

- We will establish a restorative rather than punitive ethos and culture in line with the school behavior policy.

- All members of staff (academic and administrative) must be made aware that bullying will not be accepted at BSG. As all members of staff are responsible for the implementation of the school rules, so they will be for the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy.
Staff training is an integral part of the anti-bullying stance at BSG. All staff are made aware of the policy and procedures and anti-bullying week helps provide opportunities for focused discussion and training.
- Staff will lead by example in modelling behavior. All staff should be positive role models and avoid:
 - Sarcastic comments
 - Derogatory nicknames
 - Dominating and humiliating behaviour
 - Listen to pupils when they are willing to talk about bullying
 - Be sensitive to pupils' needs for privacy and respect
- Members of staff should be vigilant about:
 - a) Setting a proper example of respect kindness, courtesy and good manners.
 - b) Ensuring that standards of discipline are maintained in a controlled and caring atmosphere.
 - c) Dealing promptly and effectively with all reported incidents of bullying.
 - d) Recording of all bullying incidents and action taken.
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- Pupils should be expressly taught, during PSHCE lessons and assemblies, the values and principles of:
 - Rights of the individual
 - Tolerance of individual differences
 - Social responsibility i.e., caring for all members of a community
 - Appropriate reporting of rule-breaking, i.e. when telling is appropriate
 - The difference between good and bad secrets
 - The correct use of the complaints procedureLessons/discussions of the issue will form part of the citizenship curriculum. Lessons dealing specifically with Internet safety will be part of the ICT curriculum

Class teachers should

- Raise awareness of bullying issue
- Discuss with their classes what is and is not bullying
- Teach assertiveness skills, to be able to say 'no' and to walk away
- Build self-esteem and confidence

- Ensure that bullying is an open issue, to be tackled and talked about
- Encourage all pupils to ignore taunts and seek help if necessary
- Playground supervisors will take care to be always alert for incidents, and step in before they develop. Provision should be made for adequate supervision and surveillance of potential danger zones'. Vulnerable pupils need to play where they do not feel threatened. Any slight concern of a member of staff will be highlighted to other staff through the use of the staff room board, in order to ensure vigilance by all.
- We will encourage parental involvement in making sure that pupils always feel able to talk to someone about bullying and through positive home-school communication involving parents in restorative processes as soon as possible.
Parental Responsibility will be made clear in terms of:
 - a) Specific support for the school policy on bullying once published
 - b) Prompt reporting in the first instance of all suspected bullying incidents to either the Primary Coordinator or the Principal who will co-ordinate any investigation

ANTI-BULLYING CODE

Procedures

The child:

- If a child is being bullied, feels tempted to bully or sees someone else being bullied, he/she should tell someone he/she trusts.

They could either tell: another pupil (their best friend, or an older pupil, perhaps) their parents, any member of staff, (their Class Teacher, the Principal, Primary Coordinator, Learning Support Coordinator, Teaching Assistant, administration staff, school councilor)



- In some cases, a person who is being bullied may not want to tell an adult because:
 - he/she does not want to tell tales
 - he/she is afraid of what his/her bully/bullies will do if he/she is found out
 - he/she does not want the bully to suffer
 - he/she is hoping it will go away
- If a child knows of someone who is being bullied, he/she should tell a trusted adult straightaway. The victim may be too scared or lonely to tell. To do nothing supports the bully.



- The victim/witness will be asked to give the facts of the incident – what they saw and heard (not what they think happened). They will be reassured that they are not in trouble and that they have done the correct thing in speaking to an adult about this.



- The child will be offered support in talking about how they feel about the situation and the next steps in dealing with this.

Adults:

The message that bullying should be reported must be strongly communicated to pupils.

- Parents will be encouraged to report any suspicions/incidents of bullying to the school at the earliest opportunity
- The first member of staff involved should report without delay to the Class Teacher, Primary Coordinator and Principal **before any action is taken. An incident form should be completed** (online in policy section -see appendix) and forwarded immediately to either the Primary Coordinator who will co-ordinate any investigation and ensure that the Principal is informed. In the absence of the Primary Coordinator, incidents must be reported to the Principal immediately.



- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated jointly by the above mentioned and appropriate action taken quickly.



- Alleged bullies and victims and any witnesses may be expected to provide detailed accounts of any incident for the Primary Coordinator /Principal. This may be a personally written or scribed account depending on age and ability.



- If, following investigation it is believed to have been a bullying incident, parents (of both parties) will also be informed and may be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem



- In line with the school behaviour policy the bully will receive the appropriate sanction which could ultimately result in suspension or exclusion. An attempt will also be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour through collaboration/support of the Learning Support Coordinator and/or school counsellor, class teacher and Primary Coordinator
- Support will be given to the victim and witnesses to ensure that they feel safe and understood in their school environment.



- A record of clearly substantiated incidents will be kept by the Primary Coordinator and School Principal

Outcomes

- 1) The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- 2) Parents will be informed that there has been an incident of bullying in which their child has been involved and the outcome of the investigation.
- 3) Serious cases may result in suspension or even exclusion. **The Suspension and Exclusion Policy** of the Secondary Department applies here.
- 4) If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.

5) After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.