

Anti-Bullying Policy

POLICY TITLE: Anti-Bullying Policy

STATUS Statutory

REVIEWED BY: Welfare Committee

DATE of LAST REVIEW: May 2013

DATE of NEXT REVIEW: May 2016

AIM:

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that all members of the school community learn and work in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and students, parents and staff should be able to feel confident that no bullying behaviour will be tolerated at Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School.

We recognise the effects that bullying can have on students' feelings of worth and on their school work, and the school community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment.

Bullying will not be tolerated between any members of the school community; between students, between students and staff, between parents and staff or between staff, by individuals or by groups. All members of the school community have an individual responsibility to act on and report any incidents of bullying and not to ignore them.

We aim to provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear, which is conducive to the achievement of individual aspirations, and to reduce and to eradicate wherever possible, instances in which students are subject to any form of bullying.

What is bullying?

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can involve one or more individuals targeting a lone victim, and can include a "silent majority" who observe but do not intervene or even incite further bullying.

The main types of bullying are:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture – including racist and faith based bullying and the bullying of traveller children
- Bullying related to SEN and disabilities –including harassment because of a disability/SEN.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation – including bullying of a homophobic nature
- Sexist or sexual bullying – including uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery, graffiti and remarks about appearance.

This is not an exhaustive list and any behaviour which singles out one or more people will not be tolerated.

The main methods of Bullying are:

- Cyberbullying - the use of e-mail, instant messaging, chat rooms, social networking sites, mobile phones, images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phones or other forms of information and communication technology to deliberately harass, threaten or intimidate someone.
- Physical – ranging from pushing and kicking to a serious assault, having possessions damaged or taken
- Verbal - name calling and threats, including remarks of a racist or homophobic nature
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious e-mails or messages on mobile phones.
- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding someone from social groups, tormenting

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy, nervous, withdrawn, lacking concentration, feigning illness, taking unusual absence or truanting from school. All members of the school community must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with the school policy.

Statutory duty of schools

The ‘Education and Inspections Act 2006’ states in section 89 that:

“Every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils”.

In addition, the ‘Equality Act 2010’ states that public bodies should have due regard to the need to:

“Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act”.

Criminal Law

The Department for Education guidance ‘Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for Head teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies’ (2011) states:

“Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986”.

At QEGS, if staff feel that an offence may have been committed we will consult with the School’s Police Liaison Team.

QEGS’ Behaviour Policy explains how we promote positive behaviour in school to create an environment where pupils behave well; where pupils take responsibility for each other’s emotional and social well-being; and where they include and support each other.

Our Equal Opportunities policy and the QEGS Code of Conduct also contribute to our work on creating an anti-bullying culture in school.

Implementation

School

At Queen Elizabeth’s Girls’ School we demonstrate our commitment to making sure our school provides a safe and caring environment through our curriculum.

Our curriculum is used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and our anti-bullying policy,
- Increase understanding for victims and help build an anti-bullying ethos
- To teach pupils how to constructively manage their relationships with others.

Current affairs, literature and historical events are chosen to reinforce our anti-bullying approach.

Assemblies, PSHE, Tutorial work including ‘Stop, Understand and Move On’ (SUMO) activities, Circle Time, role plays and stories are used to show what pupils can do to prevent bullying, and to create an anti-bullying climate in school.

- During the school day all staff have responsibility for monitoring the behaviour of students.
- If bullying is suspected or reported teachers are required to investigate the matter fully and as quickly as possible.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and the Form Tutor, Head of Year or senior member of staff involved as appropriate.
- Appropriate support will be given to those being bullied.
- Parents will be kept informed with feedback being given as appropriate, balancing the interests of all concerned.

- The following disciplinary sanctions can be used to deal with the unacceptable behaviour – verbal warnings, detention, meetings with parents, internal or external exclusion from school, permanent exclusion.
- Where bullying is of a racist or homophobic nature, it will be logged on the school's Racist Incidents Form or Homophobic Incidents Form. All reports will be taken seriously and will be followed up by member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Many young people are active users of social networking and other electronic communications. Although these sites are not accessible from school, the school will intervene where evidence is produced of cyber-bullying between members of the school community.

Students

Students are expected to take the appropriate action. Victims of bullying are strongly encouraged to report any kind of bullying. Any student who is aware of another student being bullied is expected to immediately report the incident to a peer mentor or an adult and all information will be acted upon.

Students must inform their Form Tutor, Head of Year or a senior member of staff if they are being bullied or if the student is unwilling to do so, they should speak in confidence to another appropriate member of staff.

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Being listened to and having their concerns taken seriously
- Being given on going support to restore self-esteem and confidence

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student become involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- Informing parents/guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.

We also offer the following support systems for students:

- Student Voice committee – offers a forum in which concerns about bullying can be discussed.
- Peer Listening Programme – a group of students have received training to enable them to provide a peer listening/mediation service in school. Two Peer Listeners are attached to each Year 7 and Year 8 tutor group.
- Restorative Justice – the school works closely with the Police Liaison Officer to offer this service which aims to resolve conflict and repair harm.
- Counselling – can be provided in school and through outside agencies.

Parents

Parents/guardians should:

- Regularly remind their daughter of the school Code of Conduct in order to reinforce the aims of the school and so minimise their chance of becoming involved in bullying.
- Be alert to signs that their daughter may be being bullied or that their daughter is bullying others.
- Ensure your daughter informs their Form Tutor, Head of Year or a senior member of staff if she is being bullied. If she is unwilling to do so, she should speak to another appropriate member of staff.
- Work with the school to resolve incidents of bullying rather than making contact with students or their parents directly.
- Record any incidents of bullying and keep any evidence, digital or otherwise, to present to the school.
- Regularly monitor their daughter's use of mobile phones, social network sites and messaging sites. Parents should ensure that the appropriate parental controls are in force. Access to these sites is blocked in the school network but their use out of school hours can prove to be problematic and lead to incidents of bullying.
- Help to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.

Staff

Staff should refer to the Code of Professional Ethics which governs relations between staff. This can be located in the staff handbook.

Everyone within school is expected to:

- Act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another, and
- Adhere to and promote the objectives of this policy.

Monitoring, evaluation and review.

The school will review this policy every three years or more frequently if there are changes to policy or best practise guidelines. The implementation and effectiveness of the policy will be assessed by requesting regular feedback from staff, students and parents through questionnaires and monitoring the occurrence of incidents.

We will publish our anti-bullying policy on the school website.

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt effectively with an incident of bullying and we would ask that this be brought to the Headteacher's notice. If the Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure. Please see the school's Complaints Policy.

Appendix: Support Organisations

Anti-bullying Alliance	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Beat Bullying	www.beatbullying.org
Restorative Justice Council	www.restorativejustice.org.uk
Advisory Centre for Education	www.ace-ed.org.uk
Children's Legal Centre	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline	www.kidscape.org.uk/helpline 08451 205 204
Family Lives	www.familylives.org.uk
Bullying Online	www.bullying.co.uk
Childline	www.childline.co.uk 0800 11 11
NSPCC	www.nspcc.org.uk
Victim Support	www.victimsupport.com