



Anti-bullying Policy

1. Introduction

It is a fundamental principle of Trinity School that all members of the community – teachers, support staff and pupils – are expected to treat each other with courtesy and respect. Everyone has the right to be safe and secure, whether at school or elsewhere, and to be protected when vulnerable, so that they may flourish without fear of unfair treatment or harassment.

Failure by any member of the school community to treat others with courtesy and respect undermines the ethos and wellbeing of the whole school, and will always be regarded as a serious matter. The School's approach to bullying is clear: it is always unacceptable. It damages children and the School will, therefore, do all it can to prevent it.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person through the threat of violence or humiliation or by isolating them either physically or online. Sometimes the perpetrator is just being thoughtless. Bullying causes fear and distress for the victim(s) and may distract them from their school work. It may also affect other pupils who witness it and it can damage the atmosphere in a class or even in the entire school.

The aim of this policy is therefore to describe what the School understands as bullying, establish the School's stance towards such unacceptable behaviour, indicate how it will be dealt with and how it may be prevented from occurring.

The statutory framework which governs anti-bullying strategy in all schools in England is provided in Appendix 1 of this policy. This policy pays particular regard to the 2010 Equality Act, the provisions of the 1989 Children's Act and KCSIE 2016, whereby a bullying incident should be treated as a Safeguarding concern when there is "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm."

2. Definition of bullying

Any behaviour which makes another person feel uncomfortable or threatened may be construed as bullying – whether intended or not. Bullying may be of a racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise personal nature such as commenting on a person’s culture, religious background or disability, or holding up members of a person’s family to ridicule on the basis of their race, gender, sexuality, religious belief, disability or appearance, or because of the fact of the person targeted by the bully/bullies being adopted, or looked after, or looking after others themselves.

There are many definitions of bullying, but most have three things in common:

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

Bullying can take many forms but the main types are:

- i. Physical – this may include fighting, hitting, kicking, taking or damaging belongings, setting up someone else to get the blame for a breach of school rules; initiation ceremonies.
- ii. Emotional or psychological – this may include excluding someone from a group, activity or place; spreading rumours, being deliberately unfriendly; unpleasant digital communication or telephone calls or unpleasant material placed on websites.
- iii. Verbal – this may include aggressive name calling, teasing, mockery, insults, use of homophobic, racist, sexist, and other types of discriminatory language. Any or all of the listed forms of bullying may, by some, be considered to be harmless ‘banter’ but will still be considered as bullying behaviour by the School.
- iv. Sexual harassment – this may include making inappropriate comments about appearance and attractiveness, uninvited propositions, uninvited touching and using innuendo or inappropriate imagery. The School also considers the showing of sexual and/ or pornographic material which could be upsetting to those who view it as a form of sexual harassment.
- v. Cyberbullying – this is the use of information and communications technology particularly mobile phones, email, social websites, text messages, cameras and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. It may occur in or outside school and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially large audience and/or more accessories, since others are able to ‘forward on’ bullying content at a click.

3. Promoting positive behaviour at Trinity School

The School, at all times, seeks to promote a culture of courtesy and mutual respect amongst all members of the School’s community. Positive values of mutual respect and consideration will be promoted within the school in a wide range of contexts from assembly and tutorial periods to informal discussion. The Personal Development course will address the topic of bullying directly.

Tutors will also remind pupils at the start of each academic year of their responsibility to ensure that bullying does not occur and to talk to a member of staff if they witness or suspect bullying.

Staff will receive anti-bullying training as part of induction and ongoing CPD. The Heads of Section and Heads of Year will identify any patterns relating to bullying behaviour and decide what action needs to be taken to prevent recurrences of such behaviour.

All First Year boys receive a talk in the Autumn Term on bullying – how to recognise it, how to combat it, why it must not be tolerated. The School addresses the nature and implications of bullying through our programmes in Personal Development, through discussions and presentations during tutor periods and through Assemblies. Tutors in particular are encouraged to make use of such opportunities to explore with their forms why bullying is unacceptable.

Online, the School monitors and filters anything connected to the Trinity School Network. Personal devices connected to other networks cannot be monitored by the School, but through the ICT AUP, the Personal Development curriculum, online safety ‘themes of the fortnight’ and our Computing curriculum pupils are educated as to good and safe use of digital technologies.

Information available in the DfE advice documents listed below will be used to inform the messages disseminated to the School community:

- Preventing and tackling bullying (DFE, July 2017)
- Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff (DFE, November 2014)
- Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying (DFE, November 2014)

The School aims to ensure parents are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents should feel confident that the School will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child. The School also expects all parents to reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.

Further measures taken and aims of the School in relation to tackling bullying include:

- i. All pupils are given clear advice about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders
- ii. The School regularly evaluates and updates its approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance by updating ‘acceptable use’ policies for computers and regularly reviewing and updating this policy.
- iii. The School implements disciplinary sanctions for bullying behaviour. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable
- iv. We aim, through discussions in tutor groups and lessons, to openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality, also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. We also give clear advice to pupils and staff that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable and aim to challenge the use of such language any time it is used

The School can draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations (such as *Stonewall*) with proven track records and which provide resources for dealing effectively with certain forms of bullying

The School aims to provide effective staff training in anti-bullying. We understand that policies are most effective when all school staff understand the principles and purpose of the School's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support.

The School will work with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and/or where a criminal offence may have been committed, including working with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school

The School aims to make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils are also encouraged through Personal Development lessons and assemblies to feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school, including cyber-bullying

The School aims to sustain an inclusive environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause and nature of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination

The School aims to celebrate success in addressing bullying issues. Celebrating success is recognised by the School as an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue.

4. What is expected of staff, pupils, parents and governors?

All members of the Trinity School community - and this includes staff, pupils, parents and governors - have a responsibility to show that they believe that any form of bullying is unacceptable and to set an example which reflects that view.

All members of the School should help to create an atmosphere in which bullying and inappropriate behaviour or language that demeans any individual or section of society, will be spoken of openly, taken seriously and responded to with appropriate action.

The school expects staff, pupils, parents and governors to:

- treat other people with respect and sensitivity – including (but not limited to) members of the school and the wider community; members of other schools; visitors and exchange students.
- think carefully before speaking/acting (whether face-to-face or via any form of media) in ways which may cause upset
- respect and celebrate differences and variety

Bullying must be dealt with quickly and firmly because it is a very serious matter. Bullying can cause serious and long-term physical and psychological damage to a victim. In extreme cases,

bullying can lead to suicide. The whole school community has a responsibility to combat bullying. And action which is taken make take careful account of the needs of both the victim and the bully.

4a. Advice to Pupils

Bullying and its effects can only be dealt with if responsible adults are made aware of what is happening. Pupils must, therefore, tell their Form Tutor or any other responsible member of the school community (which could be your Head of Year, any teacher, the nurses, a prefect, your form mentor) whenever

- they feel that they have been a victim of bullying.
- they see someone else being bullied – this includes what you see or hear when online or using your phone
- they have bullied someone themselves and would like to stop.

Any person who suspects bullying should report it to their Tutor or Head of Year. Telling is absolutely necessary. The bully believes he or she is safe so long as nobody tells. In fact we help nobody - victim, school, bully or future victims - by keeping such behaviour secret. For victims and onlookers to tell is not just their right, it is an obligation. In the end, telling helps everybody.

4b. Advice to parents:

A parent who is concerned that a pupil (their own son/daughter or another pupil) may be being bullied, should speak to their child's Tutor, the relevant Head of Year, Head of Section, the Deputy Headmaster or the Headmaster.

4c. Advice to staff:

Whenever, in their professional judgement, staff deem it appropriate, they should remind pupils of the definition and meaning of bullying which the School has adopted. This might, for example, be during a tutor meeting, on a coach to a sports fixture, during a lesson or while supervising the queue in the dining hall. The intention of this expectation is that the anti-bullying culture which the School has worked hard to create is maintained and, indeed, enhanced.

All staff receive training in terms of identifying and responding to bullying as part of their induction; discussion of concerns about the wellbeing of individual pupils also forms a normal part of tutors' meetings, departmental meetings and Heads of Years meetings.

Victims and observers of bullying must be encouraged to tell a responsible adult.

All staff must be alert to the possibility that bullying may occur at any time and any place. Staff should be sensitive to changes in behaviour, mood, and patterned absenteeism. If you believe you have noticed such a pattern emerging, make a written and dated note of your observations.

Staff must take every incident of bullying seriously and speak directly to the Form Tutor and Head of Year should they learn about bullying behaviour within the School's community. For a

member of staff to allow or to condone the bullying of a pupil is an extremely serious matter. If a member of staff is found to have behaved in this way then an investigation, led by the Deputy Head (Pastoral), will take place.

Although bullying can occur at any time and in virtually any location, staff should take particular note of the following times/locations:

- before and after school, including at the bus stops
- during break and lunchtime in classrooms; remember that, below the Sixth Form, boys from one year group are not permitted to be in the form room of a different year group unless some specific permission has been given by a member of staff
- changing rooms (especially before and just after PE/Games sessions) and toilet facilities
- Perimeter areas of the School grounds – especially the wooded area bordering the lower fields.
- In corridors between lessons – be alert for signs such as intimidatory body language being used by one pupil towards another
- During lessons – be aware and respond firmly to any malice or derision being directed towards one pupil's contributions.
- On school transport – pupils appointed as 'Coach Monitors' are expected to report any bullying behaviour to their respective Head of Section as soon as possible.

5. Dealing with an allegation of bullying

All reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated by pastoral staff, supervised by the relevant Head of Section. Investigations will involve interviewing alleged victims and perpetrators, as well as witnesses, if there were other pupils present at the time of the incident or who have other relevant information. In the cases of cyberbullying, a digital record of the evidence will be made (e.g. saving screenshots) if possible. In cases where an allegation is made but evidence (e.g. independent witnesses, digital records) is unavailable, and the alleged perpetrator denies involvement, it will not always be possible for sanctions to be applied. However, the following action will be taken:

- a report of the investigation will be kept
- all of the pupils involved will be made explicitly aware that the behaviour in question is unacceptable and should they be involved in this or similar behaviour in future, the School would take serious action.

In an instance of alleged bullying, the Form Tutor has the responsibility for initiating the School's response and he or she may take advantage of the expertise of any other member of staff, subject to the following considerations:

- a Form Tutor must inform the appropriate Head of Year and Head of Section.
- the Head of Year should enter details of the incident on to the Bullying Log on Gateway
- the Head of Section(s) must be informed whenever parents are contacted.
- The Deputy Headmaster is to be apprised of the incident and the steps taken in response to it.
- serious bullying must be reported to both sets of parents in a calm, clear and reassuring manner.

In dealing with bullying, the following considerations should apply:

- always talk sensitively and privately to both victim and bully
- a written and dated statement should be made and kept on file
- guarantee some protection to the victim
- try not to allow the victim to feel foolish or inadequate
- if appropriate, get older pupils to befriend the victim of persistent bullying
- the victim may need some assertiveness training and advice on how to respond to, or avoid, similar incidents in future
- the bully must see and feel the School's (and his/her parents') disapproval and must understand that his/her acts must stop
- try to get the bully to see the victim's point of view - empathy is the key to improvement; this may entail a face to face meeting
- with a group, deal with the pupils separately, but remember that it is unwise to make a separate example of the leader
- the bully may also require subsequent support
- where possible and thought to be of help, the bully should be involved in reparatory behaviour which may include, for example, formally expressing an apology to the person(s) who has been hurt.
- ultimately, continued bullying is likely to lead to the Headmaster considering a pupil's membership of the School, in accordance with the procedures set out in the School's [Behaviour and Sanctions Policy](#).
- It is not uncommon for pupils at Trinity to approach members of staff with concerns about a fellow member of the School who is being bullied. As far as is possible and consistent with allegations being investigated fairly, pupils who express such concerns should be allowed to remain anonymous. Any such concern expressed must be treated seriously. Information or evidence they may supply should be written down, by the pupil, and the statement dated. Where such information leads to an incident of bullying being uncovered, it is appropriate, at a later point, to acknowledge the positive contribution made by pupils who give such information, in a way that is discreet – for example, a written note to a tutor or parent and private word of encouragement and appreciation for the pupil in question, in line with the School's [Behaviour and Sanctions Policy](#).
- It is possible that an incident of bullying may have implications in terms of Safeguarding, according to the terms of the 1989 Children's Act and KCSIE 2016, as indicated in the introductory paragraph above. For example, if bullying of one pupil by another has been carried out with the involvement of an adult, or where investigation of the behaviour causing a child to bully reveals significant information about that child's personal circumstances, the School's Designated Safeguarding Officer should be informed without delay.

6. Sanctions for bullying

Punishment needs careful consideration and must go hand in hand with pastoral advice and, if needed, counselling:

- allegations must be substantiated
- the bully may have had some provocation and needs to be listened to.
- the bullying behaviour may be related to a deeper issue in that child's life and circumstances

In accordance with the School's [Behaviour and Sanctions Policy](#), a pupil found to have bullied another member of the School community can expect to receive a sanction. This is likely to be a Saturday Detention or a suspension. If the circumstances and nature of the bullying are regarded by the Headmaster and his Deputies as serious enough, immediate permanent exclusion may be considered, in line with the School's [Behaviour and Sanctions Policy](#), which states:

“Exclusion may also be used when a pupil’s behaviour jeopardises the education of others or places the School or other members of the School community at risk.”

The 2010 Education Act grants powers to schools to authorise searches of personal electronic devices including, but not limited to, mobile phones, laptops and tablets, where there is reason to suspect these devices contain material which has been used, or could be used, to bully another person. Where this is thought to be the case, the Headmaster or his Deputies may authorise a search of any such devices that may be on the school site, or may require them to be produced in order that such a search can take place.

Counselling may need to extend to the whole form/tutor group.

7. Criminal law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, 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.

If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they will seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

8. Bullying outside school premises

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on in accordance with the procedure above. The Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster, or Designated Safeguarding Lead will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or other agencies of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

Teachers have the authority to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises in accordance with the [Behaviour and Sanctions Policy](#). This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops or during an educational visit.

Appendix 1 Statutory Framework

What does the law say and what does the School have to do?

Every school must have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

Independent School Standard Regulations 2010

The Independent School Standards Regulations 2010 provide that the proprietor of an Academy or other independent school is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Maintained schools and Academies are required to comply with the new Equality Duty. Part 6 of the Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way it provides education for pupils, provision of pupil access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment. In England and Wales Part 6 of the Act applies to maintained schools and Academies and to other independent schools.

Safeguarding children and young people

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

Criminal law

See Item 7 in this policy

Cyber-bullying

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. Separate advice on teachers’ powers to search (including statutory guidance on dealing with electronic devices) is available – see below for a link to this document.

For more information on how to respond to cyber-bullying and how pupils can keep themselves safe, please refer to the Childnet International link under ‘further resources’.

Further Resources

Further information is available online by following the links below:

- Preventing and tackling bullying (DFE, October 2014)
- Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools (DFE, March 2014)
- Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff (DFE, November 2014)
- Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying (DFE, November 2014)

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