

Anti-Bullying Policy



The Cottesloe School

Policy Type:	Statutory (as part of behaviour management)
Reviewed by:	Teaching, Learning and Achievement Committee
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Last reviewed:	November 2018
Next review:	Autumn Term 2022 (earlier any legislative change)

As The Cottesloe School, it would be naive of us not to realise that in a community of over one thousand children/adolescents, bullying, in various forms, is likely to occur. As it is often a secretive activity, we need to develop and maintain strategies that seek to change attitudes and create a school ethos that will not tolerate bullying of any kind; in short, make bullying socially unacceptable. Schools as public bodies have duties under The Equality Act 2010 to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

The school has introduced an Anti-bullying Ambassador programme whereby two students from each Year Group volunteer to help to promote the anti-bullying culture of the school.

A national annual anti-bullying survey carried out by Ditch the Label in 2019 reported that

'27% of all young people have witnessed bullying within the past 12-months, 22% of students surveyed reported that they had been bullied in the past 12 months, and 2% of students had said that they had bullied someone in the past 12 months.

45% of students that had been bullied, were bullied at least once a month, and 31%, once a week. 59% of those that were bullied, thinks this is because of their appearance. The majority of those being bullied said that it was being done by a classmate.

For those students who had said that they had been bullied, 45% said they felt depressed, 33% had suicidal thoughts, and over a quarter self-harmed. A third of students said that it had a moderate to extreme impact on their own mental health.

72% of those that had been bullied, had reported it, 28% never told anybody.

Definition

'There is no legal definition of bullying. But it is usually defined as repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically, and is often aimed at certain people because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation or any other aspect such as appearance or disability'.

At The Cottesloe School we believe that the following is a simple definition of bullying that is understood by all:

'a group or person repeating unkind behaviour'

Repeated verbal or physical actions over time that intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs, adopted or a carer and disability. It might be motivated by actual differences between children or perceived differences. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email)

Bullies have some things in common:

- they tend to have assertive, aggressive attitudes over which they exercise little control;
- they tend to lack empathy; they have difficulty imagining what the victim feels;
- they tend to lack guilt; they rationalise that the victim somehow deserves the bullying treatment;
- they have suffered some form of emotional damage through their relationships to date.

Some bullies act individually, to demonstrate their power or leadership to their friends as well as to witnesses. Some bullies actively persuade others to join them in bullying, to confirm solidarity of the group. In essence, bullying is a cowardly activity since there is a clear imbalance of social power and/or physical prowess in favour of the bully.

Victims may be students who:

- are new to the school;
- are different in appearance, academic ability, speech, sexuality or background;
- suffer from low self-esteem (it is not clear whether this is a cause or effect of bullying);
- demonstrate 'entertaining' reactions when bullied, e.g. tantrums or loss of control;
- are more anxious or nervous.

Cyber Bullying

In recent years, with the spread of electronic communication, bullying has extended to the victim's home and when social networking sites are involved, to large numbers of other students in a short space of time. The impact of this type of bullying at home and at school is presenting a huge challenge to parents and school staff.

As outlined in Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017, the government has advised schools to take a firm stance against online bullying. 'The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the Headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should

not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. ¹If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

The Cottesloe School abides by this advice and will confiscate electronic devices which we have reason to believe hold inappropriate content linked to bullying. The Cottesloe School reserves the right to pass on evidence, including that on electronic devices, to the police if deemed necessary.

Aims

In order to prevent and combat bullying The Cottesloe School makes every effort to:

- know the students we teach or come into contact with outside the classroom;
- be aware of the various forms of bullying;
- be alert to the signs that bullying may be taking place;
- supervise key areas around the school where bullying is likely to take place;
- create and maintain a caring attitude which encourages the victims of bullying, witnesses to incidents and students in general to speak out;
- deal appropriately with situations as they arise using clearly defined procedures for investigation of incidents;
- keep detailed records of incidents;
- support and counsel both the victim and the bully;
- emphasise prevention by using a variety of means to communicate the messages about bullying to students, parents and staff;
- communicate our values, beliefs and actions to all concerned;
- participate in training events and learn from examples of good practice either from colleagues within the school or from other schools;
- engage with the healthy relationship agenda;
- provide Internet security, filtering and ICT education

Guidelines for Staff

- be alert, observe the social relationships of the students in your tutor group, do not turn a blind eye to any incident whilst on duty or merely walking through the school;
- be aware of tell-tale signs such as absenteeism, under-achievement, emotional outbursts, frequent reporting to medical room, withdrawal from social time with other students or from participation in PE, the student that appears to be a 'loner';
- treat all incidents seriously; do not dismiss them as 'rough and tumble' or 'tittle - tattle' or as someone else's problem;
- listen to students' points of view by developing their confidence in discussing problems, perhaps through relevant activities during the 20 minute morning registrations and PSHCE activities;
- follow the agreed procedure for responding to incidents;
- try not to react aggressively yourself - your response should reflect the severity of the incident;
- show that you have a committed position on bullying by following up incidents at prearranged times;
- deal with minor incidents yourself, remembering to keep a detailed record, but do not hesitate to involve other members of staff, especially Heads of Years;
- ensure that any perceived racist, sexist or homophobic incidents are reported to the students Head of Year (HOY) so that it can be logged appropriately on the serious incidents log.

Signs and symptoms of bullying

Emotional and behavioural signs of bullying

- Changes in sleep patterns
- Changes in eating patterns
- Frequent tears or anger

¹ Section 62 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 defines prohibited images of children. Section 63 of the Criminal Justice and Immigrations Act 2008 defines extreme pornographic images.

- Mood swings
- Feels ill in the morning
- Becomes withdrawn or starts stammering
- Becomes aggressive and unreasonable
- Refuses to talk about what is wrong
- Begins to target siblings
- Continually 'loses' money or starts stealing.

Physical signs of bullying

- Has unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- Comes home with missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- Comes home hungry.

School signs of bullying

- Doesn't want to go to school
- Changes their route to school or are frightened of walking to school
- Doesn't want to go to school on the bus/tram/train
- School grades begin to fall.

Other signs of bullying - sometimes signs of bullying can be far more hidden - they can include:

- Often alone or excluded from friendship groups at school
- A frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule at school
- Unable to speak up in class and appears insecure or frightened.

Procedure for dealing with bullying behaviour within The Cottesloe School

Step 1

Any incident of bullying should be reported to school. The incident should be reported to the students HOY in the first instance. This can be done via the share it button on the school website, using the 'bully box', in person, via an anti-bullying ambassador or via a parent or other teacher . Any member of staff that receives information about bullying, or who witnesses bullying behaviours SHOULD pass this information onto the relevant HOY as soon as possible. Any teacher that is recording incidents of bullying on to Safeguard should 'tag' in the students HOY to make them aware.

The HOY will listen to the report, make notes, carry out an investigation and will communicate regularly and share information. Students involved will be requested to write statements. Confidentiality and sensitivity will be used, as appropriate.

Step 2

If it is concluded that a student has engaged in either unhealthy relationships or bullying behaviours, it will be made clear that this is a breach of the school's bullying policy and behaviour policy. Sanctions will be applied as necessary, in line with the behaviour policy.

Step 3

Parents may be notified of any serious or persistent incidents and may be requested to attend a meeting with the students' HOY.

Step 4

If appropriate and if agreed, a tailored support package would be put in place for all those involved (victim(s) and perpetrator(s)). This is in the form of the school's Healthy Relationships support programme.

Step 5

After an agreed period of time, a follow up meeting with those involved will be carried out. This will allow staff to gauge any progress made or unresolved issues to still be tackled. This will also focus on the success of the investigation and support strategies.

Step 6

Monthly, during a Wednesday pastoral meeting, a review of incidents will take place and a decision will be made by all attendees about whether the serious incident bullying log needs to be completed. Behaviour data, linked to incidents of unhealthy relationships will be analysed to further inform this.

Monitoring Bullying

All reported incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded on The Cottesloe School statement forms, safeguard, SIMS and the Serious Incidents Log. The number of reported incidents will be regularly reviewed.

Bullying is monitored in the school by

- Bullying logs
- Student questionnaires
- Year Head assemblies

Outcomes can only be discussed with the parents/carers of their child. Information and student academic records cannot be shared with other parties due to confidentiality and data protection.

Involvement of Parents/Other Adults

At The Cottesloe School we aim to support parents of children who are either bullying or being bullied. We support parents by discussing the problems and offering help and advice as soon as the situation becomes evident.

Bullying examples

Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours which are often combined.

Verbal abuse

- Name-calling
- saying nasty things to or about another student

Physical abuse

- hitting another student
- Pushing, tripping or jostling another student
- physical assault.

Emotional abuse

- making threats
- undermining another student
- excluding a student from a friendship group or activities.
- hiding or tampering with another students belongings

Cyberbullying/online bullying

- excluding another student from online games, activities or friendship groups
- sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos
- 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular student
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Impact of bullying

The emotional effects of being bullied include:

- sadness, depression and anxiety
- low self-esteem
- social isolation
- self-harm
- suicidal thoughts and feelings

Bullying can affect students' performance and attendance at school. They may find it hard to concentrate on schoolwork and homework, or be too afraid to go to school

Complaints

Should a parent or student feel unhappy about the way that the school has responded to an incident, their complaint must be heard. However, the school governors may become involved, through the Disciplinary Sub-Committee, if parents remain dissatisfied. Parents and students must follow the guidelines set out in the Complaints and Resolutions Procedure. <https://www.cottesloe.bucks.sch.uk/policies/1567698608.pdf>

External support/information agencies:

- www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- www.bullying.co.uk
- www.beatbullying.org
- www.kidscape.org.uk
- Childline: 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
- NSPCC: 08088005000 www.nspcc.org.uk
- Samaritans: 08457 909090
- www.youngminds.org.uk

Review

This policy will be reviewed in two years (earlier if any materially important or legislative changes occur).