



Northampton School *for Boys*

Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by: **Governors' Welfare Committee**
Date: **14 September 2016**
Review Date: **September 2017**

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Northampton School *for Boys*. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to benefit fully from the opportunities available at school.

Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over a period of time, that intentionally hurts or harms. It has destructive effects on young people's lives. Although some can shrug it off, bullying can produce feelings of powerlessness, isolation from others, undermine self-esteem and sometimes convince the victims that they are at fault. It can affect attitudes to and performance in school. For some, it can lead to serious and prolonged distress and long-term damage to social and emotional development.

The three main types of bullying are:

1. Physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
2. Verbal (name calling, racist, sexist, homophobic remarks)
3. Indirect (spreading rumours, cyber-bullying, excluding someone from social groups)

A distinction is commonly made between physical and verbal bullying, although they can occur together and verbal abuse can carry a strong threat of violence. The common factor is the intention to undermine and degrade the individual by picking on vulnerability or making difference appear to be a fault. Those who bully aim to hurt by means of force, intimidation or ridicule in order to control others, or perhaps to inspire a reaction that escalates the situation.

1. Physical bullying seeks to intimidate and cause fear; at serious levels (assault, actual bodily harm or wounding). It is a criminal offence. Students comment that a common form of physical bullying is pushing and shoving - 'bumping' or jostling with deliberate intent. It can happen too often for the victim to see it as accidental, but it can be difficult to complain about because those who do it are adamant that it was unintentional. Physical bullying can also involve theft of or damage to property - although, of course, not all instances of theft or damage are evidence of bullying. The threat of violence very often accompanies thefts from persons - for example, of mobile phones or money - and there can be clear instances of extortion focused on weaker students. The motive - or a large part of it - is to demonstrate power and create fear.
2. Verbal bullying most often takes the form of name-calling. The range of name-calling and other unpleasant language is wide and there are significant differences in its gravity. Contemporary media for verbal abuse include messages by mobile phone and email, which means that bullying can even invade life at home.
3. More difficult to define and detect are those forms of bullying that are intended to hurt by spreading rumours, making malicious accusations, manipulating social networks, and seeking to sideline or ostracise individuals.

Bullying may be based on any of the following: Disability, Special Educational Needs, Gender, Gender Identity, Race, Religion, Belief, Sexual Orientation. It is a sad fact that the focus of bullying can be more or less anything that distinguishes an individual and represents a deviation from a presumed 'norm' - for example size, body shape, hair colour, skin, eyesight, dress, language or mannerisms; and prowess, or the lack of it, in learning, sport or other activity. It can focus on personal backgrounds, including parents' jobs, houses and lifestyles, and can sometimes derive from deep-seated local feuding, with disagreements between adults passed to children, who then act them out in school. Bullying can focus on race, nationality, culture or religion, or a mixture of these - with distinction, for example, between racism and religious bigotry being quite lost on the perpetrator. Staff dealing with a racist incident would need to complete the relevant form and follow the procedure as previously set out. It can also focus on sexual attractiveness, or the lack of it, and sexuality, based on homophobia, misogyny, or both.

Finally, there are differences in how bullying is conducted. It can be a one-off or sustained, and is damaging either way. It can be painfully obvious, but it can also be surreptitious and subtle. Bullying can be perpetrated by an individual, one-on-one, or by a group on one individual or on a group. Bystanders sometimes show tacit acceptance to such an extent that the victims see them as part of the problem. Bullying can be seen as: Several Times on Purpose (STOP).

Students must be encouraged to report bullying at Northampton School *for Boys*.

The school's teaching and support staff 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 Headteacher has a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students.

Implementation of the Policy

Prevention is better than cure so at Northampton School *for Boys* we will be vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously. We will use the curriculum whenever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour. The Citizenship and Guidance programme contains a section on bullying and the effects it has on the victim.

Students are told that they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult within school, and that when another student tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a member of staff. The school survey report from the students identified bullying as an issue that concerned them and the fear of it getting worse if they report it. By quick and effective action on any reported bullying incident, staff at Northampton School *for Boys* can make the student more comfortable with the idea of reporting a bullying incident.

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by appropriate staff members. A record will be kept of incidents. A copy of the report and the action taken will be placed on the student file. Students may be asked to write a report themselves. In order to

ensure effective monitoring of such occurrences, and to facilitate co-ordinated action, all proven incidences of bullying should be recorded as incidents and will be monitored by the member of Senior Staff with oversight of Student Welfare. If bullying includes racist abuse then it should be reported to the Headteacher to be recorded in the Racial Incident record.

Victims who are worried about openly discussing an incident when the aggressors are present (eg taunting during a lesson) can be encouraged to go to the teacher with a piece of work, using this as a reason to speak to the teacher. Victims need to feel secure in the knowledge that assertive behaviour, and even walking away can be effective ways of dealing with bullying.

Parental Involvement

The parents of the victim and the bully will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem. The bully will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for repeated incidents will be clearly explained to him/her. These will include exclusion for persistent bullies.

Parents are reminded regularly through letters and newsletters to inform their children that they must tell someone should they ever be bullied. Keeping information from the school, or from their parents, will never help a problem to be solved, and will prolong the period a victim has to suffer.

Whilst there is little recent history of bullying at Northampton School *for Boys*, we believe that one case is one case too many and we believe it is essential to constantly review this policy to ensure we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue. Where necessary we have and will call on outside agencies to support our action. This policy is seen as an integral part of our Code of Behaviour.

Support for Students

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Reassuring the student.
- Offering continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Students who have bullied will be supported by:

- Providing relevant guidance by a member of staff.
- Monitoring behaviour over a period of time.
- Providing opportunities to discuss why the bullying took place.

SPONSOR: Governors' Welfare Committee

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