

WINDLESHAM HOUSE SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Windlesham

Reviewed: January 2011

Policy Ref: 004

1) Policy Statement

- a) We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our children so that they may learn and thrive in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying in any of its guises is not tolerated. Any bullying will be dealt with as a matter of greatest importance.
- b) We hope to prevent bullying before it occurs by educating the children in their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and by agreeing a definition of bullying that is understood by the children, their parents and the staff.
- c) The Charter for Bullying is to be found in the Appendix One. It is displayed in the Pupil Handbook and is discussed with the children by their Form Teachers, Tutors and Houseparents. In addition, Anti-Bullying Policies are included in the Parents' Handbook and the Pupil Handbook and dovetails into the School's behaviour policy (with support for the both the victim and the bully), making it clear what the sanctions are for bullying (strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying).
- d) If bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. Anyone who knows that bullying is taking place is expected to tell a member of staff.
- e) This Policy is provided not only to parents of boarders and day pupils but is available and known to staff and boarders, including junior and recently appointed staff.
- f) There are no 'initiation ceremonies' intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation.
- g) Pupils do not identify bullying as a problem in the School.
- h) Pupils who are being bullied are suitably supported and pupils who may bully others are also given suitable help and guidance.
- i) This Policy has regards to Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in Schools.

This policy also applies to our Early Years Foundation Stage and after School care.

2) Bullying can be

- a) Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching or any use of violence
- b) Verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, hurtful teasing
- c) Emotional – excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, taking things, using threatening gestures), being unfriendly, writing personal graffiti, trying to humiliate
- d) Racist – racial taunts, mimicking
- e) Sexual/sexist – unwanted physical contact, abusive comments
- f) Under others guises such as religious, cultural, homophobic, special educational needs, disability and cyber (social websites, mobile 'phones, text messages, photographs and email).

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3) **The role of Governors**

- a) The governing body supports the Head in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.
- b) The Head monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the Head to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.
- c) A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter. The governing body responds in line with the complaints policy to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Head, and asks her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

4) **The role of the Head**

- a) It is the responsibility of the Head to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Head reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.
- b) The Head ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Head draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Head may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.
- c) The Head ensures that all staff understand the Bullying policy and are equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying. All staff must report incidents to the Head for follow up.
- d) The Head sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

5) **The role of the teacher and support staff**

- a) All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.
- b) Teachers keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the school. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate it themselves or refer it to the Head. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Head, the teacher informs the child's parents.

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- c) When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim, and punishment for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, we inform the Head and the special needs coordinator. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the Head may contact external support agencies, such as the social services.
- d) Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. In LW Pre Prep, they use 'Working With Others' within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.
- e) Staff receive on-going training to raise awareness, identify the earliest signs of bullying and take prompt action to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur.

6) **The role of parents**

- a) Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Head. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed in the school Prospectus.
- b) Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

7) **The role of pupils**

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.

8) **If a child complains of being bullied**

- a) A member of staff will listen to the child's concern and, if bullying has taken place, the incident will be recorded and Houseparents, the Deputy Head and Head should be informed.
- b) The perpetrator should expect to be seen by their Houseparent, the Deputy Head or the Head and may be punished for the behaviour.
- c) Attempts will be made to help the bully change his/her behaviour and to apologise to the victim.
- d) Parents and other staff may be informed of incidents. Records will be kept in pupil files.
- e) Records of all instances of bullying will be kept to help identify for remedial actions, patterns in pupils, places, times of day etc.

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9) Interviewing Children

It is important to recognise, when interviewing children after an incident or misdemeanour, that the adult/child relationship is an unequal one, and weighted against the child. Children have the same fundamental human rights as adults, and they must be treated with the same fairness and respect that we would expect for ourselves in a similar situation. In particular, staff should adhere to the following guidelines:

- a) Listen to all sides of the story (including especially independent witnesses) before coming to any conclusions. It is also crucial to listen to what an alleged miscreant has to say, before arriving at any decisions or imposing any punishments.
- b) If practicable, include another adult as witness to the interview.
- c) Where possible, make brief written notes at the time of what each child says. These notes should be signed, timed and dated, and then handed on to Houseparents, Deputy Head, or Head as appropriate.
- d) Your tone as interviewer should be calm and even-tempered, not oppressive or angry. Do not ask leading questions. Allow the child to answer your open questions in their own terms (e.g. "So what happened next?" not "So then you hit him?").
- e) Do not deprive children of food or sleep. They must not miss meals, or be taken out of dormitory before getting up time or after lights out.
- f) Children should never be locked in a room while awaiting interview. If several children need to be interviewed on the same incident, it is permissible to keep them waiting silently in the same area or room as each other – preferably supervised by another adult in order that they do not collude on a fabricated story. They should be allowed to sit if kept waiting for more than ten minutes.
- g) Children should never be assured that you will keep whatever they tell you confidential, as you have a legal duty under the Children Act to pass on any information which leads you to think they may have suffered abuse. You can reassure them that you will not take any step without letting them know first, and you will keep them in touch with further developments.
- h) When interviewing is complete, children must be allowed to telephone parents or others (e.g. Independent Listener) if they express the wish to do so.

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Charter for Bullying

BULLYING

Any bullying will be dealt with as a matter of greatest importance

SPEAKING OUT

The most important point about bullying is to speak out about it. Whether it is happening to you or to someone else, you must speak out about it to a member of staff or to any adult. Often children keep quiet about bullying, out of fear or in the hope that it will stop. If you do speak out, you can be assured that the adult to whom you speak will treat what you say as a matter of great importance, and will be able to do something to stop the bullying. If nothing happens when you first speak out, speak out again - **DON'T GIVE UP!**

BULLYING

Bullying is the deliberate and conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. It can be physical or verbal in nature.

BULLYING INCLUDES

Name calling, teasing and taunting. Physical assault is very distressing but verbal abuse is also painful. Bullying also includes rude gestures (e.g. pulling faces), intimidation and extortion. Any act designed to cause fear is a form of bullying. This also includes cyber bullying or any form of electronic bullying. There is a separate policy on this.

EXCUSES

There are no excuses for bullying. You should not try to say "It was only a joke" or "I didn't mean it". You must think how you would feel if somebody behaved in the same way to you.

IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED

Remember:

1. It is not your fault. It is the bully who is at fault, and who may need help.
2. Tell an adult (your tutor, your Houseparents, the Head or the Head's wife, or any adult in the school). If nothing happens at first, speak out again. **DON'T GIVE UP.**
3. If necessary, ask a friend to speak out for you.

THE BULLY CAN EXPECT

The bully must recognise the nature of what they are doing, and recognise the hurt which they are causing.

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The bully can expect any or all of the following:

1. To be seen by a member of staff. Serious cases will be passed on to Houseparents, the Deputy Head and the Head.
2. To have the problem explained and to be warned about their future behaviour.
3. To be made to take responsibility for their actions by changing their behaviour and apologising to their victim.
4. To undergo appropriate sanctions and to have their behaviour recorded.
5. To have their parents and the staff informed of their behaviour.
6. If they repeat their behaviour after a clear warning, to suffer more serious sanctions (including suspension from school, or, in the worst possible case, to be asked to leave the school).