

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Considered by Governors:

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Ratified by Governors:

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1 Rationale

- 1.1 Priestlands School is committed to opposing bullying. Staff and Governors believe that every student has the right to feel safe and secure at school and that any form of bullying needs to be challenged swiftly and effectively. We recognise that in dealing with incidents we need to deal with the person doing the bullying, support the person being bullied and address the impact of the incident upon the family of the person being bullied, other students present and/or upon the school population.
- 1.2 The Education Act (Number 2) 1986 and Education Reform Act 1988 require schools to maintain acceptable standards of discipline and behaviour and uphold certain values, including those which reject bullying and cruelty. The Education and Inspection Act 2006 states that “All schools must have measures in place to promote good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying”. Under the Ofsted Framework for Inspection, inspectors will report on behaviour welfare and safety, including the views of students, parents and teachers on the incidence of bullying and the school’s response.
- 1.3 The Equality Act 2010 states that schools must work to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation.”
- 1.4 Under the Children’s Act 1989 -Where there is a concern that a child may suffer significant harm as a result of a bullying incident, the incident should be addressed as safeguarding and child protection concern.
- 1.5 Bullying itself is not a criminal act, however, some types of harassment and threatening behaviour is. If schools feel that a criminal offence may have taken place they will seek assistance from the police.
- 1.6 The Education ACT 2011 states that members of staff can confiscate electronic devices and can access data and information to support the investigation of an incident (with the authorisation of the Headteacher) where there is good reason to do so. Parental consent is not required.
- 1.7 Bullying which occurs outside school premises – The Education and Inspection Act 2006 states that school can discipline students for behaviour outside the school premises. School will challenge and follow up bullying behaviour and incidents which occur outside the premises and the normal school working day.
- 1.8 We accept that when students are bullied, their lives may be made miserable. They may suffer injury and may be unhappy about coming school. Over time, they are likely to lose self-confidence and self-esteem. Some may blame themselves for “inviting” bullying behaviour. The unhappiness of bullied students is likely to affect their concentration and learning; they may avoid potential bullying by not attending school.
- 1.9 Equally, if other students observe bullying behaviour going unchallenged, they may infer that bullying is a quick and effective way of getting what they want. Those students who are being bullied may interpret a school’s inaction as condoning unacceptable behaviour. They may feel betrayed by and lose respect for adults in authority.
- 1.10 However slight or infrequent the incidence of bullying, no school can claim “there is no bullying here”. Every school has some degree of bullying; and parents and the wider community know this. A school which recognises the issue and demonstrates, through its policy and action, a determination to respond positively and effectively, is more likely to secure the confidence and respect of parents, students and the wider community.
- 1.11 It is likely that parents, students and teachers will need clarification about what we believe constitutes bullying behaviour. There will, therefore, need to be some education to encourage



all members of the school community to share a common understanding of bullying. There are many definitions of bullying, but most have five elements in common:

- it is deliberately hurtful behaviour;
- it is specifically targeted
- it is repeated, often over a period of time;
- there is an imbalance of power and control
- it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

1.12 Bullying can take many forms, all of which are unacceptable:

- **PHYSICAL**, such as intimidatory behaviour; invasion of personal space; hitting; kicking; aggressive physical contact which may not cause pain or injury; taking, damaging or otherwise interfering with belongings; coercing victims into acts which they do not wish to commit; or unwelcome sexual advances.
- **VERBAL and NON-VERBAL**, such as name-calling; insulting, racist or sexist remarks or remarks related to an individual's real or perceived disability or real or perceived sexuality (homophobia); making fun of someone or belittling them; or nasty looks, abusive gestures or sounds.
- **INDIRECT**, such as malicious gossip; spreading stories or rumours about someone; excluding someone from social groups or deliberately isolating them.
- **CYBER-BULLYING**, an increasing concerning method of bullying because it invades the private space of individuals and families; it can include malicious text messaging or emails; or humiliating video clips/images or abusive messages on social networking sites.

1.13 This policy applies to all forms of bullying or harassment, regardless of their motivation and specifically includes behaviour arising from a student's gender, race, disability or sexual orientation.

2 Objectives

2.1 To reduce bullying in the school by:

- promoting the safety and happiness of all members of the school community through ethos and culture
- promoting educational achievement
- providing a model for positive and responsible behaviour
- increasing understanding and awareness of bullying behaviour and its impact
- developing a consistent and effective structure for dealing with those doing the bullying and those being bullied
- Affirming diversity and promoting an attitude of tolerance of people's differences
- providing an indicator of school effectiveness

3 Educating and informing students about bullying

Curriculum time



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- 3.1 The curriculum can be used to raise awareness about bullying behaviour and the school's anti-bullying policy. The curriculum can also be used to challenge attitudes about bullying, increase understanding for bullied students and help build an anti-bullying ethos in school.
- 3.2 The PSHCE programme is strongly focused on building positive relationships; tackling bullying; raising awareness; developing understanding.
- 3.3 Each department will consider how it can help promote anti-bullying values and co-operative behaviour and will prepare an explicit statement for inclusion in the Department Handbook.
 - Many subject areas contribute directly through reference to individual or group behaviour and its impact on others, for example, an incident in history, current affairs or a fictional account.
 - All subject areas can contribute indirectly through the selection of curriculum approaches which require students to work together co-operatively and which include regular opportunities for personal evaluation or reflection on how effectively each student has worked with others and how interaction could be improved. Activities which are based on group tasks, experiments or investigations offer plenty of opportunities for such personal and social development.
 - Assemblies will specifically focus on anti-bullying throughout the year and there will also be assemblies themed around tolerance and diversity

Other opportunities

- 3.4 A clear message will be published to students. Students may be involved in the production of this statement through consultation with year committees and the Student Council.
- 3.5 Students who are worried should be advised where they can go during non-teaching time where they can feel safe and who they can contact for support at any time during the day.
- 3.6 Year teams have a crucial role in fostering positive relationships. Heads of Year will develop a consistent approach towards creating tutor group and year group identities. Tutor group and inter-group activities will be one method. The issue will also be discussed in tutor-time and addressed in year assemblies. Year committees will discuss the issue and may suggest solutions to any problems.
- 3.7 The Senior Team will work with Heads of Year to support their work through assemblies and the Student Council. The Senior Team will also construct supervision duty rotas with a preventive approach to bullying.
- 3.8 The school will participate in Anti-Bullying Week annually.

4 Educating and informing parents and the wider community



- 4.1 Parents need to be advised of the school's policy. The policy will be included in the prospectus and included in annual mailings to parents. From time to time, it may be appropriate to discuss the issue of bullying at special parents' meetings.

Governors

- 4.2 The support of Governors is crucial in introducing and maintaining this policy. They will be fully involved in the implementation of the policy and in reviewing its effectiveness.

6 Educating staff (teachers and support staff)

- 6.1 At Priestlands School we are never complacent about peer relationships among students. We have a wide-ranging intake from a very mixed catchment area; this can be a factor in the breakdown of relationships and sometimes result in bullying. Staff will be made aware of the context of our intake.
- 6.2 All adults in school will share a responsibility for creating an anti-bullying ethos. Every year we will provide staff development which will raise awareness of current issues and ensure that colleagues are equipped to respond effectively to incidents. Development opportunities will be provided primarily through whole staff meetings, the induction programme for new staff, department and year team meetings and line management meetings. Some personnel may also need further support in the form of additional, specific training.

7 Dealing with incidents

- 7.1 A model procedure for dealing with bullying incidents is attached as Appendix 1.
- 7.2 The school recognises that a variety of approaches may be used, depending on the nature of the incident, and that accurate record-keeping will be essential. Possible approaches include the "No Blame" approach; assertiveness training; and peer counselling.
- 7.3 In cases where a "ring-leader" is identified or a student has a track record of bullying, additional approaches involving disciplinary sanctions will be considered.
- 7.4 Staff dealing with any incident will need to consider to what extent they need to involve the person(s) doing the bullying, the person(s) being bullied, families (of either party), witnesses and the wider school community.



- 8.1 Priestlands is proactive in raising awareness of this “hidden” form of bullying. Students will become informed and empowered through assemblies, calendared events, discrete ICT lessons and the availability of advice leaflets designed by peers. Parents will be invited to calendared internet safety awareness evenings.
- 8.2 Cyber-Bullying (see definition) often originates outside school. If an incident is having an impact on school life the normal anti-bullying procedures will be followed. Additional responses may include contacting parents of alleged bullies, informing them that there may be a problem and recommending close monitoring of their child’s use of the internet. Where the bullying is taking place in school, measures may include withdrawing access to internet and banning individuals from bringing a mobile phone to school. School may encourage the parent to report an incident to the police. If the school feels that a criminal offence has taken place they will seek assistance from the police.
- 9.1 A summary of the roles and responsibilities is attached as Appendix 2.
- 10.1 The Policy will be reviewed every 3 years and its success evaluated through:
- Identification of baseline statistics (e.g. bullying log, annual report to Governors);
 - Surveys of parents, students and/or staff;
 - Inspection by external agencies such as Ofsted.

11 Implications for Whole School Development

- 11.1 The Anti-Bullying Policy overlaps a great deal with the Behaviour Management Policy. It also has clear implications for communications within school; the induction of students and staff; staff development and INSET. There will also need to be links between this policy and policies on equal opportunities; teaching and learning.



Anti-Bullying Policy Appendix 1

Procedures

- 1 Any member of staff becoming aware of any incident, whatever its intensity, must first bring the incident to an end and give whatever help and protection is necessary to the person being bullied.
 - The staff member should make it clear to the person(s) doing the bullying that their behaviour is unacceptable.
 - The staff member should make it clear to any onlookers that bullying will not be tolerated in school.
 - Where possible, interactions with students should be measured and calm: the aim is to relieve tension, not escalate it. Though initial disapproval might be shown in a forceful manner, it is important that, at a later stage, disapproval is shown in a calm, rational way.
- 2 The staff member should then report the matter in writing, however trivial it may appear, to the appropriate Head of Year, following this notification with a written incident sheet as soon as possible.
- 3 If a serious bullying incident occurs in a classroom, the Head of Department or a senior member of staff should be called for additional assistance where needed.
- 4 When a serious bullying incident occurs outside the classroom, those involved should be taken away from the scene. Names or recognisable features of those involved should be noted. Help should be obtained.
- 5 Parents of the person being bullied and the persons doing the bullying should be made aware of any incidents and advised how their actions might help.
- 6 Onlookers should be advised of what they can do to help create a more pleasant place for all (e.g., by reporting incidents).
- 7 The Head of Year, Pastoral Support Manager or member of Senior Leadership Team will then deal with the matter along the following lines (involving other colleagues as appropriate):
 - Interview all persons involved, seeing them separately and securing written accounts of everything that happened;
 - Where appropriate adopt the Support Group Method (formerly known as the No Blame Approach) in order to secure agreement about what happened, modifying initial statements where necessary;
 - Where possible, see the persons involved together (only with the consent of the person alleged to have been bullied) and secure an agreed understanding of all that took place in the incident. Seek to get the person doing the bullying to understand how the person being bullied felt at the time. Encourage a mutual understanding between the parties involved and encourage the perpetrator to accept responsibility for their actions;
 - Put to the people involved the question, “What do you think we ought to do now?” or “What do you suggest...?”;
 - Act on the suggestions made by the parties if this is feasible. Establish goals and ground-rules on the basis of what has been suggested. Ensure that there is agreement. Arrange to meet again in a week’s time to review the situation. It is important that in follow-up work possible alternative behaviour is explored.



- At appropriate intervals, review with the persons concerned to ensure that there is no recurrence of the behaviour or any displacement of it. Review after 4 weeks and then 8 weeks to check it's resolved and make contact with parents.
- Record Deliver annual training to staff and keep the anti-bullying agenda high profile.
- Monitor the way the school responds to all recorded incidents.
- Record the incident in detail on CPOMS, informing KM each time an incident is recorded.

Note: Experience from this and other schools shows that this approach works. However, it depends on several factors, principally the ability to conduct the interviews effectively, the readiness to listen and empathise with all parties concerned and the ability to adopt a no-blame approach.



Anti-Bullying Policy Appendix 2

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of Senior Team is:

- Deliver annual training to staff and keep the anti-bullying agenda high profile.
- Monitor the way the school responds to all recorded incidents.

The role of the Head of Year is:

- To co-ordinate the delivery of the anti-bullying package through PSHE and Tutorial work, working with the SLT to discuss relevant issues with individuals and groups with the Year Team.
- To ensure every incident is responded to appropriately involving SLT line manager as appropriate. This may involve specific in-school support, referral for further support, sanctions for students.
- To communicate findings and outcomes of investigation to students, staff and parents as appropriate.
- To record details on the Bullying and any racist incidents on CPOMS (informing KM that an incident has been recorded.)
- To ensure appropriate monitoring and follow-up takes place.

The role of the Pastoral Support Manager is:

- To take action (as agreed with Head of Year) on any incident of bullying reported to them (see guidelines).
- To log the use of the Support Group Method approach and its outcome on each Student's record.

The role of all staff is to respond to incidents of bullying:

- To accept that the victim's perception that s/he is being bullied is paramount. Remember that in this context name-calling is the single act which causes most distress to students.
- To record information from the victim and/or bully.
- To report, in writing, all incidents of bullying to the Head of Year.
- To be aware of the School's policy and be prepared to take an active role in dealing with incidents of bullying if that is deemed to be appropriate after discussion with the Head of Year.
- To make use of opportunities which arise in the curriculum to make clear the damaging and distressing nature of bullying.

Students

The students are the most powerful group in dealing with bullying. The "Bystanders" (students who are neither bully nor victim) can:

- support the victim.
- make clear their opposition to bullying.
- TELL! Make sure that a member of staff, teaching or non-teaching, knows what is happening.

Parents

- Contact Head of Year or Pastoral Support Manager if their child is bullied.
- Re-assure their child without encouraging retaliation.
- Maintain contact with the School as long as is necessary.



Other Agencies, such as School Nurse, Doctor, EWO, Educational Psychology Service, and others

- Will on occasions be aware of bullying before staff in school are aware and will inform the relevant Head of Year.
- Will on occasions act as a link between home and school in situations involving bullying.

