

POLAM HALL SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(part of SAFEGUARDING & WELFARE Policy Suite)

General Statement

The Governing Body values the good relationships fostered by the school, and expects that every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously.

All staff, pupils and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on individuals and the School in general, and should work towards ensuring that pupils can work in an environment without fear.

Bullying is unacceptable in this school and will not be tolerated. The School also recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school. The School will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying.

AIMS

- to demonstrate that the School takes bullying seriously and will not be tolerated
- to take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the School and on off-site activities
- to support everyone in their actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied
- to demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying
- to promote an environment where it is considered a very positive and appropriate move to tell someone about bullying
- to promote positive attitudes in pupils (including assertiveness training)

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, whether physical or psychological, repeated over a period of time, and where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying

- involves aggression (deliberate)
- involves an unequal power relationship
- results in pain and/or distress
- is persistent

How is bullying shown?

It can be

- physical
- verbal
- sexual or homophobic
- social or psychological
- cyber bullying
- an inter-relationship between classes/groups

Signs of Bullying

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, eg becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, a lack of concentration, or truancy.

Actions

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the Head of Year/Department or member of SMT as appropriate.

Pupils will be encouraged to report incidents of bullying.

Form Tutors and PSHCE teachers will include anti-bullying training in their programmes.

Responsibilities

Governing Body

The nominated governor will liaise with the Chair, the Head, the SMT and any designated teachers over the School's anti-bullying strategies, and individual cases where appropriate.

The governing body will discuss, review and endorse agreed strategies on the initiative of the nominated governor, and will discuss the Head's annual report on the working of this policy.

The Head

The Head will act upon her legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils.

The Head will:

- ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them
- determine the strategies and procedures
- discuss development of the strategies with the Leadership Group
- ensure appropriate training is available
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils
- report annually to the governing body

Deputy Head will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and bullies
- keep the Head and appropriate teachers informed of incidents
- arrange relevant staff training
- determine, in consultation with the Head, how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems

Form Tutors will:

- be responsible for liaising with Pastoral Head of Year over all incidents involving pupils in their form
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution
- take part in the anti-bullying programme in the PSHCE course.

All Staff will:

- be familiar with the policy and procedures
- be observant and ask pupils what is happening to them
- deal with incidents according to the policy
- never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity

Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum

The School will raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through a PSHCE programme, school assemblies, the School Council, use of tutorial time and programmes of study as appropriate.

The PSHCE co-ordinator is responsible for initiating and developing, with appropriate colleagues, an anti-bullying programme as part of the PSHCE course.

Dealing with Incidents

- if bullying is suspected or reported the incident will be investigated and dealt with initially and immediately by the teacher approached
- the teacher will record the details of the incident and inform the Pastoral Head of Year/Form Tutor
- the Pastoral Head of Year/Form Tutor will interview all the parties and make a record as appropriate
- staff teaching the bullied pupil and the Form Tutor will be informed
- the Pastoral Head of Year/Form Tutor will determine in consultation with the Deputy Head the appropriate strategy and plan of action to combat the bullying
- the Form Tutor will oversee the implementation of the strategy
- parents will be kept informed by the Form Tutor/Deputy Head
- any sanctions against the bullies will be discussed and determined by the Pastoral Head of Year/Form Tutor/Deputy Head/Head as appropriate
- Records of all pupil contact relating to the above should be passed to the Head and Deputy Head and will then be filed appropriately

Bullied Pupils

Staff who deal with pupils who have been bullied must always offer reassurance. Pupils who have been bullied will be given support determined by the Pastoral Head of Year/ Form Tutor/Deputy Head/Head in consultation with the pupil.

Sanctions

Any of the School's formal punishments can be used against bullies as appropriate. For persistent offenders or incidents considered gross acts of aggression a pupil could be permanently excluded.

Involvement of Parents

Parents, as well as all staff and pupils, should know that the school will not tolerate bullying, and that Polam Hall takes a positive approach to educating pupils to combat it.

Parents of pupils who are being bullied and parents of the bullies will be involved in helping to find the most appropriate solution to the problem in consultation with the relevant Pastoral Head of Year/Form Tutor/Deputy Head/Head.

Parents will be informed of the policy and procedures and the possibility of permanent exclusion following gross acts of bullying.

Specific Strategies for Dealing with Bullying

Shared Responsibility Approach:

Staff should encourage pupils who feel they are being bullied or believe that relationships have broken down, to talk to a member of staff about the problem.

The member of staff should encourage the pupil to talk:

- about the problem
- how s/he feels about what is going on
- who is upsetting/bullying her/him
- who is supportive/friendly towards her/him

Outline the Shared Responsibility Approach:

- No one will be blamed and punished
- Group of supporters and 'bullies' seen, preferably individually
- Pupil won't be there/ Is s/he prepared to trust the member of staff to
- Put her/his point of view? To say how s/he feels?

To the pupils chosen to help resolve the problem, the member of staff should:

- Tell the helpers that the member of staff has a problem with
- Ask them to help solve the problem.
- How can YOU help me with this situation?
- Write down two or three ways for each helper.
- Arrange meeting in a week's time to review the situation.
- Also arrange to see the pupil who is upset.

NB: Be positive and encouraging

Review after a week (if necessary after a second week has elapsed too)

- How have things gone?
- What did you promise to do to help? Have you been able to do this?
- How are the relationships now?

BOARDERS

All the above principles and procedures are observed by all members of the boarding staff, including Housemistresses and Matrons.

Members of the Boarding Staff are expected to be vigilant in all areas of boarding life. All staff are expected to listen carefully to reports of bullying and should then inform the Head of Boarding, Form Tutor, Head of Year and/or Deputy Head/Head as appropriate.

An independent listener has also been appointed and may also report concerns about bullying to the Head of Boarding or any member of the SMT.

The boarders are encouraged to approach a member of the boarding staff of their own choosing should they wish, or feel the need, to bring any matters concerning behaviour towards others or themselves to the attention of an adult.

The Senior Boarders are encouraged to act as peer mentors to the younger pupils and they too are aware of the need to share concerns with the appropriate responsible adult.

STAFF

- Polam Hall School is committed to ensuring that all staff are treated with respect and dignity, irrespective of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation or age.
- The School wishes to provide an environment of positive working relationships which maximises staff's skills and abilities and sets a good example to pupils. It follows that we will not permit or condone any behaviours by staff which amount to bullying, by which we mean the persistent and normally deliberate intimidation, humiliation or undermining of a colleague, including the misuse of power or position.
- Bullying may take many forms, ranging from overt verbal abuse and threatening gestures to more covert behaviours including setting unreasonable deadlines, removing responsibilities without good reason and marginalising individuals by ignoring them.

The Head and Governors will consider seriously and confidentially any allegations of bullying. Bullying is regarded as a disciplinary offence and any incidents complained of will be dealt with under the School's disciplinary procedure. Whether or not any complaint is upheld, the School will not tolerate any discrimination against a member of staff who has lodged a complaint about bullying or who has assisted with an investigation.

Criteria for Success

The Head and Governors will review the efficacy of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy by reviewing annually:

- the numbers and severity of reported incidents
- any relevant case studies and their outcomes
- feedback (verbal and written) from the parties involved

Counselling

The school is prepared in appropriate cases to arrange counselling for both bullies and the bullied.

The Kidscape Service (0845 1205204) will be used as a consultative body.

Reporting and Recording

All incidents must be reported and recorded using the school's 'Contact Form'.

Staff Training

The Deputy Head is responsible for arranging a programme of staff development, which will include anti-bullying strategies.

Monitoring and Review

The Head will keep and consider reports on serious incidents. The Head will consider the reports with the Leadership Group to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled with a view to improving the school's strategies.

The Head will make an annual report to the governing body.

Signed

Chair

Head

Last reviewed: September 2009

Next review: September 2010