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# QUEEN'S CRESCENT SCHOOL

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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### **Rationale**

At Queens Crescent School we work with the children through our behaviour policy to promote positive behaviour which respects the feelings, rights and safety of others. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's behaviour policy. Good behaviour is promoted through the use of the golden rules of the school and the classrooms plus the class vision statements.

All staff are made aware of what is expected in terms of good behaviour when they join the school. They are expected to work within the guidance set out in the behaviour policy. The children are helped to develop an understanding of these expectations through class discussion, circle time and in assemblies. Parents are involved in the process through the booklet given to each family "Good Behaviour Guide". Teachers work with parents to promote good behaviour. If parents have a worry relating to behaviour or if the teacher has identified a concern, an early meeting is arranged to discuss the issue. We want our children to enjoy their time in school feeling safe and valued.

Unfortunately in any community there can be incidents of unacceptable behaviour. This may be a 'one off' isolated incident that is dealt with by the teacher, TA or MDSA working with the child or children concerned. Staff help the child to learn to recognise the unacceptable nature of their behaviour so that they can change their behaviour and attitudes. Occasionally there are incidents of inappropriate behaviour that are carried out over a period of time.

The purpose of this policy is to describe what is deemed to be bullying and set out how the school works to tackle individual situations, as well as, promote positive attitudes in the school community so bullying is reduced ideally this is not something that occurs within our school community.

There is no place for violence, bullying, harassment, vandalism, rudeness to adults, or bad language in school and these must always be discouraged. This includes cyber bullying, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and prejudice based bullying related to special educational needs, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment and disability.

The school also recognises that there can be incidents of staff members being bullied. If such an incident were to occur this would be dealt with under the LA's procedures so that the member of staff is supported and the incident investigated. If necessary appropriate action taken with the perpetrator.

### **1. The nature of bullying**

In order to work with the children to prevent bullying happening there is a need to understand what it is. At Queen's Crescent we define bullying as:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is

often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case. Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

*Preventing and tackling bullying Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (October 2014)*

The growth of technology and the easy access to it has provided a new medium for bullying. This Cyber Bullying can happen at any time of day and therefore in or out of school. The ease of one click and the wider audience it can reach means this is a very real and serious issue.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. Separate advice on teachers' powers to search (including statutory guidance on dealing with electronic devices) is available.

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Bullying can take the form:

- Emotional - unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures);
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- Homophobic - focusing on the issue of sexuality;
- Transphobic
- Biphobic
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing;
- Religious – a negative or unfriendly focusing on religious difference or how somebody expresses their faith
- Cyber - all areas of the internet (e.g. email & internet chat room misuse); mobile phone threats by text messaging & calls; misuse of associated technology (e.g. camera & video facilities).

Name-calling is the most common form of bullying. This situation will always be addressed but were the perpetrator to use racist language, the incident would be dealt with not only under the guidance issues in this policy but also investigated under the school's 'Single Equalities' policy.

Persons observing or experiencing bullying, harassment or vandalism are encouraged to enlist the help of adults in the school to resolve problems of this type.

## **2. Prevention of Bullying**

Prevention is always better than a cure, and at Queens Crescent, we are always working proactively to ensure that our pupils feel safe and happy in school. A happy and safe environment will lead to children be able to thrive, and for this environment to be achieved the pupils will need to be aware, understanding and accepting of differences whilst also understanding the impact of their positive or negative actions.

In July 2015 the school re-enrolled on The BIG (Bullying Intervention Group) award to identify our strengths and also improve our overall practice. The BIG Award is for schools, FE Colleges and community organisations which are attended by children and young people. To gain the award, we will have to meet strict criteria which will determine whether our anti-bullying practice is of the highest standard possible.

At Queens Crescent we have a Bullying Intervention Focus Group, which is attended by our pupils, parents, staff and outside agencies, who meet termly to discuss our bullying prevention work. During these meetings, there are also discussions on events to raise awareness of Anti-Bullying, with the aim of having 3 main events a school year.

Prevention is also promoted through an understanding of the whole school communities concerns and experiences of bullying at Queens Crescent. Participations from the children comes in the forms of whole school surveys, schools councillors, BIG focus group and playground buddies sharing ideas and experiences, whilst all children can share and ideas and experiences through circle times and PSHE lessons. Parents have the opportunity to share their experiences through an annual survey whilst also having representatives in the Bullying Intervention Focus Group.

Teachers receive annual training on bullying intervention and prevention whilst undertaking a yearly survey. The school ensures that all consultations are inclusive to all children, parents, carers and staff.

The school also works very hard in promoting equality and celebrating differences through PSHE and RE. We have visitors from faith groups as well as using trained staff from the LA to promote understanding of different family backgrounds and circumstances by delivering assemblies.

## **3. Approaches used to dealing with reported incidents**

### **1. Reporting**

Incidents of bullying can be reported in a variety of ways, such as:-

- The victim, the child, may tell their teacher, their parents, a TA or MDSA or a friend about what they are feeling and what is happening to them. The child needs to be listened to carefully and reassured that their worries will be taken seriously and investigated.
- Parents - Parents may let the teacher or head teacher know about a concern. They also need to be reassured that the school will investigate the concern. The

parents will be invited to come and see the teacher, for example, once the incident has been investigated so the action taken can be discussed with them.

- Members of staff - Concern about a bullying situation may come to a class teacher from information given by MDSAs, TAs or other teachers who have seen some behaviour or have heard inappropriate remarks made by a child to another. By reporting this to the class teacher they can then investigate the situation.

Once a concern has been raised that there may be a bullying situation then the class teacher will need to investigate the situation. They may involve a senior member of staff in the investigation but they will keep head or deputy informed of the situation. The teacher records their investigation findings so that a log is kept which can be used to inform parents and may also become part of an on going log of evidence. The information is kept in the confidential class file (purple file). Staff are required to record the incident in the central Bullying log, kept in the head teacher's office.

## 2. Investigation

During the investigation of a bullying situation it is important for the teacher to establish what has actually happened. The teacher will establish by:

- Talking to the child who is being bullied. This will be done discreetly and sensitively in order that the child can explain what has happened to them.
- The class teacher will talk to any witnesses that the child has mentioned as seeing what has happened.
- The teacher will then talk to the child/children that have been identified as causing the problem.

Investigation of incidents involving an SEN child can be difficult as children with SEN and disabilities:

- May not recognise that they are being bullied (or bullying others).
- Are less likely to be able to report it
- Could be more isolated with fewer friends
- Find it more difficult to resist or rebuff bullies
- May not be able to use 'fogging' or other verbal techniques
- May struggle to remember details of incidents or identify bullies

This is an area where by the investigation needs to be treated sensitively by the member/s of staff investigating incidences, taking into consideration the specific needs of the child.

These actions are aimed at establishing what has happened. By establishing what has happened then actions can be taken to deal with the bullying incident.

### 3. Actions

#### **Stage 1**

If the investigation confirms that a bullying situation has happened it will need to be addressed. The child/children who have carried out the action need to understand the unacceptable nature of their behaviour. The class teacher will talk with them and help them appreciate the victim's feelings. By improving the children's understanding of the victim they can begin to empathise with what it would feel like to be bullied. By doing this it is hoped that they will apologise for their behaviour and modify what they have been doing. The incident is recorded in the central bullying log and the teacher will add additional information if the incident is not resolved, so an ongoing record is maintained.

The teacher will then monitor what is happening over the next few weeks. The class teacher would keep the parents of the victim informed and ask for support and co-operation from the parents of the child who has been causing the problem. The class teacher would also ensure that TAs and MDSAs are aware of the situation and can support the child who is feeling vulnerable as well as monitor the bully's behaviour especially at lunchtimes and playtimes.

The class teacher may also use circle time and group discussions to help the bullies gain more understanding of their actions. By involving the class in a positive way to support good behaviour, the peer group can support the bully to improve, and the victim to gain the reassurance and friends that they also need.

#### **Stage 2**

If having completed the investigation and worked with the bully through the Stage 1 process and the situation still continues, then the class teacher would involve the head or deputy head teacher. They would work with the child to reinforce the work of the class teacher and work to help the child understand the unacceptable nature of the behaviour. This may involve a loss of privileges, for example, loss of playtime. The class teacher and other support staff would closely monitor their behaviour. A daily report card may be used to record the child's behaviour and this would be shown to the parents as well as the head.

Parents would be involved throughout the process and would be invited to a meeting with the head or deputy. For part of the meeting the child would be present, as unless the child recognises the need to change their behaviour little progress can be made. It is hoped that by gaining the support of parents they can also work with the child at home to improve the attitudes and behaviour of the child.

The class teacher and other staff would also be closely monitoring the feelings of the victim. They will be supportive so that the child does not feel they are to blame for the situation. The class teacher will also monitor behaviour closely to find out whether the bully is transferring the unacceptable behaviour to another child. Circle time will continue to be used to support all the children and to promote appropriate behaviour. Assembly time may also be used to promote appropriate behaviour throughout the school. This will enable more children to support the positive behaviour process.

#### **Stage 3.**

If, despite all the support that has been given, the situation continues then advice and support to improve the bully's behaviour may be sought from the Behaviour Support team. The child may, with discussion with parents, be supported through the school's

SEN procedures by being placed within the school action or school action plus procedures.

The class teacher and the senior staff will continue to work closely with the bully and their parents. The aim would be to enable the child to change their attitudes and behaviour so that they can respond appropriately within the golden rules of the school.

If the situation is so severe and the victim continues to be the target of bullying then the bully may be excluded temporarily or permanently following the LA procedures for exclusion.

Very close monitoring of the victim would be undertaken so that they are given support and help to deal with the situation. The child would also be shown strategies to help the victim cope with feeling bullied. By building the child's self esteem and assertiveness they can be helped to feel less of a victim but in control of what happens to them.

#### 4. Involvement of parent

Working positively with parents of the victim, as well as, the bully can make a considerable difference to the outcome of a bullying situation. The school acts as an intermediary between the families and helps and supports both sets of parents. The parents need to know what the situation is and how the school is dealing with it. By being explicit about situations, parents can then be invited to work with the school to improve the situation. If parents are reluctant or unwilling to help, the school will endeavour to gain their co-operation as the parents' role in promoting good behaviour is important.

#### 5. Monitoring bullying in the school

Class teachers work with their classes regularly on promoting good behaviour. They work with TAs and MDSAs daily and receive information about the children's behaviour. They also have regular contact with parents. By encouraging this contact they are able to gain information from parents as well as other members of staff about the behaviour of the children in their class. This monitoring enables them to form a picture of the behaviour of the children in their class. Class teachers, through the staff meeting item c.c.c. (Children causing concern), can inform colleagues of the concerns over a child's behaviour and ask them to closely monitor behaviour, for example, on the playground. This also provides the opportunity to offer further advice to support this behaviour, and reflected on what was successful or needs to be improved if similar issues arise again.

The head teacher also monitors behaviour and bullying incidents; in particular from information gained from teachers and parents. The head notes information given by parents in her confidential log. The head works closely with staff and parents to support both the victim and the bully so that the situation is addressed and both children are given the support they need to improve the situation.

The head keeps the Chair of Governors informed of the details of any particular situation and the governing body in general terms. This is to ensure that there is no conflict of interest if the governors had to work through the exclusion process.

## 6. Bullying outside school

The school has responsibility to deal with poor behaviour of pupils beyond the school gate and would wish to support a bullied child. By promoting good behaviour and encouraging a victim to speak out to parents, friends or a teacher in the school can help children not to suffer in silence if they are bullied out of school. The school would pass this information on to parents of the victim. Children at Queen's Crescent School are taught to recognise the needs of others wherever they are. By doing so this will help children to understand the need to care for each other.

Cyber Bullying can happen at any time of day; often out of school.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. Separate advice on teachers' powers to search (including statutory guidance on dealing with electronic devices) is available.

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**If the bullying incident is deemed to be of a safeguarding concern, please refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

## **Reviewing**

The schools practice is through annual surveys by students, parents and staff. The Bullying Intervention focus group also review practice and evaluate initiatives and awareness raising events. The data from the surveys also shape the discussions for the Intervention group; we reflect, discuss and re-design the objects of the initiatives to meet the needs of the school community.

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis to make sure that it is up to date to the school practice.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

All staff are responsible for following what has been outlined in the policy.

Charlotte Goodyear is BIG ambassador and PSHE Leader

Tracey Broadway (Safeguarding Link Governor) and Shelia Copeman (PSHE Link Governor)

## **Conclusion**

Bullying is considered an unacceptable form of behaviour. It will be investigated, confronted and dealt with.

*This policy should be read in conjunction with: -*

*The Child Protection Policy*

*The Online Safety policy*

*The Behaviour policy*

*The Single Equalities policy*

*The SEN policy*

*The PSHE policy*

*The Vexatious Complaints Policy*

*SEND anti-bullying alliance action plan*

Reviewed

September 2015  
November 2016

The Full Governing Body agreed to adopt this policy at the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

Signed .....  
Mrs J Hawkins, Headteacher

Signed .....  
Mrs R Dimech, Chair of Governors

Dated .....

Dated .....