



Anti Bullying Policy

Reviewed September 2016

Ant-bullying policy

Introduction

In Cedar Lodge, bullying is always treated as a serious matter. We are committed to acting promptly and firmly to combat bullying whenever and wherever it occurs. Everyone has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy and only if this happens will all members of our school community be able to achieve their maximum potential. Bullying of any kind prevents this from happening and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this from happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos within our school.

Aims of the policy

- To ensure that in the school community, all pupils are valued and emphasis is placed on developing confidence and self esteem.
- To provide a safe, secure and supportive learning environment for all pupils.
- To give pupils the opportunity to talk about bullying in general and specifically.
- To help pupils to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others
- To encourage respect for family, friends and others
- To create an atmosphere of trust where pupils feel they can voice their concerns, fears and feel confident that they will be dealt with
- To raise awareness of bullying throughout the school curriculum
- To provide counselling where necessary
- To provide learning experiences for all so that they recognise responsibility for their own behaviour
- To provide alternative strategies for those who bully so that they can work with others

Definition of bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated over a period of time which makes other people feel uncomfortable, threatened or distressed – **whether this is intended or not**. It is a form of abuse which is particularly destructive not just because of the victim's immediate distress, but also because the inevitable loss of self esteem can have damaging long term effects. The three main types of bullying are:

- **Physical:** hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongs, etc.
- **Verbal:** name calling (inc sectarian, homophobic, racist), teasing, insulting, threatening, etc
- **Emotional:** excluding, spreading rumours, tormenting, isolating, etc

The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply “falling out”.

Discouraging bullying

It is important that we create an atmosphere in the school where students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed and that action taken will be sensitive to their concerns. The message to pupils should be Informing on bullies is not touting.

Procedures for dealing with a bullying incident

1. Teachers should watch for early signs of distress in pupils. This could be evident in any aspect of school life and may include:
 - A deterioration in work
 - Spurious illness
 - Isolation
 - The desire to remain with adults
 - Erratic attendance
2. All instances of bullying observed or reported should be passed to the class teacher or vice principal
3. It is important that a written record is made detailing the facts of the incidents
4. The bullied pupil should record the events in writing

5. The bully should be offered the opportunity to record the events in writing
6. The victim should be offered immediate support and help. He/she should be given the chance to talk the problem over and to be listened to. In minor cases this will be done by the class teacher. In more serious cases the matter should be reported to the appropriate vice principal who will deal with the problem.
7. Pupils who are involved should be spoken to separately at the initial stage. In more serious cases parent/guardians will be contacted and asked to visit the school to see the class teacher, vice principal, principal.
8. Bullies will be required to apologise to their victim
9. The situation will be monitored by the class teacher to ensure that the bullying has stopped
10. On going support will be provided for the victim
11. Parents/guardians and the Board of Governors are informed of the anti-bullying policy which will be in the school

NB It is important that a written record is kept of all discussions

Bullying and the school curriculum

We at Cedar Lodge believe that prevention is better than cure. We ensure that opportunities are provided through the curriculum to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils develop strategies to combat bullying type behaviour. An awareness of the issue of bullying is raised in a variety of subjects. Role play and other drama techniques are used so that pupils learn to cope better with bullies. These also provide a forum for discussing issues such as human rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour.

Parent/guardian involvement

The parent/guardians of bullies and their victims will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place. The bully will be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for their actions will be clearly explained to them. The future conduct of any pupil found to be bullying will be monitored.

Parents/guardians are reminded that they must tell their children to report any incident of bullying immediately. Keeping information from the school, or from

their parents/guardians, will never help a problem to be solved and will prolong the period the victim has to suffer. At Cedar Lodge we are proud of the excellent relationships and the family values which have been developed over the years, however, in relation to bullying we remain resolute in dealing with this issue. This policy will be kept under review to ensure we are in a position to respond to any future developments.

This policy is an integral part of our behaviour policy.

WHAT TO DO

FOR PUPILS

What to do if you are bullied

- Talk to someone you trust e.g. a parent/guardian, a teacher, an older friend, a relative
- If you can write down what the bully has said or done to you and how you feel about it. Be careful to write down what actually happened
- If you need to, ask a friend to come with you to talk to a member of staff
- Always do something – sometimes the bullying will stop, however, it may not and you may become more upset. This will encourage the bullies. Remember other people could be hurt unless they are stopped.
- Remember it is not your fault. The bullies need to change, NOT YOU

What you should not do

- Do not suffer in silence – there is nothing wrong with asking for help
- Do not retaliate and hit the bully – you could be accused of bullying
- Always be truthful – do not exaggerate. If anything you say is untrue – people may doubt your whole story
- Do not believe the lies bullies tell you about you – you know they are untrue

Advice for parents/guardians

- Watch for signs of distress in your child e.g. –
 - An unwillingness to attend school
 - A pattern of headaches or stomach pains
 - Equipment that has gone missing
 - Request for extra pocket money
 - Damaged clothing or bruising
- If you think your child is being bullied in school, inform the class teacher, vice principal and principal
- Advise your child that they **must** tell a teacher
- Do not encourage your child to hit back or respond verbally

Please remember that the school can only act if they are informed of the situation