



Liverpool College

# **Liverpool College Preparatory School**

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

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### **Introduction**

It is a government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. In 2003, Ofsted published *Bullying: Effective Action in Secondary Schools*. This was followed by DfES guidance for schools under two headings: *Don't Suffer in Silence* and *Bullying – A Charter for Action*. This policy reflects this guidance.

### **Aims and objectives**

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

### **Definition**

DfES guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful, and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (e.g. being ignored or not spoken to).

A person using strength or power to hurt or coerce others by intimidation (Oxford Reference Dictionary). This power may be physical, verbal, emotional or psychological and when an individual applies it repeatedly, it constitutes bullying.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and victims. It also affects the other children who are aware of it, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by peer pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at the School.

Bullying can occur through various types of anti-social behaviour.

It can be one unresolved, frightening experience or a series of such incidents.

Bullying may be brought to the attention of staff by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parents or other interested people.

1. Physical: a child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, pinched etc.
2. Verbal: Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, ridicule. It may be directed at gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, personality etc.
3. Emotional: A child can be bullied by being excluded from discussions/activities, tormented, humiliated, the setting of impossible tasks or deadlines.

4. Racist: There may be racially abusive taunts, comments, graffiti, gestures
5. Damage to property or theft: Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hands over property

## **Signs and Symptoms**

A child may display signs or behaviour that might indicate that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has money continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received
- stops eating

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

## **What to do if you are being bullied:**

**Remember that silence is the bully's greatest weapon!**

- Report what has happened
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive – shout "no", walk confidently away, tell a member of staff.
- Fighting back may make things worse. Talk to a teacher or parent/guardian first.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

***If you know that someone is being bullied:***

- TAKE ACTION. Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel that you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.

**It is our aim, as a school, to:**

Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying

Discuss aspects of bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, eg through the PSHE programme incorporating SEAL and 'R' time activities and schemes.

Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints and involve parents if necessary.

Maintain a firm but fair discipline structure. Rules should be few, simple and easy to understand.

Ensure that teaching materials / equipment do not give a negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex etc.

Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.

We will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it.

All allegations of bullying will be treated seriously

When parents are informed records of allegations of bullying will be kept and records will be passed on from the Nursery to Pre Prep to Prep and to the Upper School

**The role of governors**

The governing body supports the headteacher 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.

The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the headteacher 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.

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 within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the headteacher, and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

**The role of the headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all members of staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy,

and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the headteacher 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.

The Headteacher should ensure that all pupils are aware that they should:

Report incidents of bullying to an adult if they are the victim

Report incidents of bullying if they are a witness

Treat others as they would wish to be treated

Accept the consequences of their behaviour

The headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

The headteacher 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.

### **The role of the teacher and support staff**

All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.

If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will refer it to the deputy headteacher/**Head of Pre Prep** or the headteacher. The Deputy Head is responsible for an Incident Book where incidents of bullying are logged whether they occur in class or out of class. This is regularly reviewed by the Headmaster and the Deputy Head. Incidents that occur near the school, or on the children's way between school and home are also logged. Any adult who witnesses an act of bullying should record it in the logbook.

Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. All staff will monitor the situation and if a child continues to be bullied over a period of time, then the headteacher will be informed and the child's parents will be informed.

When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately by logging it in the Incident Book. The teacher may also offer counselling and support for the victim. All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., 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. PSHE, Moral and Religious Education, visits and visitors assemblies and circle time are all opportunities that should be used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere. The school participates in National anti-Bullying Week and children are engaged in workshops, drama, games and stories appropriate to their age.

## **The Role of the Parent**

Look for unusual behaviour in your child. For example, a child may suddenly not wish to come to school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to his/her normal standard

Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how his / her day has gone, how lunch time was spent etc. If you feel that your child may have been the victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. We cannot help unless we know. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.

It is important to advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.

Tell your own child that there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that he / she is being bullied.

Make sure that your child is fully aware of the policy concerning bullying and that he / she need not be afraid to ask for help.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

## **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. There is a child friendly comments and suggestions box outside the Head of Pre preps office and children can, at any time, voice opinions, worries or suggestions. It is under discussion as to whether this should be extended into the Prep department.

Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in the annual pupil questionnaire.

Our School Council is encouraged to take an active role with the issue of bullying eg leading assemblies, organising pupil questionnaires etc

## **Action to be taken when bullying is suspected:**

When there is serious or continued bullying, both the parents of the alleged perpetrator and the victim are informed by the Head, the Head of Pre Prep or the Deputy Head.

If bullying is suspected we will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified the following action will be taken:

- Help, support and counselling will be given as appropriate to both the victims and the bullies

We support the victims in the following ways:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, or another member of staff if they choose.
- Informing the victims parents and by offering continued support when they feel they need it
- By taking one or more disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying

We will support the bully by talking about what happened to discover why they became involved

- Informing the bully's parents
- By continuing to work with the bully in order to change prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- The school may suggest counselling, accessed through the child's GP or, in more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the headteacher may contact external support agencies, such as the social services.
- By taking one or more of the disciplinary steps outlined below.

### **Disciplinary Steps**

Action must be appropriate to the age of the child but **may** include:

- 1) An official warning to stop offending
- 2) Informing the bully's parents
- 3) Missing playtime / detention
- 4) Suspension for a fixed period
- 5) Exclusion from school if bullying continues to persist

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the headteacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this through discussion with the headteacher.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.

### **Key Sources of Information**

Safe to Learn	DCSF (2007)
Bullying - Charter for action	DCSF (2007)
Don't Suffer in Silence	DCSF (2000)
Kidscape	<a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a>
Bullying Online	<a href="http://www.bullying.co.uk">www.bullying.co.uk</a>

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## Appendix

### Cyberbullying

Mobile, Internet and wireless technologies have increased the pace of communication and brought benefits to users worldwide. But their popularity provides increasing opportunities for misuse through 'cyberbullying'. It's crucial that children and young people, who are particularly skilful at adapting to new technology, use their mobiles and the Internet safely and positively, and that they are aware of the consequences of misuse. School staff, parents and young people have to be constantly vigilant and work together to prevent this form of bullying and tackle it wherever it appears.

The advent of cyberbullying adds new dimensions to the problem of bullying. Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can follow children and young people into their private spaces and outside school hours; there is no safe haven for the person being bullied. Cyberbullies can communicate their messages to a wide audience with remarkable speed, and can often remain unseen and unidentifiable.

#### What is cyberbullying?

"Cyberbullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself."

#### Report to the Anti-Bullying Alliance by Goldsmiths College, University of London

Research commissioned by the Anti-Bullying Alliance from Goldsmiths College, University of London, identifies seven categories of cyberbullying

- **Text message bullying** involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.
- **Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras** is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks.
- **Phone call bullying via mobile phone** uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.
- **Email bullying** uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them.
- **Chat room bullying** involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.
- **Bullying through instant messaging (IM)** is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online.

**Bullying via websites** includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyberbullying.

#### What can we do about it?

Cyberbullying is already a significant issue for many young people. School staff, parents and young people need to work together to prevent this and to tackle it whenever it occurs.

## **If you're a school governor or headteacher**

Schools have a duty to ensure that:

- bullying via mobile phone or the Internet is included in their mandatory anti-bullying policies, that these policies are regularly updated, and that teachers have sufficient knowledge about cyberbullying in school
- the curriculum teaches pupils about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely
- all e-communications used on the school site are monitored.
- clear policies are set about the use of mobile phones at school and at other times when young people are under the school's authority
- Internet blocking technologies are continually updated and harmful sites blocked
- they work with pupils and parents to make sure new communications technologies are used safely.
- security systems are in place to prevent images and information about pupils and staff being accessed improperly from outside school
- they work with police and other partners on managing cyberbullying.

## **Accessible help**

- A quarter of the young people who had been cyberbullied said that knowing how to get hold of and speak to an expert at dealing with cyberbullying would have made a difference.
- Knowing there was a staff member at school dedicated to stopping bullying was cited by 15% as a help.
- 13% said that knowing of a website with advice and tips would have helped them.

## **NCH/Tesco Mobile survey, 2005**

**A key way of supporting children who are being bullied is to establish good links between schools and counselling organisations.**

- Make sure parents are kept informed of the school standards and policies so that they can be applied at home as well as at school.
- Research recommends that young people themselves should be involved in developing new anti-bullying strategies.
- [Becta](#) has invaluable information on devising and communicating school Internet safety policies.
- The [DfES's bullying site](#) has useful information and resources for parents and families, young people and teachers, including ideas for schools to consider to combat bullying.

[www.antibullying.net/cyberbullying1.htm](http://www.antibullying.net/cyberbullying1.htm) has suggestions for a code of conduct for schools to introduce to pupils.

## **If you're a member of staff**

Make sure you're familiar with your role and responsibilities in:

- teaching children safe Internet etiquette
- applying school policy in monitoring electronic messages and images
- giving pupils key guidance on:
  - personal privacy rights
  - material posted on any electronic platform
  - photographic images
- taking action if a pupil is being cyberbullied or is bullying someone else
- teaching pupils the value of e-communications and the risks and consequences of improper use.

Keep up a dialogue with parents about emerging technologies their child might be using.

Ensure parents know what steps to take if they suspect that their child is being cyberbullied or is bullying someone else.

