



# Weald of Kent Grammar School

## Anti-Bullying Policy – March 2018

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The aim of this anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We strive to create an open atmosphere of mutual respect in which bullying behaviour is unnecessary and unacceptable. Our school belief is:

*“We embrace differences”*

Bullying is defined as behaviour which, either intentionally or unintentionally, upsets or intimidates another child or children. Forms of bullying include:

- **Physical:** pushing, hitting, kicking, and threatening gestures; damaging or stealing property that belongs to someone else; violent behaviour and assault.
- **Verbal:** name calling, teasing, taunting, intimidating, humiliating, spreading malicious gossip, sexual harassment, racial abuse, homophobic abuse.
- **Written:** text and email messages, notes spreading rumours.
- **Cyberbullying:** name calling, teasing, taunting, intimidating, humiliating, spreading malicious gossip, sexual harassment, racial abuse and homophobic abuse on Social Networking sites, on email, in ‘chat’ rooms/forums and on line gaming sites.
- **Silent:** exclusion from group activities and conversations, rude gestures.

It is important in respect of this that students learn that one person’s good natured teasing may, to another person, be unkind and even cruel bullying.

It is not necessarily the way the behaviour is intended, but the way that it is received that is important in identifying and tackling incidents of bullying.

Some young people are more likely to be bullied than others. These are recognised specific types of bullying:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture.
- Bullying related to SEN or disabilities.
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation or gender.
- Bullying related to young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist or sexual bullying.

Students may be bullied in relation to other aspects of their lives, for example:

- Students who are gifted and talented.
- Students who do not have English as a first language.
- Students who do not have a lot of friends.
- Students who are shy and sensitive.

### Signs of bullying

Bullying can seriously damage a person’s confidence and happiness, impact on their peers and the community. Common indicators of bullying can include:

- Changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous or withdrawn.
- Feigning illness, taking unusual absences or truanting from school.
- Clinging to adults.
- Evidence of changes in work patterns.
- Lacking concentration.
- Uncharacteristic aggression.
- Being excluded from groups both at social times and in the classroom.

All school staff, teaching and support, must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

Advice for Students and Parents about how to deal with bullying if it is happening to them or their child, or if they are witness to the bullying of another student can be found in Appendix 1 and Student Planners.

### **Statutory duty of schools**

Headteachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents/guardians and students.

### **Implementation**

We employ both **pro-active** and **re-active** anti bullying strategies.

**Pro-active** includes regular assembly sessions, PSHCE lessons (Appendix 1), form time activities (including circle time). Peer Mentor activities; awareness raising during significant, relevant calendar events such as anti-bullying week. Our Anti-bullying policy is one of the key documents in the Students' Planners demonstrating that tackling bullying is something we are constantly prioritising.

Our classroom rules emphasise the importance of respect. There is an expectation that all members of the school community, students and all staff treat one another with consideration and respect.

The staff handbook reminds staff that they are role models for students and should set a good example of positive behaviour. They should ensure they do not misuse their power (i.e. avoid sarcastic remarks, derogatory nicknames, dominating and humiliating behaviour).

A range of strategies will be employed to tackle problems that arise from bullying and social interaction problems:

- No-blame meetings.
- Mediation.
- Peer Mentor scheme.
- Flexible curriculum planning for PSHCE to target issues as they are raised.
- Sanctions (also see Behaviour Management Policy).

## Dealing with Bullying incidents

All reports of bullying are taken seriously. The first priority is to keep the 'victim' safe.

The first point of contact is often the Form Tutor. He/she will listen and then inform the relevant Heads of Year liaising verbally if a very sensitive issue. The Head of Year will work appropriately with the Form Tutor, Student Services team or other staff to support those involved and keep all students safe. Action will be agreed with Head of Year team.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Head of Year.
- The Head of Year or another member of staff will meet with those concerned and may need to ask others who may have witnessed the incidents.
- The student will be kept apprised of what action has been taken.
- A report will be recorded internally using the SIMs system.
- In cases of more serious or persistent incidents parents/guardians will be contacted.
- In cases of social interaction problems, first steps may include – speaking to a small group of students, circle time in form time, involvement of Peer Mentors, a 'No Blame' meeting conducted with a second member of staff or mediation.
- All bullying is taken very seriously and the following disciplinary steps can be taken:
  - Official warnings to cease offending.
  - Detention (either lunch time or after school).
  - Exclusion from certain areas of school premises.
  - Exclusion from 'social time' with peers.
  - Isolation during the school day.
  - Fixed-term exclusion.
  - Permanent exclusion.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) sets out in their guidance, "Social Inclusion: Student Support" (Circular 10/99 paragraph 4.32, page 25), that schools must:

Make clear in their schools' behaviour policy that racial harassment will not be tolerated and how staff and students should deal with it.

**Record details of all racial incidents, ensuring that parents/carers and governors are informed of such incidents and of the action taken to deal with them.** (This requires schools to investigate all allegations of racial incidents.) The allegation can be made by the victim, perpetrator or any other person.

As an enhanced approach to record keeping, Weald of Kent will record all incidents of harassment or intimidation (bullying) relating to homophobic, gender based or disability based behaviour which will be reported to the Headteacher and if necessary the governing body.

## Cyberbullying

There is a clear policy for the use of mobile phones and similar technologies that are often involved in incidents of bullying. Cyberbullying involving mobile phones or computers is treated as seriously as any other type of bullying with the additional concerns of child protection issues regarding the internet.

The appropriate use of technology in school is implemented not only to avoid bullying behaviour but to encourage effective and diplomatic communication between students. This is outlined clearly in all Student Planners. The school's e-safety Policy and Child Protection policy as well as

staff training are robust in their acknowledgment of the dangers of Cyberbullying. ICT support staff and the Senior Assistant Headteacher monitor changes in online habits and dangers in relation to Cyberbullying and regularly update staff, students and parents.

In school, the Peer Mentors project supports students and strengthens community cohesion by providing a safe and anonymous place to seek help. Relationships with Early Intervention services and the local Police mean that serious incidents can be dealt with effectively.

Further details can be found at Childnet <http://www.childnet.com/resources/cyberbullying-guidance-for-schools>.

Signs that a student may be experiencing cyberbullying are as follows:

- Being emotionally upset during or after using the Internet or the phone.
- Being very secretive or protective of one's digital life and avoiding discussions about computer or mobile phone activities.
- Withdrawal from family members, friends, and activities.
- Avoiding school or group gatherings.
- A change in work attitude or grades.
- Change in behaviour such as "acting out" in anger at home or school.
- Changes in mood, behaviour, sleep, or appetite.
- Wanting to stop using the computer or phone.
- Being nervous or jumpy when getting an instant message, text, or email.

Cyberbullying can take many forms but includes the following:

- **Threats and intimidation:** can be sent by mobile phone, email, online games, via comments on websites, social networking sites or message boards. Threats can include violence, including sexual threats.
- **Harassment or stalking:** Repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages or making phone calls (including silent calls). This can also include using public forums or message boards, to repeatedly harass, or to post derogatory or defamatory statements. Tracking someone's activity and collecting information about them.
- **Vilification/defamation:** Posting upsetting or defamatory remarks about an individual on line, or name calling, general insults and prejudice-based bullying, for example sexist, homophobic and racist messages. 'Slut-shaming' can be defined as the practice of attacking (primarily) girls and women on the grounds of perceived or fabricated transgressions or socially acceptable sexual behaviours.

**Identity theft/unauthorised access and impersonation:** This covers cases where sites have been set up which make use of school logos and name, or using photographs of staff or students taken from the school website without permission.

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
  - Looking at use of the school systems.
  - Identifying and interviewing possible witnesses.
  - Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.

- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
  - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
  - Confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and also the school searching and confiscation policy. (Note: Schools should ensure they access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet Cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the schools powers are used proportionately and lawfully).
  - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies. September 2017, Education Safeguarding Team, Kent County Council 6.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the student responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of any students responsible, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
  - Advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply.
  - Providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists.
  - Helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

## **Students**

Students who have been bullied will be reassured and supported in order to restore their self-esteem and confidence. This may be through:

- One-to-one meetings with the Form Tutor or other pastoral practitioner.
- Peer mentor counselling session.
- In rare exceptions, a change of form group will be agreed.
- Continuous monitoring of student's social interaction following a reported incident.

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened to discover why the student became involved.
- Establishing any wrong doing and need to change.
- An on going and transparent dialogue with parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the student.
- On some occasions we may recommend and refer to attendance at an anti-bullying programme.
- On occasion, we may recommend and refer to member of the local police force or a Community Support Officer for advice and guidance.

Decisions on appropriate action are decided by the Senior Leadership Group taking all context and circumstances in to account and with the safeguarding of all students as a priority.

## **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The school will review this policy regularly. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

<b>Author:</b>	Lisa Barker	<b>Reviewed:</b>	March 2018
<b>Link Governor/s:</b>	Sheila Viola Julia Wilson	<b>Next Review Date:</b>	March 2021
..... Ratified March 2018 FGB			

## **Appendix 1 Advice for Students and Parents**

### **What can students do if they are being bullied?**

Students are encouraged to report bullying in schools. If unchallenged, students who bully others are unlikely to stop. Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon! If you are being bullied you need to follow these guidelines:

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- Be proud of who you are, it is good to be individual.
- Try not to show the bully you are upset, he/she thrives on that!
- Stay with a group of other students if you can.
- Be assertive, let the perpetrator know that you believe you are being bullied, walk away confidently. Go straight to a member of staff.
- Share your fears with your parents.

### **What can students do if they know someone is being bullied?**

Those who witness bullying often harbour the fear that it could happen to them next. It is, however, important that if you know that someone is being bullied you let a member of staff know it is happening.

### **What can a parent do if their child is being bullied?**

It is extremely difficult for parents whose child is being bullied but the most important things to remember are:

- Listen carefully to your son/daughter.
- Encourage them to write down the incidents that have happened, where they happened and who, if anyone, saw them happening.
- Encourage them to report it to a member of staff. If they do not want to let the school know immediately that it is happening.
- Do not get involved directly and contact the students involved or parents of the perpetrator.

## Appendix 2 Overview of PSHCE Lessons that cover Anti-Bullying and Inclusion \*

Year Group	Term	Topic Covered
7	4	<b>MENTAL HEALTH</b> Resilience Friendship fall outs Understanding emotions Thinking about others Dealing with feelings Happiness project
	5	<b>WIDER WORLD</b> Identity Youth around the world Prejudice and tolerance Charity and ethics Induction leaflets for new Year 7s
	6	Being a buddy Guide to first week at Weald
8	1	What is different about us from Year 7? What are the expectations? FRIENDSHIPS – what makes a good friend? What is important about friendships?
	3	<b>MENTAL HEALTH</b> Affirmations Dealing with changing emotions Positive self-talk Resilience Setting goals
9	3	<b>MENTAL HEALTH</b> Mental Health Awareness Mind Fitness DEALING WITH CONFLICT
	6	CONFLICT IN THE WIDER WORLD
10		
11		
12		
13		

\*Please note this is an example and is subject to change depending upon the specific needs of the school or year at a specific time.