

Blossom Lower School and Upper House



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Foundation stage, Primary, Secondary, Post 16

**Last reviewed July 2013 Charlotte Lawrence-Smith
Next review due July 2014**

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Definition

Bullying can be described as being *‘a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident which casts a shadow over a child’s life, or a series of such incidents.’*

A recent definition describes bullying as:

“Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”.

Ref: (DfE 2011) **Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies** (*refer to Appendix C*).

At Blossom House and Upper House School staff, parents and pupils work together to create a happy, caring, learning environment. Bullying, either verbal, physical or indirect will not be tolerated. It is everyone’s responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Research has shown time and time again that the extent of bullying in schools is greatly underestimated.

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

Refer to **Appendix A** for further clarification of ‘Bullying issues’ within Blossom House Lower, Upper and Secondary school, and the purpose and application of the hurting and inappropriate behaviour books.

Strategy for dealing with bullying

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too – that is why they bully. However, they should also be made clearly aware of the seriousness of their behaviour as well as the impact which it has/had upon the victim.

*Refer also to **Appendix A** for the use of the 'Hurting Book/Inappropriate Behaviour Book' which would usually precede referral to the Head teacher and/or the Staff Member Responsible for Behaviour.* This aims to illustrate and explain what 'hurting' and 'bullying' behaviour is, and the different forms it can take.

- Discussions with the victim (as is appropriate to the pupil's level of understanding). This will require patience and understanding. Remember – Listen, believe, act. The events that lead up to a bullying incident may need to be drawn out on paper in order to aid the pupil's understanding and recognition of his or her behaviour. It should involve a member of staff with whom the pupil feels comfortable as well as the person responsible for behaviour and/or the Headteacher.
- Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible. Advise the Head teacher and/or the Staff Member Responsible for Behaviour. Record all details in the books and/or pupil logs.
- Discussions with the bully. Explain the details clearly and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at Blossom House or Upper House School.
- N.B It is important to establish whether there was '**intent**' behind the behaviour/s. It is common for pupils with language and communication problems to experience confusion about the effect of their behaviours on others. This is continually targeted through a whole school, multi-disciplinary approach. However, once staff are sure that a pupil or pupils have been made explicitly aware of the unacceptability of certain actions/behaviours, anti-bullying policies will be implemented.

- If they admit responsibility then follow the procedure outlined below and in the Discipline and Behaviour Policy and in *Appendix A*.
- If they do not take responsibility, investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, continue with the procedure. Pupils usually own up if presented with all the facts. It may be that the perpetrator is unaware of the seriousness of their behaviour and the impact that it has upon the victim, due to their social interaction and language problems.
- Separate discussions with parents of bully and victim. May involve phone call/s and/or meetings in school also.
- Sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of playtimes, exclusion from playground during lunchtimes, exclusion from school, depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s)
- Continue monitoring the situation by observing at lesson times, playtimes/ lunchtimes and having discussions with victim to ensure no repetition
- As the behaviour of the bully (hopefully) improves, then favoured activities etc can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the pupil's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.

In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identities of bullies, at Blossom House and Upper House School we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils
- All staff listen, believe, act

- Circle times, form times, assemblies, SLT sessions and PSHE are used to talk about bullying.
- Dfes Anti-bullying pack 'Don't Suffer in Silence' provides the basis for the Blossom House strategy. This has been further added by to by the advice and direction given in Dfe 2011 Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (*refer to Appendix C*).
- Anti-Bullying week.
- All staff aware of the process for acting upon bullying.
- All staff aware and confident in implementing policies specific to a given cohort relating to specific issues and able to seek help from senior staff.
- Support for both the victim and perpetrator through onsite resources such as speech and language therapy input (with regards to social interaction/communication issues) and arts therapy provision (for emotionally related issues).
- Liaison with the Child Protection Officer (Susan Sandler).

Refer also to **Appendix B** for use of methods such as the 'Kindness' and/or 'Sensible Book' and 'Appropriate Behaviour' books which are used throughout the Primary and Secondary schools (in forms appropriate to the groups' age and levels of maturity and understanding) in order to promote appropriate interactions between pupils and reduce incidents of bullying.

N: B The school's policy with regards to Anti-Bullying also includes any form of **Cyber Bullying**. Reefer also to the *Facebook Policy* which sets out a clear process for tackling issues related to Facebook and social

network media (e.g. Xbox chat). This process needs to be supported by parents in the home.

Cyber Bullying could include use of text messaging, email, Messenger, BBM, 'Facebook', Internet, chat rooms and online games.

- The school will ensure that the curriculum teaches children about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely. Some of these applications are not available to the pupils in school.
- Internet blocking technologies are continually updated and harmful sites blocked (overseen by the I.T. manager in liaison with staff).
- Clear policies are set about the use of mobile phones at school and at other times when pupils are under the school's authority.
- Pupils will be given key guidance on:
 - personal privacy rights*
 - material posted on any electronic platform*
 - photographic images.*
- The curriculum will cover the value of e-communications and the risks and consequences of improper use, including the legal implications in lessons such as Life Skills, PSHE, assemblies with local police and ICT lessons.
- A dialogue will be kept up with parents about emerging technologies their child might be using, as well as reminding parents are the support the school requires in order to implement policies.
- The school will ensure that parents know what steps to take if they suspect that their child is being cyber-bullied or is bullying

someone else. Parents are invited to a talk at the school on this subject by a specialist national charity. Letters are sent home by the Principal.

- Internet safety week involving in school activities with the pupils and after school training sessions available for all parents.
- Liaison with the Child Protection Officer (Susan Sandler).
- Refer also to the *Facebook policy*.

Bullying – A Charter for Action

Name of School.....

We are working with staff, pupils and parents to create a school community where bullying is not tolerated.

Our school community

- **Discusses, monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis**
- **Supports staff to identify and tackle bullying appropriately**
- **Ensures that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively**
- **Reports back quickly to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying**

- **Seeks to learn from anti-bullying good practice elsewhere and utilises the support of the LA and relevant statutory/voluntary organisations when appropriate.**

.....**Headteacher**

.....**Representative of pupils**

.....**Date**