



# SEDBERGH JUNIOR SCHOOL

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### POLICY STATEMENT

**Scope:** This policy applies to all pupils and staff at Sedbergh Junior School irrespective of their age and whether or not a pupil is in the care of the School when/if bullying behaviour occurs.

**Policy Aims:** Through the operation of this policy we aim:

- to maintain and drive a positive culture of kindness and consideration among all pupils and staff throughout the School; and
- to deter bullying behaviour, detect it when it occurs, and deal with it by counselling and/or disciplinary sanctions and, if necessary, by exclusion.

**Bullying behaviour** is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Sedbergh Junior School because:

- it is harmful to the person who is bullied, and to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and those who support them;
- it interferes with a pupil's right to enjoy his/her learning and leisure time free from intimidation; and
- it is contrary to all our aims and values, our internal culture and the reputation of the School.

### BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

#### WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is behaviour which hurts or causes distress by taking unfair advantage of another person in some way, making him or her feel uncomfortable or threatened. Bullying can be:

- Emotional      being unfriendly, excluding, intimidating, 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 inappropriate or abusive sexual comments or actions
- Disability Disability-related taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexist comments or actions that focus on sex differences
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber all areas of internet, such as email, social network and internet chat room misuse for the purpose of upsetting someone  
bullying via text messaging and calls such as threatening or unfriendly texts or calls  
misuse of associated technology, ie camera and video facilities for the purpose of upsetting someone.

## SIGNS OF BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing or are damaged
- Change to established habits (eg giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self-confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches etc
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares etc
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

**Intention:** Not all bullying is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as "teasing" or "a game" or "for the good of" the other person. These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may be non-malign and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. A bully who does not respond appropriately to advice or sanctions would ultimately have to leave Sedbergh Junior School.

Serious and malign bullying can cause great distress to the person bullied and can lead to significant psychological damage. It may also lead to the application of laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

**Responsibility:** It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no person becomes a victim of bullying. A person may be vulnerable to bullying because of his/her age, physical appearance, nationality, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion or disability, or because s/he is new in the School, appears to be uncertain or has no friends. S/he may also become a target because of an irrational decision by a bully.

**Legal Aspects:** A person who makes a physical or sexual assault on another, or who steals or causes damage to the property of another, commits a criminal offence and also a civil wrong known as a "tort" for which there can be legal consequences outside the School.

## **ANTI-BULLYING CULTURE**

**Ethos:** Our expectation of all members of the School community is that:

- the School has a total commitment to its Anti-Bullying Policy and Safeguarding Policy;
- behaviour expectations are displayed and should be adhered to;
- a pupil or a member of staff who witnesses or hears of an incident of bullying will report it;
- a complaint of bullying will always be taken seriously; and
- no one will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone else is being bullied.

**Equal Opportunities:** In School and in every year group:

- discriminatory words and behaviour are treated as unacceptable;
- positive attitudes are fostered towards people who are disabled and towards ethnic, cultural and linguistic groups within and outside the School; and
- positive attitudes are fostered towards both sexes through the curriculum and tutorials.

**Staff:** Through their training and experience, members of the staff are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:

- celebrating achievement;
- anticipating problems and providing support;
- disciplining sensibly and fairly;
- making opportunities to listen to pupils; and
- acting as advocates of pupils.

**Pupils:** Through our pastoral care systems, pupils are informed and taught that bullying will not be tolerated in the School. They are encouraged:

- to celebrate the effort and achievements of others
- to hold and promote positive attitudes

- to feel able to share problems with staff
- to turn to anyone they trust, if they have a problem
- not to feel guilty about airing complaints
- to treat meals as pleasant social occasions

## **ANTI-BULLYING SYSTEMS**

**Approach:** Our systems for detecting and dealing with bullying to or from pupils are designed to operate:

- *vertically*, through all year groups
- *horizontally*, within year groups and in the classroom and other activities.

Our anti-bullying systems are implemented and driven in the way described below.

**Complaints:** A pupil who is being bullied should complain without delay and can do so in several ways which are displayed in Junior School classrooms and on the school's website; or:

- ◆ by informing his/her parents, his/her Housemaster/Housemistress or House Matron, or the Chaplain, or a member of staff, or a responsible older pupil;
- ◆ by contacting the School Medical Officer or the Sister in the Sanatorium;
- ◆ by contacting the designated child protection teacher (Mr Hattam 07894584959) or his deputy (Mrs Prall 07967 873932);
- ◆ by contacting the Independent Listener who currently is Canon Robert Western (tel 015396 21426);
- ◆ by telephoning Childline (0800 1111);
- ◆ by contacting the Social Services department (01539 773300 or 01228 526690 (24 hours));
- ◆ by contacting OFSTED on 08456 40 40 40.

**Vigilance:** Members of staff are vigilant at all times but particularly:

- before and between lessons
- playtimes and in the changing rooms/cloakrooms
- in houses, particularly in dormitories
- on School transport.

**Meetings:** Bullying is regularly discussed in meetings between:

- members of the Senior Management Team
- Housemaster/Housemistress and Senior Tutor
- tutors and pupils in their tutor group.
- house staff and matrons.

The result of these meetings is to feed back information about friendship patterns, particular incidents, any pupil who seems to be isolated, any growing "power base" and any known conflict between a member of staff and a pupil, or between pupils.

**Record Keeping:** The Housemaster/Housemistress and house staff maintain records of the welfare and development of individual pupils.

Each Junior School child has an individual Action Plan on which all pastoral incidents are recorded.

**Education:** The PSHE curriculum includes lessons on bullying which cover:

- Who is the "bully"? Who is the "victim"?
- Why are some people "bullies" and others "victims"?
- What should a pupil do if s/he is bullied?
- What constitutes bullying? Where are the boundaries?
- What should be done if bullying is confirmed?

Videos are shown to stimulate discussion.

**Staff Awareness:** Appropriate staff are trained to be made aware of all aspects of care to ensure that they have the necessary professional skills, especially:

- awareness of the risk and indications of child abuse and bullying, and how to deal with cases.

And in houses, ensuring that:

- there is an adequate presence of staff;
- staff are actively involved with pupils in all areas of the house when they are on duty;
- attempts are made to avoid boredom and lack of purpose among pupils;
- there is space available for pupils' quiet withdrawal;
- there is no crowding in bedrooms or common rooms;
- good behaviour and discipline is maintained.

**Pupils' Responsibilities:** We emphasise with senior pupils the role which is expected of them in setting a good example and being helpful to younger pupils and each other. Older boarders are encouraged to keep an eye on younger boarders and offer support, where it is needed, and in particular:

- all senior pupils have the opportunity for house duties but senior pupils who do not wish to have extended pastoral responsibilities are not coerced;
- the responsibilities of senior pupils are appropriately limited;
- members of staff expect prefects and senior boarders to offer supervisory support;
- house and School prefects receive training at the beginning of the academic year on how to control younger pupils sensitively.

**Monitoring:** Every complaint or report of bullying must be entered in the Incident Book or in the child(s) Action Plan in the Junior School. The Housemaster/Housemistress keeps Incident Books up-to-date. The Junior School Headmaster will review every child's Action Plan each term.

## REPORTING INCIDENTS

**Victim:** There are many reasons why a person who has suffered bullying may be reluctant to report it. S/he may become demoralised and may say, for example:

- it is telling tales. They won't believe me because the person I am complaining about is intelligent and popular and I am not, and I will become even more unpopular;
- the things they are saying and doing are too embarrassing to discuss with an adult;
- it is all my fault anyway for being overweight/too studious etc;
- there are too many of them; there is nothing the staff can do;
- it will get back to my parents and they will think less of me;
- I will just try and toughen up and grow a thicker skin;
- I will lie low and not audition for a part in the School play etc.

**Witnesses:** There are also reasons why a person who has witnessed or learned of bullying behaviour may not want to make a report. S/he may say:

- it is "grassing" and I will become unpopular;
- it is not my concern anyway;
- I don't rate the victim and I would find it embarrassing to be associated with him/her.

**Culture:** Any of these responses would be contrary to our culture at Sedbergh Junior School. When we drive and implement this policy we encourage every pupil to understand that:

- every complaint of bullying will be taken seriously;
- members of staff will deal with a complaint correctly and effectively in accordance with their experience and the training they have received;
- there is a solution to nearly every problem of bullying;
- a pupil who complains will receive support and advice and in many cases the problem can be dealt with on a no-names basis;
- the primary aim will be for the bullying to cease, not the punishment of the bully unless necessary.

## PROCEDURES

**Guidelines:** The following procedures are a guideline except where expressed in the terms "should" or "must". The best guide is the experience and training of the staff.

**Initial Complaint:** A person in authority who learns of alleged bullying behaviour should:

- firstly, offer advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim;

- report the allegation to the Junior School Headmaster, or Housemaster/Housemistress of the victim and the alleged bully as soon as possible.
- The Housemaster/Housemistress/SJS Headmaster must:
  - Record the complaint in their Incident Book/ Action Plan.
  - Contact the Housemaster/Housemistress/members of staff in the Junior School (if applicable) to agree on a strategy, and on who will take the lead.

**Assessment:** The complainant's SJS Headmaster/Housemaster/Housemistress will normally see the complainant and (unless the case is very serious) any witnesses without delay and form an initial view of the allegation, viz:

- the nature of the incident/s – physical? verbal? exclusionary? etc
- is it a "one-off" incident involving an individual or a group?
- is it part of a pattern of behaviour by an individual or a group?
- has physical injury been caused? Who should be informed – SJS Headmaster? Parents? The School's child protection officer? Social Services? The police?
- can the alleged bully be seen on a no-names basis?
- what is the likely outcome if the complaint proves to be correct?
- at this stage, the possible outcomes for an incident which is not too serious include:
  - there has been a misunderstanding which can be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice to the alleged bully; or
  - the complaint is justified in whole or in part, and further action will be needed (see Range of Action, below).

**Serious Incident:** If the SJS Headmaster/Housemaster/Housemistress believes that serious bullying behaviour:

- has occurred involving a pupil in the Junior School; or
- has recurred after warnings have been given to the "bully" s/he must inform the Headmaster and the School's Child Protection Officer ("CPO"), currently Mr C Hattam.

The CPO will then:

- interview the alleged victim, bully and any witnesses separately, in order to establish the facts of the case. S/he may decide to ask the SJS Headmaster/Housemaster/Housemistress/ to be present;
  - send a summary of his/her findings to the Headmaster, relevant Housemaster/Housemistress, the Chaplain;
- AND
- The Headmaster and/or the relevant Housemaster/Housemistress will interview the alleged victim and bully separately:
    - to confirm the facts of the case, if considered necessary;
    - to decide on the action to be taken in accordance with the Range of Action set out below.
  - The Headmaster will notify the parents of the victim and bully giving them details of the case and the action being taken.

**Range of Action:** When a complaint is upheld the range of responses will include one or more of the following:

- advice and support for the victim and, where appropriate, establishing a course of action to help the victim;
- advice and support to the bully in trying to change his/her behaviour. This may include clear instructions and a warning or final warning, and involvement of the Chaplain;
- a supervised meeting between the bully and the victim to discuss their differences and the ways in which they may be able to avoid future conflict
- a disciplinary sanction against the bully such as suspension or gating. **In a very serious case or a case of persistent bullying, a bully may, after a fair hearing, be required to leave the School permanently;**
- action to break up a "power base";
- moving either the bully or victim to another House after consultation with the pupil, his/her parents and the relevant staff;
- involving Social Services or the police;
- notifying the parents of one or both pupils about the case and the action which has been taken;
- such other action as may appear to the Headmaster to be appropriate;
- noting the outcome in the relevant pupil's Action Plan.

**Monitoring:** The position should be monitored for as long as necessary thereafter.

**Action shall, where appropriate, include a review of the case including talking to the bully/ies and victim/s a fortnight after the incident and in the next half term following the incident.**

Action may include:

- sharing information with some or all colleagues and with pupils in the House so that they may be alert to the need to monitor certain pupils closely;
- ongoing counselling and support;
- vigilance;
- mentioning the incident at meetings of staff;
- reviewing vulnerable individuals and areas of the School;
- liaison between staff, the outcome being recorded in the pupil's Action Plan.

**Formal Complaint:** If the victim, bully or his/her parents are not satisfied with the action taken, they should be advised to make a formal complaint, according to the procedure outlined in the Complaints Procedure.

## **EYFS CHILDREN**

Our youngest children are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They have to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect the possessions of others. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, to work hard and to

listen to others – in line with our School ethos. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity. Mrs Williams, the Head of the Pre-Prep Department, is in day-to-day charge of the management of behaviour in the Pre-Prep Department and is in regular contact with home, through personal communication and the children’s home/school book. Any concerns are quickly raised and addressed.

We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and can be hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions but sometimes we may have to take swift, reasonable and appropriate action to address behaviour which is deemed as inappropriate. Occasionally, and in extreme circumstances, a child may be sent to see the Senior Tutor of the Junior School, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action but such instances are extremely rare. Parents would be fully informed. In cases of repeated instances of unkind or inappropriate behaviour, parents will be invited into the school to meet with the Head of Pre-Prep and Headmaster to agree, between home and school, a way of handling the difficulty and the way forward for all concerned.

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**By Resolution of the Board of Governors**



**Headmaster**

**Circulation on request:** Pupils, parents, staff and the Governors of Sedbergh School  
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