

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

One of the five points in the Mission Statement for St Teresa's School states that the school will endeavour:

To maintain a happy, disciplined and orderly environment in which it promotes dignity, order and respect.

There is a high expectation that the school and the wider community at St Teresa's will fully support this statement; that all members of the school will behave in a way that will allow for the full development of all individuals personally, socially and academically; that all will show tolerance and respect towards individuals and a responsibility towards the community as a whole.

Research tells us that what children fear most is bullying and bullying behaviour takes place in all schools. This school does not tolerate bullying and it is everyone's responsibility to see that incidents of bullying are dealt with immediately. All staff should be aware of what to look for, and staff and pupils should be familiar with the procedure to follow when incidents of bullying occur.

Bullying is unacceptable in this school and will not be tolerated. The school also recognises that it is important to be aware of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school. The school will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying.

AIMS

- To demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and will not be tolerated.
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and on off-site activities.
- To support everyone in the actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying.
- To promote an environment where it is **not** an offence to tell someone about bullying.
- To promote positive attitudes in pupils

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is defined as repeatedly and intentionally acting to hurt or frighten somebody else. It can take the form of teasing, assault, intimidation and

extortion. It is deliberate harassment or an aggressive act of omission or commission which causes physical or psychological hurt, and may be inflicted by one or more persons.

How is bullying shown?

It can be:

- Physical
- Verbal
- social and psychological
- cyber bullying
- often an inter-relationship between classes/groups

Signs of bullying:

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences, or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, a lack of concentration, or truancy.

If anyone is made aware that bullying is taking place, they should inform a relevant member of staff straight away. Once it has begun, bullying rarely stops until there is an intervention. Intervention can be arranged in such a way that bullies can be discovered by staff and then dealt with. Once they know what they are looking for, staff can discover it for themselves and hence accusations of 'sneaking' are avoided.

Bullying can be as distressing and harmful to children as child abuse, and as such it is unacceptable behaviour. As a boarding school, we must be aware that boarders may not be able to escape those who bully them. It may be most effectively and more often perpetrated at night, in dormitories, but may also occur in unsupervised areas or periods unbeknown to staff or others.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Bullying will be taken seriously by all St Teresa's staff, who will establish the details of any incident in order to evaluate whether it is a case of child abuse. All staff are aware of the Child Protection Policy Procedures.

Anyone approached by a pupil expressing concerns about bullying by a fellow pupil or of a fellow pupil, must ensure that the pupil feels that their concerns are being taken seriously.

The Headmistress will:

- ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them
- determine the strategies and procedures

- discuss development of the strategies with the SMT
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils
- report annually to the governing body

The Deputy Head will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and bullies
- keep the Head informed of ongoing incidents
- determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems
- will keep and consider reports on serious incidents, and make a termly report to the Head.

The Heads of Year will:

- be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution
- take part in the anti-bullying programme in PSHE

All Staff will:

- know the policy and procedures
- be observant and raise any concerns about a pupil to an appropriate person (Form Tutor, Head of Year)
- deal with incidents according to the policy
- never let any incidences of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity
- participate in the PSHE programme

ANTI-BULLYING EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM

The School will raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through the PSHE programme, school assemblies, the school council, use of tutorial time and through departmental schemes of work as appropriate.

- The Deputy Head is responsible for initiating and developing, with appropriate colleagues an anti-bullying programme as part of PSHE
- Heads of Department should be aware of using anti-bullying material in their programmes of study as appropriate

Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will play a major part in the strategies used by the school.

PROCEDURE FOR STAFF

If an accusation of bullying is made to a member of staff:

- Staff should report to the Form Tutor or Head of Year, in the first instance, any incident of bullying of which they are aware. Boarding Mistresses should report to the Head of Boarding.
- The Deputy Head should be informed if the incident is of a serious nature, or if a pattern of bullying is detected. Any such incident should be recorded in writing.
- The Deputy Head or the Head of Boarding will talk to the bully and to the bullied, and to their parents if necessary. Written records will be kept of these interviews and action appropriate to the incident will be taken.
- Reassurance and continuing positive support should be given to the victim of the bullying.
- Any pupil found to be bullying another pupil will be subject to the school's (Rewards and) Sanctions policy. For persistent offenders or incidents considered as gross acts of aggression a pupil could be permanently excluded.
- The school also recognises that changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school.

Involvement of Parents

Parents, as well as all staff and pupils, should know that the school will not tolerate bullying and takes a positive approach to educating pupils to combat it.

Parents of pupils who are being bullied and parents of the bullies will be involved in the solution to the problem as appropriate by the relevant Head of Year, in consultation with the Deputy Head.

Parents will be informed of the policy and procedures and the possibility of permanent exclusion following gross acts of bullying.

PROCEDURES FOR GIRLS

The following information should be conveyed to the girls by staff; in the first instance, by the Form Tutor or the Boarding Mistress. The school diary should be used to reinforce the school's anti-bullying policy at the beginning of each academic year. For information, Appendix (i) shows the information that is contained in the homework diary.

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour. If you suspect that someone is being bullied or in distress, take action by informing a member of staff immediately.

If you yourself are subjected to bullying, have the confidence to tell an adult. The school has a procedure for dealing with such incidents.

Within the pastoral care system pupils take on the role of prefects (Sixth Form pupils), buddies to the Year 7 pupils (Sixth Form pupils) and peer mentors (pilot scheme 2009 Year 11 pupils). Through whole school assembly and the Heads of Year the girls are made aware of the support that is available to them throughout the school. Each year the incoming prefects, buddies and peer mentors receive training on how to listen and communicate effectively as well as guidelines on how to respond to any concerns that are raised to them. The training is completed by an outside agency – Learning Performance.

The Headmistress will be kept informed at all times.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Deputy Head will keep records on serious incidents. These incidents will be considered by the SMT to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled with a view to improving the school's strategies.

The Headmistress will make an annual report to the governing body.

Appendix (i)

ANTI BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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AIMS:

- To demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and will not be tolerated.
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Bullying is defined as repeatedly and intentionally acting to hurt or frighten somebody else.

It can also be:

- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, tripping up, hitting, pinching or pulling hair, taking things from another person, damaging another person's belongings, playing practical jokes on other people.
- **Verbal** - calling people names or laughing at them, being rude or spiteful or using offensive language, making threats to hurt people physically, teasing people about their appearance (weight, hair, clothes), their intelligence, family, money, their colour, race or religion, aggressive behaviour, bribing people or otherwise making them do things they do not want to do, sending hurtful or offensive text messages or Internet messages.

- **Psychological** - using threats to obtain money, whispering about people when they are present, leaving people out or ignoring them, spreading untrue rumours or writing notes about people, getting other people into trouble for something they did not do, embarrassing other people. People who are bullied may lose their confidence and can be made feel that it is their own fault that they are being bullied.

What should you do if you are bullied?

Many people who are bullied make the mistake of keeping it to themselves. If you are being threatened or bullied, you must tell someone.

This could be:

- a friend in your class or an older girl.
- an older sister or brother.
- your mother or father or another member of your family.
- your Form Tutor, Head of Year, Boarding staff or any other teacher.
- the School Chaplain.
- the Headmistress or Deputy Head.

If anyone tells you that she is being bullied, you should report this to a member of staff; do not keep it to yourself.

Other things which can help the situation are:

- Keep calm, ignore the bully and don't let her see that you are hurt by her behaviour.
- Stay confident and behave in a friendly way towards the bully so that she has no reason to be aggressive.
- Walk away before the bully has the chance to treat you badly.

If you report that you have been bullied and you are willing to identify the person who has been bullying you, the school has a responsibility towards you. Someone will talk to the bully to find out why she is acting as she is. The bully will be given every possible encouragement to change her way of behaving.

The situation will be monitored to make sure that it does not happen again and that the bully does not retaliate. The parents of the bully will be told about her behaviour. The bully will be given a suitable punishment and warned about her behaviour.

If the bullying continues, the bully may be suspended from school and this suspension will become part of her permanent school record.

In extreme cases, a girl may be asked to leave the school.

Useful websites:

www.kidscape.org.uk www.childline.org.uk

Names of people in school who maybe able to help:

My Form Tutor.....

My Head of Year.....

My Year Prefects.....

My Buddy.....
Gemma Bates (Head Girl)
Claudia Medina Moralejo & Ebba Blakeborough-Tait (Deputy Head Girls)
Arcadia Chan & Mafalda Neves (Boarding Prefects)

Mrs Mandy Binney (Chaplain)
Mrs Jill Elburn (Deputy Headmistress/Child Protection Officer)
Miss Helen Vose (Head of Boarding)
Mrs Lesley Falconer (Headmistress)
Miss Annie Whatford (Matron)