

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. AIM

- 1.1. Every student should be able to learn in a school environment in which they feel safe and supported and be free from bullying of any kind.
- 1.2. The school staff are totally opposed to bullying.
- 1.3. The aim of this policy is to provide students with a safe and secure working environment.
- 1.4. Providing a safe and happy place in which to live and learn is essential to achieving school improvement, raising achievement and attendance, promoting equality and diversity, and ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
- 1.5. It is recognised that all schools are likely to have a problem with bullying at some time. This school regards bullying as particularly serious and firm action will always be taken against it.
- 1.6. This policy aims to produce a consistent response by the school to any bullying incidents that may take place.

2. PRINCIPLES

- 2.1. Every person has the **RIGHT** to feel secure and happy at school. Our school will not tolerate any unkind actions or remarks.
- 2.2. Our definition of bullying includes:
 - Physical: e.g. hitting, kicking, threatening behaviour and taking others' belongings.
 - Verbal: e.g. name calling, insulting, discriminatory remarks and threatening comments.
 - Indirect: e.g. excluding from social groups, spreading rumours etc.
 - Cyber: e.g. hurtful comments made using mobile telephones, text messaging or internet chat rooms (MSN, Facebook etc). The scale and scope can be greater than other forms of bullying and the person being bullied will not always know who is attacking them. It is also true that some students may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying.
- 2.3. Cyber bullying can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.
- 2.4. Research into the extent of cyberbullying indicates that it is a feature of many young people's lives. It also affects members of school staff and other adults; there are examples of staff being ridiculed, threatened and otherwise abused online by pupils.

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- 2.5. Every student and member of staff has a **RESPONSIBILITY** to ensure that bullying is not tolerated.
- 2.6. Every student is **ENTITLED** to the respect of others.
- 2.7. Students are expected to report all forms of bullying.
- 2.8. Staff guarantee to take the matter seriously and deal with each incident appropriately and discreetly.
- 2.9. Bullying is one aspect of behaviour, which causes hurt and anxiety to pupils. The possibility of any form of bullying taking place in the school is an issue, which often causes parents some concern.

3. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CASES OF BULLYING

- 3.1. All suspicions of bullying will be reported to the head teacher (or the head of education in the absence of the head teacher). The headteacher will investigate and take appropriate action with involvement of the hospital care and therapy teams.
- 3.2. Support and reassurance will be given to any student thought to be a victim of bullying.

Bullying/exclusions

- 3.3. Bullying behaviour will be dealt within the context of our behaviour and attendance policy and in line with wider CAMHS policies and procedures.

A. Recognising the signs of bullying

- 3.4. Bullying is repeated deliberate, harmful behaviour over a period of time. Staff will watch out for the signs and symptoms of the following forms of bullying:
 - Physical harm or threat of physical harm
 - Verbal, name calling or teasing, spreading rumours
 - Indirect, deliberately excluding someone from an activity
 - Misuse of mobile phones or internet message boards and chat rooms.
- 3.5. The school recognises that any student can be bullied but there are certain **factors that can make bullying more likely**:
 - A lack of close friends in the school / hospital
 - Shyness
 - Race, religion, sexual orientation or social class
 - Special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem, those with caring responsibilities, children in care (sometimes frequently on the move).
- 3.6. *Cygnnet school staff are aware that Children with SEN or disabilities can often lack the social or communication skills to report bullying incidents so it is important that staff are alert to the potential bullying this group faces and that their mechanisms for reporting are accessible to all.*
- 3.7. Staff **may** suspect bullying is occurring if a student:
 - becomes withdrawn and anxious
 - shows a deterioration in his or her work

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- has spurious illnesses
- persistently arrives late for class
- prefers to stay with adults
- has money or possessions damaged or go missing
- shows physical signs of being in a fight
- becomes aggressive
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- gives unlikely reasons for any of the above.

B. Preventing bullying

3.8 As a school we take bullying seriously. We use a range of proactive strategies to prevent bullying. These include;

- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
- Use of curriculum opportunities, in particular PSHE/citizenship classes where issues of diversity are discussed and anti-bullying messages are drawn out.
- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year.
- Pupil surveys.
- Poster campaigns.
- Improved supervision in potential problem areas.
- Peer mentoring and Buddy Schemes.
- Review of general and specific staff induction and continuing professional development to ensure staff training reflects the anti-bullying policy and practice of the school.

C. Dealing with bullying incidents

3.9. Any incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible. Staff will do all they can to support the victims of bullying and make it clear to the bully that this behaviour is not acceptable. In dealing with bullying, school staff will:

- Not ignore it
- Act on incidents that may occur outside school, if reported to them.
- Not make premature assumptions.
- Listen to all accounts of the incidents.
- Adopt a problem-solving approach that encourages students to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves; and
- Make regular follow-up checks to ensure that bullying has not resumed.
- Investigate and take appropriate action against incidents reported to the school, of bullying that occur outside the school (e.g. On ward, social media).

D. If a pupil is bullied

3.10. Staff who receive a report of a bullying incident from a student will:

- Listen to the student's account of the incident.
- Reassure the student that reporting the bullying incident was the right thing to do.
- Make it clear to the student that he or she is not to blame for what has happened.

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- Record the incident and report it to the headteacher (or the head of education).
- Explain that the student should report any further incidents to a teacher or other member of staff immediately.

E. Support for students who are bullied.

- 3.11. The nature and level of support provided depends on individual circumstances and the level of need. This can include mentoring from a teacher who knows the student well, 1-1 with ward staff or named nurse, referral to hospital therapy teams, engaging with external professionals e.g. CAMHs care coordinator, social worker, or engaging with parents.

G. Helping the bullies to change

- 3.12. Staff will spend time to help students who have bullied others to change their behaviour. If a student is bullying others, staff will:
- Talk to the student and explain that bullying is wrong, makes others unhappy and will discuss with the student how to join in with others without bullying.
 - Try to ascertain any reasons behind the bullying actions, and encourage the young person to establish acceptable ways of expressing, communicating, and dealing with these.
 - Give the student lots of praise and encouragement when he or she is being kind and considerate to others.

H. Dealing with serious bullying

- 3.13. If the preventative measures and peer support strategies do not succeed, serious bullying will be dealt with under the school's behaviour and sanctions policy. The bully may:
- Be removed from the group.
 - Lose privileges e.g. Attendance to reward trips, accumulation of reward points.
 - Attend a meeting with head teacher and named nurse to put a support plan in place.
- 3.14. In serious cases a student who bullies may:
- Be educated on ward (rather than in school) for a fixed period, allowing time for additional mentoring.

Note: Sanctions to be applied only on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

I. Co-operating with parents and guardians

- 3.15. The school will work with parents and guardians in dealing with bullying. Bullying in school is everyone's problem. All staff, students and parents should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the school a happier place for everyone.
- 3.16. The school will ensure that parents are aware of the school's anti-bullying policy by making the policy available on the school website and involving them in policy review.

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- 3.17. The school will encourage parents and guardians who suspect that a student is being bullied to immediately contact the school to discuss the matter.
- 3.18. Common physical symptoms that a victim may present as a consequence of bullying include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability.
- 3.19. Parents and guardians will be informed of incidents and involved in discussions. The school will discuss with parents how they can work together to stop the bullying.
- 3.20. In the case of cyber bullying, parents/guardians will be informed to ascertain if more stringent monitoring of mobile phone and/or internet use is feasible.

K. Recording incidents

- 3.21. All incidents of bullying and discussions with the students involved will be recorded, along with the school's response.
- 3.22. A report of the details of the incident, and of the way it has been resolved, should be made by the headteacher/ staff member in writing and this information should be available to colleagues in the school.

4. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 4.1. This policy is regularly monitored by the Headteacher to ensure that it is working as effectively as possible.
- 4.2. This policy is considered alongside:
 - Behaviour and Sanctions policy
 - Safeguarding in schools Policy
 - CAMHs safeguarding policy