

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Philosophy

We believe that everyone at Biddenham International School & Sports College has a right to feel happy, secure and included. All members of the school community have a right to work in an environment without harassment, intimidation, prejudice or fear. We believe that bullying of any sort thwarts the individual's ability to achieve their maximum potential because it is a major barrier to effective learning and prevents equality of opportunity. All bullying, of any sort, is therefore unacceptable and those who experience it will be supported and those who perpetrate it may need to be supported. In Biddenham bullying is 'any form of repeated behaviour which intentionally causes hurt, distress and unhappiness to another person'. This may include:

- **Physical bullying:** violence, e.g. hitting, pushing, slapping, arm-twisting.
- **Verbal bullying:** teasing, taunting, abusive comment about appearance, ability, dress, gender, race, family, culture and the spreading of malicious rumours.
- **Gesture bullying:** gestures that imply threats or have embarrassing sexual or racist connotations.
- **Extortion bullying:** intimidation used to acquire or abuse the possessions of others.
- **Exclusion bullying:** isolation from peers intended to undermine self-esteem and cause distress.
- **Cyber Bullying:** the use of social media to intimidate, abuse or encourage others to do so.

Broad Goals

Our broad goals are to:

- Create a safe, secure learning environment for all our students who have a right to be able to concentrate on their studies without the negative effects that anxiety, humiliation, prejudice and fear create.
- Challenge the perception that bullying is an inevitable part of school life, that there is some prestige to be gained by being a bully, that there is stigma attached to being a victim and that silence is a solution to the problem.
- Foster a supportive ethos and break down the culture of secrecy so that victims, or those who witness bullying, are encouraged to speak out.
- Communicate widely and unequivocally the school's abhorrence of bullying so that perpetrators have no doubt about the school's condemnation of such behaviour and that sanctions will be taken.
- Devise an agreed set of strategies and procedures (using Restorative Practices) for colleagues to follow when dealing with incidents.
- Recognise that long-term strategies must address the issue of changing the behaviour of the bully and the group and not merely concentrate on developing coping skills that focus on 'deficiencies' in the victim.
- Eliminate prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping and value and celebrate difference. This might include addressing wider issues and putting in place some whole school strategies in addition to working directly with the bullies.

Student Outcomes

We will know we have been successful when:

- Students demonstrate an awareness of the policy on bullying and fulfil their obligations to it and the promotion of an anti-bully environment and discuss the issue regularly.
- Students display increasing confidence to follow the advice and guidance provided during tutor activities and PHSE lessons.
- Students report that bullying incidents are low and dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- Students and staff do not experience any form of prejudice and / or discrimination.

To achieve our broad goals and bring about these student outcomes we will:

- Ensure that our policy and procedures to promote an anti-bullying environment are communicated to students, staff and parents/carers including our specific procedure for dealing with prejudice related incidents.
- Support 'student voice' mechanisms to acquire information about 'bullying' in school e.g. Peer Mentoring, Student Forum, Student Voice and student surveys.
- Endeavour to be pro-active and anticipatory, rather than reactive, in our approach.
- Develop a planned approach in curriculum and pastoral programmes to the issue of bullying in a context which promotes self-esteem and confident relationships along with a message of inclusion and anti prejudice
- Improve efficient patrolling by staff on the school site especially of key locations at key times e.g. toilets, lunch queues, secluded areas, etc.
- Develop the role of Peer Mentors and try to involve students in procedures dealing with instances of bullying, e.g. restorative practices, peer mediation, etc.
- Respond promptly and thoroughly to reported incidents of bullying and any prejudice related incidents including contact with parents of victims and bullies in order to agree, if possible a course of action - use of the website should be considered for support for parents and students.
- Provide for follow-up with victims of all bullying and prejudice related incidents and the bullies themselves, e.g. using Restorative Practices
- Use SIMS to record incidents of bullying so that analysis of patterns can inform policy and practice.
- Explicitly teach about bullying within PSHE, including where to find support

Date of Next Review: **September 2024**