



Sentinel Anti-Bullying Policy

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1. Rationale

The Sentinel Schools recognise that bullying exists in society and in school. In order to counter its negative effects on the victim, bully, and bystanders, we are committed to developing and implementing positive strategies for preventing, recognising and dealing with bullying incidents when they occur.

In this context, we define bullying as follows:

- A willful, conscious desire to hurt another and put him or her under stress
- A persistent series of actions by an individual or group which causes fear, anxiety or harm to another person or group of people.
- Actions aimed to exercise power over victims, the success of this action depends usually on having an audience.
- Verbal, physical, written or cyber actions that are designed to intentionally hurt and intimidate or to make the person who is at the receiving end feel unhappy, embarrassed or insecure about themselves.

2. Aims and Objectives

Sentinel schools aim to combat and prevent bullying as follows:

- To be committed to providing a caring, friendly and same environment for all our students and staff so that they can learn, work and communicate in a relaxed, friendly and secure atmosphere.
- To create a friendly and welcoming school environment where students feel secure and accepted, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.
- To ensure that bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school.
- To ensure that if bullying does occur, all students and staff should be able to tell and know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- To act upon all cases of bullying and ignoring bullying is wrong.
- To create a safe and secure learning environment where students and staff feel valued and respected.
- To create a climate where bullying is rejected and frowned upon by the majority.



- To educate students, staff, and parents to recognise all forms of bullying and to appreciate the school's view that bullying in any form is unacceptable.
- To prevent bullying by raising the issue in pastoral and academic curriculum and to keep publicising that it is unacceptable.
- To encourage students to be open and to report bullying incidents.
- To establish a procedure for dealing with incidents of bullying.
- To initiate support for victims at all stages of an investigation: help for bullies and when necessary support to parents.
- To encourage staff to be good role models, thus giving clear messages about school ethos.
- To link with the school discipline policy and to regularly review procedures and to
- evaluate the success of the policy.
- To have an anti-bullying week and address bullying as a topic on a regular basis in school assemblies, through posters, circle time and PHSE lessons.

3. What is Bullying?

Forms of Bullying

- **Gesture bullying**; intimidating that may lead to malicious rumours and implications of physical violence to follow such as ridicule, threats, emotional harm, taunting/teasing
- **Verbal**: May be personal, sexual, racial or involve remarks about the victim's family such as Name-calling, Threats, Emotional harm, Taunting/Teasing
- **Physical**: May also involve vandalising the victim's property such as threats, physical harm, hiding belongings.
- **Exclusion**: Covert and can isolate and destroy a victim's school life. It can be very painful because it is often carried out by so-called friends. This is where a student is excluded from their usual friendship group.

What kind of behaviour is not bullying?

- Occasional loss of temper
- Having a joke that is received in good spirit
- Falling out with friends
- Hurting by accident
- Pushing by accident

How do I recognise bullying?

It is recognised that when bullying takes place, some or all of the following features are present:

- It is constant, frequent or repetitive
- It is deliberate
- It is often accompanied by a threat not to tell
- It is not always obvious who the bully is or might be
- It can be a group of people
- It is often focused on individual differences, (e.g. colour, sex, ability, home circumstances)
- It can be emotional or psychological (e.g. whispering about someone, excluding them from a group, staring and laughing)
- It is often subtle and not easily detected by teachers or adults who could respond
- The bully is usually seen to be more powerful or empowered than the receiver (either by being stronger, bigger, older, cleverer or by belonging to a majority group)
- Use of ICT e.g. texting, e-mailing, telephoning, WhatsApp, Instagram (cyberbullying)

4. Advice to Staff

1. Watch out for signs of distress in students – false illness, isolation, erratic attendance, and the desire to remain with adults. These may be signs that the student is a victim of bullying.
2. Listen to the information given to you by students about possible problems and report information to the appropriate line manager who needs to investigate.



3. Use all the students as a positive resource to counter bullying. Pupils can be used to help new or shy students to feel welcome and accepted.
4. Ensure that you are prompt to lessons, vigilant about duties, and alert as you move around the school and boarding facilities.

5. Suggested Procedures for Investigating Incidents

1. Staff will confirm by discussing with colleagues that the events add up to bullying
2. All incidents considered bullying is initially investigated by the person who it is reported to.
3. Remain calm, you are in charge. An emotional reaction might provide fuel for the bully.
4. Reassure the victim that you accept what they are saying i.e. believe them and take the report seriously (be positive – do not make the victim feel inadequate or foolish).
5. Act as quickly as possible – decide whether this should be private or public.
6. Support the victim, offer him or her help and make plain to the bully that you disapprove of their behaviour. (Do not criticise them as a person, only the behaviour).
7. Some incidents may be intimidating for staff. If you are unsure about how to proceed, ask for the support of a more senior colleague.
8. There will be different responses according to the situation, but in cases which cause the teacher concern, the teacher will need to make a written record of the incident (the version of both parties should be recorded) which is passed to your line manager and, depending on the seriousness of the incident, will record the incident on the incident book/ISAMS. The Tutor is then informed. Letters regarding the incident need to be sent to both the victim's and the perpetrator's parents immediately.
9. For a more serious incident, the bully should be referred to the Deputy Head. The incident is recorded on the ISAMS System, the Tutor is informed and if considered necessary, the parents are informed. Temporary exclusion may be an option and if the incident is not the first of its kind, the bully might eventually be asked to appear before the Head-Master or Head of School.
10. Many incidents will have two sides. Often pupils will justify their behaviour by claiming they were victims of provoking or teasing. Although there is no justification for bullying, this will need to be investigated.
11. In all situations, it will be important to consider the victim's wellbeing as paramount. Generally, the victim should be provided with a secure, private place in which to recover, to talk and to write down what happened. It is also vital to ensure that the victim is able to travel home safely, without fear of further reprisals.
12. The victim needs to feel confident that his or her complaints will be dealt with and he or she, plus the member of staff who reported the incident, need to be informed of the outcome.
13. The bully should also record the incident in writing and other evidence of bullying will need to be kept, e.g. damaged property, to be shown to parents. Students should be encouraged to report any subsequent incidents.
14. Make sure that all teaching and support staff know about the incident in order for them to be vigilant and responsive.

6. Guidance for Working with Bullies

- Bullies should be seen to be dealt with but stress that it is the behaviour which is wrong not the whole child!
- Do not mirror the aggression by shouting at them by doing so you are simply confirming that aggression is the appropriate role model to follow.
- The bully should record their version of events and damaged property should be retained to show parents.

- Do not dwell on the incident. Instead move the situation forward by emphasizing the distress of the victim. Stress the steps needed to be taken to change the situation and to make up for what has happened.

7. Responding to Bullying Incidents

In all cases of bullying behaviour, we should use restorative strategies to:

- Show that there is a 'united' response. This is one of strong disapproval
- Reinforce our belief that behaviour is learned and can be changed and help the bully to change their behaviour.
- Consider and discuss strategies to help this change, with all parties concerned.
- Involve the bully in the solution (how can they help / what can they do?)
- Implement sanctions (or punishments)

When we know a student or adult has been bullied in school we will:

1. Respond quickly and praise the reporter.
2. Listen to and reassure the receiver.
3. Demonstrate our support by taking the matter seriously
4. Report the incident to the Deputy Head and/or Headmaster / Head of School
5. Report to the child's parents and ask them to monitor and report.
6. Create a network of support, if felt appropriate, by informing friends of the receiver, child's parents and class teacher
7. Teach or suggest ways the receiver might assert themselves or respond to future incidents
8. Implement activities for the class/school (e.g. circle time, counselling, drama, literature, assemblies, school council meeting)

8. Suggested Sanctions or Interventions for Bullying Incidents

- Break detentions.
- Kept out of sensitive lessons.
- On dress parade.
- Required to write a victim story.
- Required to do something constructive/helpful for the victim.
- Required to help another pupil with work etc.,
- Required to write a letter to the victim.
- Required to write an anti-bullying story.
- Asked to write and sign guarantees/contracts involving the victim.
- Required to hear the victim's worries and anxieties.
- Require them to explain themselves to the class.
- Require the rest of the class to monitor the bully's behaviour.
- Ask the bully to choose his or her own atonement.



9. Advice for Students

1. If you or someone else is being bullied or is in distress, act, (watching, doing nothing can suggest support for the bully).
2. If you are afraid to stop it yourself, you should immediately tell an adult.
3. You can always make a note of the bullying and post it under your Year Head's door if you are too afraid to speak out.
4. Do not tolerate bullying of any kind in your social group. Make it clear that hurting others is never 'fun'.

10. Advice for Parents

1. Watch for possible signs of bullying: false illness, requests for extra pocket money, bruises and damaged or lost property, etc.
2. Take an active interest in your child's social life. Discuss friendships, how lunchtimes are spent, and the journey to and from school, etc.,
3. If you think that your child is being bullied, reassure them that there is nothing wrong with them, contact the school immediately to request an interview with the class teacher.
4. If the bullying persists keep a written record of events; devise strategies with the class teacher for supporting your child – both in and out of school.
5. Do not encourage your child to fight back. This will only make matters worse and could be against your child's nature. Positively encourage your child to recruit friends since a child with friends is less likely to be bullied.