



FINHAM PARK SCHOOL

A Mathematics and Computing College

BULLYING POLICY



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Policy Date: July 2010 Date of Policy review: July 2011

- 1 The Aims of the School state that the “Governors intend that Finham Park School will be a caring community in which:
 - every individual is held in high esteem.
 - sensitivity, tolerance, self discipline, respect and good will towards others are encouraged in all and are exemplified in the day to day life of the school”.
- 1.1 These aims could be expressed more fully as follows:
 - 1 Everyone in the Finham Park Community is of equal value and has the right to equal opportunities. No-one should be discriminated against or bullied in any way. People should treat others as they themselves wish to be treated.
 - 2 No-one should be treated with disrespect because:
 - they are disabled or have an illness
 - they are richer or poorer than others
 - they are older or younger
 - they are smaller or taller
 - they are male or female
 - of the friendship groups with which they socialise.
 - 3 People should not be discriminated against for any reason, e.g. because of their nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation.
 - 4 People should not be judged by their appearance.
 - 5 There should be no name calling.
 - 6 Everyone has the right to practise their religion at the appropriate time.
 - 7 Teachers and students should respect each other, and seek to establish and build upon positive relationships.



- 1.2 Any policy on bullying must begin with these aims, and intend to ensure their implementation.

2 What is Bullying?

- 2.1 Research shows that there is no particular age group or type of school which is free from the risk of bullying. This has been borne out by recent 'student voice' surveys at Finham Park. It is clear that being bullied can have a devastating effect on the victim, resulting in a loss of self esteem, underachievement and absenteeism, or depression or sometimes even suicide.
- 2.2 "Bullying is an abuse of power by one or more people through repeated, hurtful or aggressive behaviour with the intent to cause emotional or physical harm to another person." (Coventry LA, 2007)

Three factors are implicit in bullying activities:

- (i) It is repetitive, over a period of time.
- (ii) It involves an imbalance of power.
- (iii) It can be verbal, physical and/or psychological." (TACADE)

- 2.3 How bullies exercise their illegitimate power depends on who they are, who the victim is, and the context. While all bullying is aggressive, it is a complex issue, ranging from physical violence to bullying in the form of emotional or psychological aggression which while less visible, can be no less painful to the victims.

2.4 Any behaviour which is the illegitimate use of power to hurt others is bullying behaviour. The school will also seek to reduce and constantly challenge the following types of connected behaviours:

- Verbal, e.g. telling tales
name calling
racist/sexist comments
remarks about disabilities
threats.
- Looks, revealing lack of respect and non-co-operation with others.
- Cold shoulder, also revealing non-co-operation and lack of respect.
- Any threatening behaviour.
- Physical, e.g. kicking, scratching, biting, pushing, tripping, punching, fighting and intimidation.
- Interfering with others' schoolwork or possessions.
- The use of modern technologies, ie the sending of offensive/hurtful texts/email messages: "cyberbullying."
- Either carrying or claiming to carry weapons into school.



3 Recognising Bullying

- 3.1 “To be seen to act is as important as taking action – silence and secrecy nurture bullying.” (Action Against Bullying, Scottish Council)
Bullies depend on a code of silence for their success. Breaking that code can be the first step in prevention.
- 3.2 We cannot rely on a Stereotype to tell us who is a bully, but both male and female bullies have things in common:
- bullies tend to have assertive, aggressive attitudes over which they exercise little control.
 - bullies tend to lack empathy; they cannot imagine what the victim feels.
 - bullies tend to lack guilt; they rationalise that the victim somehow ‘deserves’ the bullying treatment.

Bullies can come in ‘gangs’ or groups. This is more visible, but all bully ‘gangs’ are made up of individuals needing individual responses.

- 3.3 Bullies pick on vulnerable people, but vulnerability is not always visible to adults. Their “difference” may be a notional one used to justify the bullying, to claim that bullying is in some way deserved or self-inflicted. Again there is no stereotype, but victims may be pupils who:
- are new to the class or school.
 - are different in appearance, speech or background from other pupils.
 - suffer from low self-esteem (but it’s not clear whether this is a cause or effect of bullying).
 - demonstrate ‘entertaining’ reactions when bullied, e.g. tantrums, loss of control.
 - are more nervous or anxious (but witnesses who are not bullied are found to be just as anxious).
 - have belonged to former friendship groups who have moved on / split up.

4 Taking Action

Dealing with all instances of bullying is vitally important to the whole school ethos, and to the individual students involved. Following our anti-bullying strategy (started 2007), all staff have been made aware (as have students, via year group assemblies) the mechanisms by which bullying incidents should be dealt with. All students and staff have a responsibility to both inform, and deal with, incidents which may arise. Put simply:

- any incidents of bullying which take place in a classroom are the responsibility of the **class teacher**. They may choose to deal with the incident through the BfL system, and/or refer it to senior colleagues.
- any incidents of bullying which take place in communal areas - e.g. tennis courts, corridors or dining rooms, are the responsibility of teachers **on duty**, or any nearby teacher. If a student has been bullied while moving between lessons then they have been informed to tell the teacher of their next lesson. Again, referrals to senior colleagues may be made.
- Referrals will be made via the schools’ BfL system. As all incidents are different, teachers must use their professional judgement as to how to proceed. If detentions are given, then this



mechanism automatically passes on information to College Leaders and parents, as would a referral to Isolation.

- Bullying must be recorded; paper copies of incidents and / or pupil statements should be filed. Bfl actions will be logged on Team (Sims from 09/10.)
- Staff should use their professional judgment as to whether they (as class teacher, or mentor) deal with incidents themselves and seek appropriate action, or whether incidents are passed on. Serious incidents, or repeated issues, should always be referred to Heads of College as these colleagues are more likely to be able to choose from a range of options (such as parental involvement, restorative justice etc.)

4.1 The following measures are good pieces of advice:

First steps: do –

- remain calm; you are in charge. Reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun and give the bully control of the situation.
- take the incident or report seriously.
- take action as quickly as possible, as detailed above.
- think hard about whether your action needs to be private or public; who are the pupils involved?
- reassure the victim(s); don't make them feel inadequate or foolish.
- offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim(s).
- make it plain to the bully that you disapprove.
- encourage the bully to see the victim's point of views.
- explain clearly the punishment or procedure to be followed, and why it is being given.

Involving others: do –

- inform senior colleagues if necessary (as detailed above) and/or other appropriate persons if necessary, e.g. school nurse, counsellor.
- inform colleagues if the incident arose out of a situation where everyone would be vigilant, e.g. unsupervised toilets, or with certain classes.

Final steps: do –

- make sure the incident doesn't live on through reminders from you.
- try to think ahead to prevent a recurrence of the incident, if you uncover the trigger factor.

If you have to deal with bullying, what should you avoid?

Don't –

- be over-protective; allow the victim to help him/herself if they can.
- assume that the bully is bad through and through; try to look objectively at the behaviour, with the bully.
- keep the whole incident a secret from the parents of the victim or of the bully.
- try to hide the incident from the parents of the victim or the bully.
- call in the parents without having a constructive plan to offer either side.

4.2 Results from our recent surveys have shown the need to address issues brought to the schools' attention, and the need to revisit bullying issues regularly. As such, the school is committed to continuously:



- 1 Raise awareness amongst staff and pupils of this policy statement, and of its thrust that bullying is NOT acceptable behaviour since it goes against the positive ethos we all wish to have at Finham Park School.
 - 2 Remove silence and secrecy from the bullying agenda. The most effective deterrent to bullying is other children – the victim needs to be allowed to help her/himself, and helped to become more socially skilled and assertive.
The aim must also be to instil in students values which result in bullying being seen as increasingly worthless and anti-social; for the body of students themselves to underline their lack of acceptance towards ongoing bullying.
 - 3 We need to continue to effectively use PSHE, Citizenship, Drama, mentor periods, assemblies and subject activities as part of a prevention programme. Co-operative work and non-aggressive behaviour can be praised. Empathy can be created through role play, or exposure to relevant stories and scenarios. Language work and social education can pick up the theme of how other people feel. The whole curriculum should support the schools' aims and help support where possible the anti-bullying message.
 - 4 Regular reminders in assemblies of what we are about.
 - 5 to explore methods for pupils to be able to communicate their anxieties to School Council and through them to staff as relevant, making use of technology, such as texting or email services (though such suggestions have not been popular – bullying surveys.)
 - 6 Raise the status of all teachers as people who can be approached and people who will get something done. Positive relationships between all people at Finham Park remains a key priority.
 - 7 Be aware of what is happening around us especially in unstructured, non-timetabled time.
 - 8 Surveys have indicated an unacceptable amount of bullying in classrooms. Therefore we need to be on time to lessons as well as duties at Break, and constantly be vigilant in our learning areas.
 - 9 Keep careful records of all incidents to build up accurate pictures of bullying.
 - 10 To consult with staff, students and parents on a regular basis so that the school can respond quickly and appropriately to the changing patterns of bullying within school.
 - 11 To respond to all the challenges of cyberbullying quickly and decisively. Students should be encouraged to keep all evidence of any cyberbullying, and to ensure that they are aware of the need for vigilance regarding their privacy on social networking sites such as facebook and MSN. As a school we need to be proactive, and reactive (ie restricting access to ICT areas) if we suspect cyberbullying has taken place.
- 4.3 Reports of bullying should always be taken seriously.



Bullying which is unchecked, or which teachers seem to condone by ignoring, affects not only those immediately involved but the school in general. Without a positive and caring ethos standards fall and learning cannot take place.

A positive and caring ethos demands an active anti-bullying policy.

5 Critical Incidents: the school retains the right to not follow procedures when there is a serious incident of bullying.

6 Cyber Bullying

With the growth of social networking, cyber bullying will become an issue for all schools. Here at Finham Park School we will not condone this misuse of technology. Students should be aware this could be regarded as a critical incident.



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Written by D Ratcliffe
Review date:

July 2010
July 2011

Approved by Governors:

28 September 2010

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Bailie', is written over a horizontal line.

MARK BAILIE
Headteacher

Date:

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Burns', is written over a horizontal line.

PETER BURNS
Chair of Governors

Date: