

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## Introduction

Forest Hill School is committed to creating an environment where all pupils feel safe and secure so that a culture of mutual support exists. School staff work continuously to ensure that all pupils form positive learning and friendship groups, in all areas of school life.

We fully subscribe to the 5 outcomes of the Every Child Matters Agenda and, therefore, the Government's aim for every child, whatever background or circumstances, to have the support they need in order to:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

The governors and staff firmly believe that without the feeling of safety and security the 5 outcomes of the Every Child Matters Agenda cannot be achieved.

To develop a supportive culture we take time and care to ensure that incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively. All members of the school community are asked to adhere to this policy.

**At Forest Hill School all students and staff know there is a culture in which bullying is not tolerated.**

The members of staff at Forest Hill School are aware that most incidents of bullying between students take place in the absence of adults. We are therefore very clear with students about the need to tell adults when incidents of bullying do occur so that we can deal with them promptly and effectively. All staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly to address it in accordance with the guidelines laid down in this policy.

### **Links with other Policies**

This policy is linked with the following policies: Behaviour & Relationship Policy; Safeguarding Policy; Every Child Matters Policy; Teaching and Learning Policy; Health and Safety Policy.

#### **AIM OF THE POLICY**

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from opportunities available at school.

### **Evidence of Consultation**

The original policy was approved and adopted by staff, pupils and parent groups, in 1996.

Revised – March 2000

Revised – June 2003

Revised – June 2006

Revised – June 2008

Revised – June 2012

Revised – June 2016

## Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour deliberately aimed at making someone feel unhappy, afraid or isolated through an imbalance of power. Bullying incidents usually take place over a period of time, but can sometimes be just a single incident.

Bullying can take many forms in school, including:

**Verbal:** name calling, insults, jokes, offensive language or comments including graffiti, threats, innuendo, teasing, taunting, bragging, ridicule.

**Non-verbal:** staring, gesturing, manipulating behaviour through intimidation, body language, invasion of personal space, spitting, stalking, refusing to touch, playing mind games.

**Physical:** unprovoked assault, such as prodding, pushing, hitting or kicking, 'rushing/steaming', shaking, inappropriate touching, blocking the way, contact involving objects used as weapons.

**Social:** humiliation through exclusion or rejection by peer group, 'blanking', spreading rumours, gossiping, peer pressure to conform, using difference as a dividing factor.

**Cyber:** via the internet, email or mobile phone, e.g. text messages, phone calls, pictures/video clips, chat rooms, instant messaging or posting on message boards or websites.

**Provocative:** inciting others to behave in a threatening, racist, sexist or homophobic manner, bringing in provocative literature or propaganda.

**Other:** extortion, blackmail, hiding or interfering with personal property, forcing to take part in embarrassing or humiliating acts.

Some students are more susceptible to being bullied for a wide variety of reasons, usually because they are perceived as being 'different' – for example physically, or in relation to learning, language, status, sexuality or family background - by other students. All staff need to be particularly vigilant for incidents of bullying involving this more vulnerable group.

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming nervous, withdrawn, complaining of illness, taking unusual absences or truanting, showing reluctance to go to or talk about school, becoming aggressive, angry, disruptive or upset with no clear explanation. They may also appear to lose possessions or money on several occasions, have unexplained bruises/cuts or rapidly change their friendship group. During lessons a student who is being bullied may show a change in work pattern, for example a drop in concentration or confidence.

## **Methods of Prevention and Intervention**

There is a clear and unambiguous statement that applies to all pupils, staff and visitors to the school prominently displayed in all classrooms and in key areas around the school including the Main Reception area.

It states '**Any form of racist, sexist or homophobic language or behaviour is completely unacceptable in this school**'.

The school's anti-bullying message is given to the whole school regularly, in the following ways:

### **PSHCE/Citizenship lessons**

Bullying is included in Schemes of Work and is openly discussed during both Key Stages 3 and 4.

### **Introduction of SEAL (*Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning*) programmes**

Elements of this programme run through all areas of pastoral work in the school. It is extremely important to help our pupils to develop social and emotional aspects of learning to support their emotional health and well-being.

### **Assemblies**

- House
- Full School

### **Posters**

These are displayed in all areas of the school to ensure that it is seen as a non-bullying zone.

### **Specialist support (within school)**

- Pupils can self refer to the School Counsellor
- Prefect & House Captains system (these Year 11 Students are expected to be vigilant and report any incident of bullying)
- Pupils are encouraged to share concerns they have with the pastoral team- Tutors Heads of House 2i/c House and House Mentors.

### **Restorative approaches**

Restorative approaches are used across the school to resolve incidents of bullying and to repair damaged relationships.

## Circle of friends

This method is used primarily to help those pupils who are at risk of isolation or who have become isolated and may therefore be relevant to both those who experience bullying as well as those who bully.

## Use of external agencies

The Police Service: our Safer Schools Police Officer visits the school regularly and he is accompanied by a PCSO. They play an integral role within the school community. They are present in and around the school at various times, including break-time, lunchtime and after school. They are regular contributors to the PSHCE lessons.

## Responding to bullying

All members of the school community have a responsibility to look out for and address bullying.

**No child deserves to be bullied.** As well as helping the victims of bullying it is our policy and practice to help those who bully or who are bystanders – we do no favours to these students by ignoring their behaviour. Our aim is to change the attitudes which allow bullying and to actively seek ways of stopping the behaviour.

### What does the law say?

Every school must have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying.

#### **The Education and Inspections Act 2006**

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

#### **Independent School Standard Regulations 2010**

The Independent School Standards Regulations 2010 provide that the proprietor of an Academy or other independent school is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented.

#### **The Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Maintained schools and Academies are required to comply with the new Equality Duty. Part 6 of the Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way

it provides education for pupils, provision of pupil access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment. In England and Wales Part 6 of the Act applies to maintained schools and Academies and to other independent schools.

### **Safeguarding children and young people**

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

### **Criminal law**

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

## **Guidance for staff**

Staff must be aware of the anti-bullying policy.

All staff must challenge any bullying behaviour.

Staff must remember that verbal abuse is often as intimidating as a physical threat, and that bullying can also be non-verbal.

All staff must be diligent in reporting incidents – even apparent ‘one-offs’.

Incidents must be dealt with and seen to be dealt with.

When investigating an incident of apparent bullying, staff should be aware that this may not be the underlying cause of the incident and that particular students may therefore need further follow-up.

Each person involved in an apparent incident must be given the opportunity to present their version of events.

Staff need to be aware of whether the bullying is by an individual or a group of pupils.

If students are from different Houses, the Heads of House need to liaise to ensure that the response is consistent and coherent.

## **Guidance for anyone affected by bullying**

If you are being bullied try to respond in at least one of these ways:

- Make sure that you tell someone as soon as you can.
- Try to walk away quickly and confidently even if you do not feel that way inside.
- Try to be assertive – look and sound confident even if you do not feel that way inside.
- Avoid being alone in places where bullying happens.
- Try not to retaliate.

People who bully like to think they have power over you so, if you can, try not to show them you are upset by what they are doing.

**You must tell a member of staff if someone bullies you or makes you unhappy, you can do this in person, by passing a note to them, using the school email system or by clicking the bullying button on your epraise page.**

## **Guidance for parents**

If your child is experiencing bullying, reassure him that he has done the right thing to tell you and that it is not his fault that he has been bullied.

Explain to your child that he should report the bullying to a member of staff and that if any further incidents occur these must be reported immediately.

If you are worried that your child is being bullied, ask him directly.

Take what he tells you seriously and try to find out the facts – what has happened, when and where, how many times, who was involved, whether he has told anyone else. Keeping a written diary may help with this.

Explain that you cannot agree to keep the bullying a secret because of the harm it is causing.

Talk as soon as you can to a teacher, member of support staff, Head of House or member of the Senior Leadership Team.

## **Procedures for working through an incident of bullying**

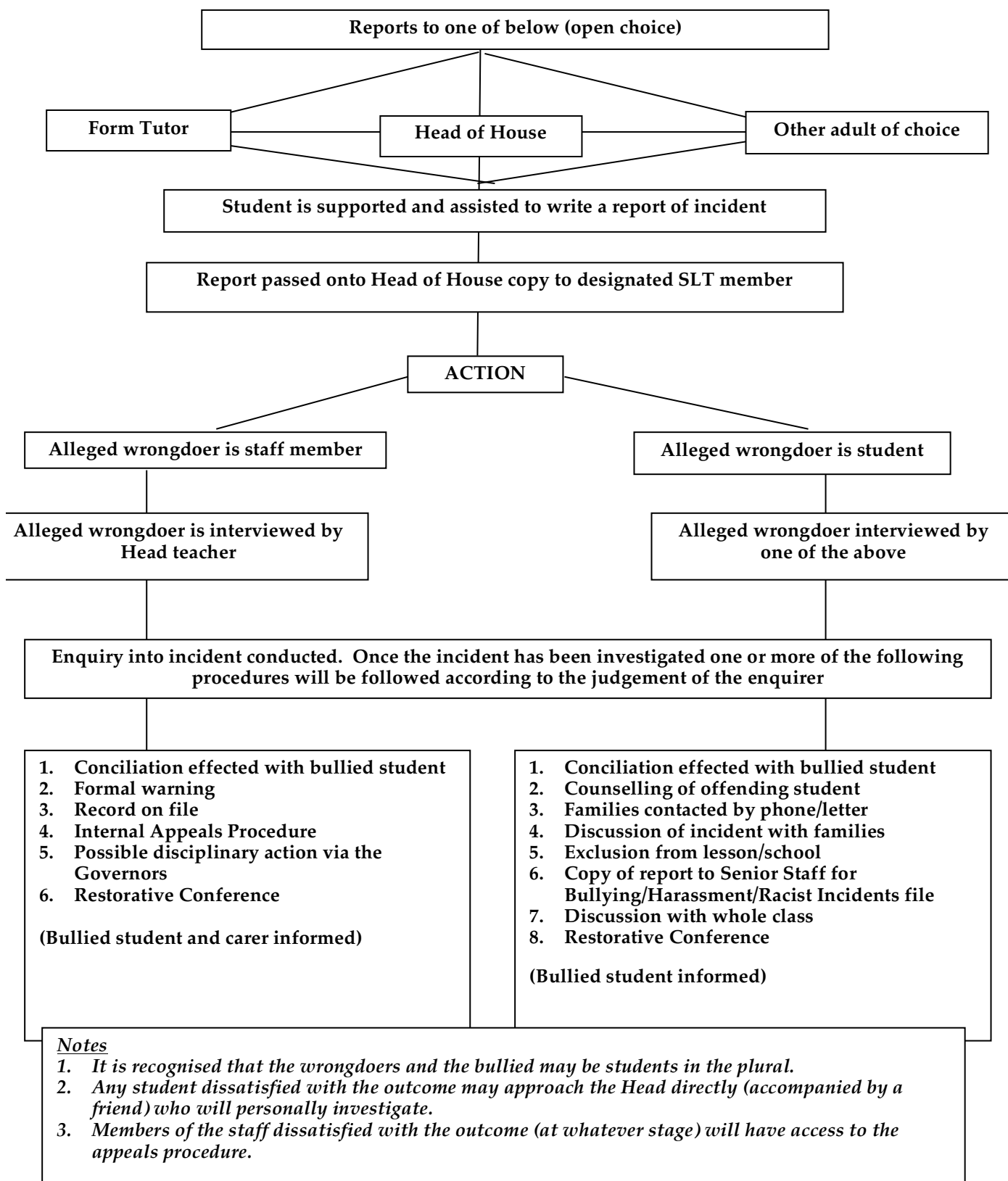
Whilst students are at school their safety is the responsibility of every adult who works in Forest Hill School. Staff and parents/carers have a duty to work together to resolve any incident of bullying that may occur.

### **Implementation**

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents:

1. If bullying is suspected or reported, initially the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
2. A clear account of the incident will be recorded in Step 1 and given to the Head of House, and a copy sent to the member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for behaviour.
3. Following discussion between relevant staff, a decision will be taken swiftly as to who will lead on addressing the incident. All concerned will be interviewed and a decision taken about what action will be taken; the plan for action will then be implemented and the outcomes monitored.
4. A written record of both the incident and subsequent actions will be made and kept by the school. Tutors and Heads of House will be responsible for monitoring bullying situations when incidents are closed.
5. Parents/carers, students and relevant staff will be kept informed throughout.





- The incident will be recorded and placed on both students' file.
- The incident will be monitored.

### **Support for those who are bullied and those who bully**

Restorative approaches will be used as one way of resolving incidents of bullying. This process includes developing agreed ways forward and identifying support needed for both the person or people experiencing bullying and those exhibiting bullying behaviour.

More specialist support e.g. circle of friends, counselling or external support will be made available, where appropriate, to both those on the receiving end of bullying and those exhibiting bullying behaviour.

Constructive supervision – having a chat to pupils while on duty etc can help both students at risk of being bullied and those at risk of bullying

### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The review of this policy will take place once every two years within the school's policy review cycle.

## **Further sources of information**

### **Specialist organisations**

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

The ABA has also put together a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools and young people from the anti-bullying sector which can be accessed here <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/advice/support-from-the-sector/>.

Kidscape: Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

The Diana Award: Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviour of their peers towards bullying. It will achieve this by identifying, training and supporting school anti-bullying ambassadors.

The BIG Award: The Bullying Intervention Group (BIG) offer a national scheme and award for schools to tackle bullying effectively.

Restorative Justice Council: Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011.

### **Cyber-bullying**

ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves

Think U Know: resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.

Digizen: provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.

Advice on Child Internet Safety 1.0: The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has produced universal guidelines for providers on keeping children safe online.

### **LGBT**

EACH: (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia): provides a national freephone Actionline for targets of homophobic or transphobic bullying and training to schools on sexual orientation, gender identity matters and cyberhomophobia. Schools Out: Offers practical advice, resources (including lesson plans) and training to schools on LGBT equality in education. Stonewall: An LGB equality organisation with considerable expertise in LGB bullying in schools, a dedicated youth site, resources for schools, and specialist training for teachers.

### **SEND**

Mencap: Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.

Changing Faces: Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.

Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance on developing effective anti-bullying practice. Anti-bullying Alliance SEND programme of resources: Advice provided by the Anti-bullying Alliance for school staff and parents on issues related to SEND and bullying.

### **Racism**

Show Racism the Red Card: Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.

Kick it Out: Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools.

Anne Frank Trust: Runs a schools project to teach young people about Anne Frank and the Holocaust, the consequences of unchecked prejudice and discrimination, and cultural diversity.