



SMITHDON HIGH SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

**Re-adopted by Local Governing Body
March 2017**

1. Aims

- 1.1 To clarify to students, parents and staff that bullying is unacceptable, that every student has the right to feel safe in school and to be protected when he/she is feeling vulnerable.

2. What is Bullying?

- 2.1 A person is being bullied when he or she is exposed to negative actions on the part of one or more persons. These actions can be either a single incident or a series of persistent issues and will result in the victim feeling hurt, threatened or frightened. Bullying can be physical or verbal and include hitting, teasing, intimidation, damaging a person's property and relate to race, religion, sex and gender.
- 2.2 Bullying can also involve cyberbullying. This can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else – as in 2.1. This may include the use of text messages or of personal or private information or images which may be sent to the victim or publicly posted or forwarded.
- 2.2 It is important to note that the perceptions of the individual in this are crucial and that the feeling of being bullied is *personal*.
- 2.3 This policy applies to all students and staff working at the school.

3. Encouraging Students to Tell

- 3.1 It is vital that we foster a supportive structure within our school community. Students need to feel that they can tell someone if they feel vulnerable, that they will be listened to sympathetically and that action will be taken. Teachers, parents and other students have a key role to play here. Not telling protects the bully or bullies and gives out the message that they can continue. They may bully other students too.
- 3.2 **Students** should remember to let us know straight away if they are being bullied or if someone else is.
- 3.3 **Parents**, if you think that your son or daughter is being bullied, let us know **immediately**.

4. Possible Signs

- 4.1 A student who is being bullied may exhibit changes in behaviour, such as feigning illness or becoming shy and nervous. They may show changes in attitude towards work, may lack concentration or may even truant from school.

5. Procedures

- 5.1 Whenever a student indicates that they are unhappy about the way they are being treated by others they must be taken **seriously** and should be encouraged to write down their experience. The disclosure should then be passed direct to the Head of Year of that student. The Head of Year will then interview the student to discuss their concerns. If, by this stage there is no written account, one should be made.
- 5.2 The victim of bullying will then be encouraged to tell the bully or bullies, in the presence of the Head of Year, what they are unhappy about. This should be done in a non-aggressive way and involves discussing this with the bullied student beforehand. This enables the victim to assert themselves and fosters the development of self-confidence. If there are several other students involved, they should be seen separately to alleviate possible anxiety in the victim. If this is not the wish of the student concerned, then the issues will be dealt with by the member of staff and those responsible.
- 5.3 The approach adopted is one of restorative justice, which is non-confrontational and involves the teacher helping the bully to understand more about how the victim is feeling and seeking a commitment that they will try to help the victim in some way.
- 5.4 A record should be made of the outcome of the interviews, with the bully (or bullies) recording their responses in writing. The parents of all students involved will be informed of what has happened and the action that has been taken. Copies of the procedure will be circulated to the Form Tutors of all pupils concerned and copies placed in the students' files. The incident should also be recorded on SIMS using the Behaviour Management module.
- 5.5 The Head of Year should arrange to see the bullied student during the following week and perhaps at intervals thereafter to check on progress. Monitoring can also take place on a regular basis through the Form Tutor. The length of monitoring will depend upon the nature of the concerns and will be at the professional discretion of the Year Head.
- 5.6 In the event that the bullying recurs and it is clear that the original intervention has not worked, then sanctions will follow. These will depend upon the nature of the bullying behaviour and may involve the Assistant Headteacher and, in very serious cases, the Headteacher. It is important that counselling of both parties continues even when sanctions have been imposed.
- 5.7 It should be noted that under the 2006 Education and Inspections Act, schools have the power to respond to the behaviour of students when they are off school premises. Where a student is involved in the bullying or harassment of another student or member of staff, including when such behaviour occurs out of school, the school has a right to intervene and to impose appropriate sanctions.

- 5.8 Where it is suspected that a criminal offence may have been committed, the police will be informed.
- 5.9 Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in UK law, there are laws that can apply in terms of harassment or threatening behaviour. In particular, some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, The Malicious Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986.
The age of criminal responsibility in the UK is 10.

6. Dealing with Instances of Racial Bullying or Harassment

Students

Any instance of racial harassment or bullying by a student or students should be dealt with by staff immediately as set out in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy, supported by the school Behaviour Policy. The action taken will depend on the nature of the incident.

All incidents should be reported to the relevant Head of Year as soon as possible, with a written account of the incident/concerns. Action will be taken in accordance with the policy.

All instances of racial abuse or harassment and the action taken should be recorded by the Head of Year on the relevant pro-forma held by the Assistant Headteacher, Mrs S Dixon. Incidents should also be logged on SIMS.

The Assistant Headteacher will complete and submit an electronic copy of the pro-forma to the Local Authority. Incidents will be reported to the next meeting of the Resources and Pastoral Committee of the Governing Body.

Staff

Any instance of racial harassment or bullying of a student or colleague by a member of staff should be reported immediately to the Headteacher, or in his absence, the Deputy Headteacher. A written account of the incident will also be required.

Any such instance will be recorded in the central log and reported as above. Any necessary action will be taken as set out in the staff disciplinary procedure.

7. Curriculum

- 7.1 The issue of bullying, including cyberbullying, will be dealt with during Citizenship sessions and can be supported in other curriculum areas and by using teaching methods which encourage co-operative work with a variety of groupings so that students can extend their relationships beyond their normal friendship groups.

8. **Review** - This policy will be reviewed annually.