

Anti-Bullying Policy

(A) Introduction

Bullying is **defined** as “the intentional, repetitive or persistent hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power” (**Anti-Bullying Alliance 2005**).

There are three broad categories of bullying;

- **spoken** e.g. face to face or written (on paper, public spaces/objects or on-line);
- **physical** e.g. direct actions against the person’s body, their property (personal or school work) or taking unwanted photographs/videos;
- **emotional** e.g. excluding people through the use of body language &/or facial expressions.

At TGGs we are as a community 100% committed to the principle that bullying of **any form is completely unacceptable**, and (in line with widely accepted good practice), our approach to managing bullying is based firstly on, wherever possible, **prevention**. Our aim is to foster a **culture of kindness** whereby before any student **speaks, writes, considers a physical act or any form of emotional manipulation** which might be perceived as an act of bullying **she will do the following**.

Firstly, take time to

- be **calm**,

and then question herself about the **nature** of what she might be considering doing – is it;

- true;
- necessary;
- or **KIND?**

Secondly, consider **who** may be affected by her actions - namely;

- **herself** and/or;
- **other** student/s.

Thirdly, reflect upon the likely or probable **consequences** of her actions for herself and others - will they be;

- **positive**;
- or **negative?**

This **ethos of kindness** and a ‘mindful’ awareness that **all actions have consequences will be promoted** through the **day to day example** set by **all adult staff** (within and outside the classroom or Form); our **PSHE, PPP and Mindfulness Programmes**, whole-school, Year or House **assemblies**, the **messages** conveyed by **posters or displays** around the school and **presentations** by **visiting external speakers/professional bodies** such as the **police & theatrical companies**.

(B) Levels of Bullying

Differing **perceptions and degrees of tolerance** are a key challenge when managing bullying; one student might perceive a comment about them as 'bullying' whilst another student could consider the same remark as 'harmless banter'. Nevertheless, the following **broad levels & examples of bullying** have been agreed as applicable to TGGs by both the **Lower and Senior School Student Councils** - they should **not** however be viewed as **mutually exclusive, all-embracing fixed or finite**.

Level 1: low level - short-term and *possibly* unintentional words or physical actions

1. Spontaneously taking an unwanted image/movie of someone without their permission
2. Unpremeditated or throwaway remarks/behaviour regarding a student's academic effort, work or attainment (of whatever quality) e.g. laughing at a mistake in class or casual teasing
3. Unpremeditated or throwaway negative remarks/behaviour regarding a student's values or choices e.g. a new hair style
4. Casually looking at a student's homework and incorporating some ideas in their own work
5. Light hearted jokes, banter or laughing 'with' a student – but perhaps with a slight 'edge'
6. A change in friendship preference/s and or disagreement
7. Occasional or brief glances
8. Casual gossiping
9. Physical contact of a possibly unintentional &/or relatively insignificant nature e.g. bumping into a student in a corridor

Level 2: moderate level - longer term, repeated and *probably* intentionally unkind words or physical actions

Any deliberately repeated, consistent or unkindly applied **Level 1 criteria**

1. Deliberately taking an image/movie of someone without their permission
2. Premeditated or deliberately negative remarks/behaviour regarding a student's academic effort, work or attainment (of whatever quality) e.g. mocking a piece of work or answer to a question in class
3. Being mocking or negative about a student's interests or choices e.g. her perceived individuality regarding choice of clothing on Mufti Days or hobbies/interests
4. Deliberately copying homework without consent
5. Laughing 'at' another student or 'banter' that is starting to go too far e.g. obviously unkind or sarcastic such as name calling
6. Temporarily excluding or ignoring a student from/within a friendship group e.g. within a lesson
7. Giving another student looks that could reasonably be perceived as unkind or aggressive
8. Making up unkind fake stories/lies/rumours within a small or defined friendship/social group
9. Physical contact deliberate and significant nature e.g. deliberately pushing a student in a corridor or classroom

Level 3: serious level – long term, hostile and *definitely* unkind words or physical actions

Any deliberately repeated, consistent, maliciously or aggressively applied **Level 2 criteria**

1. Deliberately taking an image/movie of someone without their permission & posting it on-line
2. Premeditated or deliberate remarks/behaviour regarding a student's academic effort, work or attainment (of whatever quality) that are clearly unkind and/or malicious and intended to reduce their self-esteem
3. Being prejudiced or discriminatory about a student's physical characteristics, values or personal circumstances e.g. race, gender, disability, sexuality, mental state, home/ or family circumstances
4. Forcing another student to allow the copying homework and/or deliberately passing off copied work as her own (plagiarise) in formally assessed assignments or examinations e.g. Key Assessed Work or Exam Board Coursework/Controlled Assessment
5. Deliberately humiliating or ridiculing another student
6. Permanently excluding or ignoring a student from a friendship group e.g. 'sending a student to Coventry'
7. Giving another student looks that are clearly unkind or aggressive e.g. 'the evils'
8. Deliberately spreading fake stories/lies/rumours to a wide audience e.g. Year, whole school, on-line
9. Any form of deliberate physical assault
10. Any of the following deliberate acts or words against another student: taking any explicit image/movie of someone with or without their permission (whether or not it is then posted it on-line); stalking (on line or in person); offensive language or swearing; emotional blackmail or manipulation; making threats; ganging up; damage to work or property and any other illegal action.

(C) Managing Reported Incidents of Bullying

Whenever a possible incident of bullying is alleged the school will apply the principle that the victim **will** always first be **believed**. However, to be fair to all parties the first step is to **investigate the incident thoroughly** and in an **unbiased manner** by gathering **evidence** from **as many people (students and adults) on both sides as reasonably possible**. Invariably many instances of bullying have a **context and/or a 'back story'** & are **rarely one sided**. Unfortunately, **students will also sometimes make up** a bullying allegation; this in itself being an **act of bullying**.

Initially the member of staff **will discuss** with student making the allegation **what 'Level'** she feels the incident falls into. If after discussion the **student feels** that she wants to **formally take the matter further – and/or the member of staff advises that it should** - the member of staff to whom the disclosure has been made will **either deal with the incident themselves** or **pass the matter to another member/s of staff** as detailed below.

The following investigation will then occur:

- the **student making the accusation** will be asked to give a **short written account** of the incident/incidences;
- **any named witnesses** to the incident/incidences will be **asked, independently of the alleged victim and any other witnesses**, to **write down** what they **saw or heard**;
- any **other form of evidence** e.g. mobile phone related will be gathered – **electronic evidence** will be **deleted from the phones concerned** by the school's ICT Department and **stored securely**.

If the above investigation supports the alleged victim's claims (e.g. through **corroboration and/or consistent** written evidence or **conclusive photographic** evidence), the **alleged bully will then be seen** by the appropriate member/s of staff - **instances** – and asked to **give their version of events both orally and in writing**. They will also be asked for any **evidence** they may have **supporting their case**, and if applicable the **same procedures outlined above** will be followed regarding **witnesses and any other evidence**.

If after a **thorough investigation** an incident/incidences are **confirmed as bullying**, depending on the context of **each individual case**, for following **possible actions and sanctions** may then apply. At every Level the **victim** will be given the **following support**

- **Discuss** what they consider to be the **most appropriate action** regarding the bully for their **current and longer term well-being**; member of **staff to advise and implement accordingly** (see below).
- Advice regarding the possible nature of any **future relationship** with the bully for example;
 - **Level 1:** ignore, dignified silence, acceptance of apology, forgive and resume friendship;
 - **Level 2:** avoidance of contact for a period (time-out or cooling off period) followed by reconciliation meeting;
 - **Level 3:** as for Level 2, but maybe acceptance that friendship and/or any meaningful relationship may no longer be longer possible but be civil and polite if/when contact occurs; managed separation e.g. change of Form and/or Teaching Group (if practically possible)
- Discuss the nature of any (other) **future support** they would like: **what, when and from whom:** peers group, staff, parents.
- Clear direction given **regarding the means for reporting of any further incident** to a member of staff either in person or by email; Tutor, Assistant Head of Year, Head of Year, Staff Mentor
- Brief **File Memo** of incident recorded in girl's file.

Level 1

Staff involvement

Tutor &/or Assistant Head of Year &/or Head of Year

The bully

At this level the following actions and sanctions may apply:

- formal warning and clear directive to stop;
- apologise to the victim either face to face (ideally) and (in any case) via an appropriately sincere, contrite and carefully presented written apology – copy to be placed in victim and bully's file;
- clear direction regarding the nature of the future relationship with the victim according to her wishes (see above);
- lunchtime detention in which student required to reflect on the incident and indicate the steps she will take to ensure it is not repeated;
- appropriate lunchtime punishment e.g. community action such as litter picking, removal of chewing gum from school property or helping Meal Time Assistants.
- Brief File Memo of incident recorded in girl's file.

Parents of victim/bully

The school will **possibly** contact the parents of the victim/bully regarding a **Level 1** incident;

Level 2

Staff involvement

At least two members of staff; Assistant Head of Year &/or Head of Year &/or appropriate the Head of school

The bully

Any suitable **Level 1** actions and sanctions plus the following as appropriate:

- after school detention in which student required to reflect on the incident and indicate the steps she will take to ensure it is not repeated;
- placed on Progress Book;
- issued with a Student Contract;
- allocation of Staff Mentor with whom regular formal contact will be compulsory;
- period of supervised isolation at break and/or lunchtime from Form, Teaching Group, Year Group
- other appropriate sanctions imposed such as loss of access to the school ICT network/internet or confiscation of mobile phone
- Detailed File Memo of incident recorded in girl's file.

Parents of victim/bully

The school will *usually* contact the parents of the victim/bully regarding a **Level 2 incident;**

Level 3

Staff involvement

At least two members of staff; Head of Year, Head of School and if appropriate the Headteacher & School Governor

The bully

Any suitable **Level 2** actions and sanctions plus the following as appropriate:

- parents requested to attend meeting in school;
- loss of privileges e.g. confiscation of mobile phone (fixed period or indefinitely), involvement in school trips or whole school occasions such as End of Term Entertainment, Sports Day, Sponsored Walk or House Shout;
- allocation of Senior Staff Mentor with whom regular formal contact will be compulsory;
- temporary exclusion;
- involvement of the police/other relevant external bodies.
- permanent exclusion

Parents of victim/bully

The school will *always* contact the parents of the victim/bully regarding a **Level 3 incident.**

The following **Appendix** offers **further anti-bullying guidance for students**

Mr Chris Charlwood and Mrs Sarah Colombini
Heads of Lower/Upper School
June 2017

Date of next review: Summer 2019

Appendix – Further Guidelines for Students

How can you help the school prevent incidents of bullying?

Show respect for all people at all times; try to be a positive, inclusive **KIND** person who treats others as you would wish to be treated.

Generally, as you go about your life as a member of our TGGS community always try to be mindful of how others might interpret your words, actions and body language.

Specifically, if you are unsure about something you are about to say, write or do follow the familiar advice below.

- Firstly, take time to be **calm** and then question yourself about the **nature** of what you might be considering saying, writing or doing – is it: true, necessary or **KIND**?
- Secondly, consider **who** may be affected by your actions - namely yourself and/or other student/s.
- Thirdly, reflect upon the likely or probable **consequences** of your actions for yourself and others - will they be positive or negative?

Cyber bullying can be one of the most serious forms of bullying – both for the bully and the victim – it is therefore vital that you are both very **familiar with our separate Cyber Bullying Policy** and take very seriously all the advice you are given about how to stay safe on-line and not be a cyberbully yourself. Remember also that once **on-line**, words and images can rapidly 'go viral', are almost impossible to totally eliminate and can be readily traced back to the sender by an ICT expert. Most major companies now routinely search the 'on-line profile' of candidates applying for any job vacancies they have. An **ill-advised on-line post of any kind** can have **very serious negative long term consequences** for not **only the recipient but you** for many years e.g. affecting your job prospects.

Finally, be very aware that bullying can have extremely **serious legal consequences**. '**Defamation**' is an area of law that provides a civil remedy when someone's words end up causing harm to your reputation or your livelihood. '**Libel**' is a written or published offensive statement, while slander is defamation that is spoken by the defendant. **Physical harm** committed against another person might be considered as an assault and **theft** of another person's property is also (of course) against the law.

What can you do if you think/feel that you are being bullied?

Each situation is **unique and there is often no perfect solution for every eventuality**. However, the following advice is widely considered to be **good practice**.

Evidence

If you think you **may or have been a victim of bullying** it is really important that you **have evidence** so that the school can fully and effectively support you. So, always:

- a. **keep any piece of writing** (e.g. written note, text,)
- b. **save other electronic evidence** (e.g. screen shot of an image)
- c. **look around** to see who may have witnessed the incident and carefully **notice any witnesses**, especially any '**independent students**' (i.e. those who are not a part of **yours or the possible bully's immediate friendship group**) or members of **staff** who may have seen the incidence in case it is repeated; note or obtain their **names** wherever if possible.

First Steps and possible Level 1 incidents

To start with, ask yourself if the other person/s words/actions are simply not 'true', childish, ridiculous or possibly unintentional; i.e. **Level 1** type incidents? Often bullies are **seeking a reaction and showing some resilience** by **ignoring and/or trying not to show that you are upset** about their behaviour may cause it to stop and indeed prevent you being a 'target' in the future. So a '**dignified silence**', saying to yourself something like '**Ok fine**', or simply **walking away** may sometimes be the best strategy.

Now, **take a moment to ask yourself if you are to blame at all?** Have **you** done anything that might have triggered the incident, in which case it may be that **you need to first apologise** to the other person?

Possible Level 2 or Level 3 incidents

If the other person's/people's behaviour is in your view **deliberately unkind, hurtful and/or repeated or persistent (i.e. Levels 2 and Level 3)** then you must **'tell'**: **saying nothing is the bully's greatest weapon**. You should **stay away from the persons involved**; **share** what happened with a **trusted friend/s, involved**; and then consider which of the **following two actions** would most effectively provide the **help you need**.

- a. Maybe think about **calmly talking to the person/s**. Pick your moment & **take a friend/s** & use **conciliatory non-confrontational language** such as *'I don't know why you've said/acted in this way because it's made me upset – is it anything I've done?'* In the **adult world** this is often the first stage in dealing with any conflict with another person/s – but **it is not easy and can easily go wrong!** If you do decide on this approach and the **situation starts to escalate**, politely **bring the meeting to a close** by saying something like; 'I'm sorry you feel like that & walk away': do **not** get involved in any **further exchange of insults or worse**.
- b. However, **quite naturally – and most commonly** - you may be **uncomfortable, uncertain or even scared** about approaching the person/s yourself, and/or you think it would **simply make matters worse**. If so, you must **immediately** tell a trusted adult in school: Tutor, Teacher, Assistant Head of Year, Head of Year, Deputy Head, Headteacher or Support Staff.

Immediate action is so important firstly for the **well-being of the victim** but also because leaving things for a day or more often makes it **very difficult to take effective action**; those who might have **witnessed the incident** are likely to **forget** exactly what they saw or heard and/or the **alleged bully** will have time to 'cover her tracks'.

Take and/or try to **remember your evidence truthfully and accurately** and then **tell your trusted adult** what has happened. They will then decide with you upon the next most **appropriate course of action**.

Involving your parents

You will **of course** want to tell your parents about **anything at school which has made you unhappy**.

However, we ask that you;

- **Don't contact them** from school about a **Level 1** incident
- **ideally first** tell a member of staff about any possible **Level 2** incident and
- **always** about a possible **Level 3** incident.

This is **because**:

- we are as a school obliged to first follow the **procedures of our Anti Bullying Policy** when dealing with any alleged bullying incident; no matter what a parent might wish;
- you may be **worrying your parents unnecessarily**;
- sometimes an **anxious parent** may wish to **directly target in some way and/or confront the student/s (and/or their parents)** accused of bullying – this nearly always **inflames** the situation and makes it worse;
- most importantly however, especially with **Level 3 incidents** acting quickly is really important and valuable - even life threatening - **time can be lost** talking to a parent; TGGs staff are already on-site and can act most quickly and decisively: in the **very unlikely case of a very serious incident** occurring then we will simply call the **Emergency Services** and **nothing should stop us** from doing this **immediately**.

We will:

- **possibly** contact parents of the victim/bully regarding a **Level 1** incident;
- **usually** contact parents of the victim/bully regarding a **Level 2** incident;
- and **always** parents of the victim/bully regarding a **Level 3** incident.

What can you do if you know someone is being made unhappy by a bully?

As a **general principle**, be a responsible, kind member of the TGGs community and be mindful of any unkind actions you witness which might constitute bullying. Do not **ignore** any incident of bullying that you think you witness or hear about;

- **Level 1**: tell the victim you have **witnessed** the incident/s and talk with them about which course of action they want to take;
- **Level 2/3**: once **again stand by the victim**, but incidents of this nature should **always be reported to a member of staff** and you should do your best to persuade the victim that this is what they must do.

It is very important that you do not just **watch and do nothing** or **pretend to be friends with the bully**; this makes the victim feel you are on the bully's side. If you feel **intimidated or maybe even scared** by the bully do not get involved in a confrontation with her/them but tell a member of staff immediately. Remember that often a **bully has been a victim of bullying themselves** and their actions may be a 'cry for help'; so it is important **for the bully too** that the matter is handed over to a member of staff.

