

LEICESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL TRUST

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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This is one of the policies concerned with pastoral care. It should be read in conjunction with the policies on pastoral care, pupil behaviour, safeguarding and equal opportunities.

This policy has been written with regard to the guidance given in the DfE guidance: "Safe to learn: embedding anti-bullying work in schools", "Safe from bullying", Preventing and tackling bullying (October 2014) and Cyberbullying: advice for Headteachers and school staff (2014)

INTRODUCTION

Bullying in any form is not accepted at Leicester Grammar School. We should all make every effort to prevent it occurring. Those being bullied should be given the help and support that they need. Those doing the bullying must be reprimanded, but it should be recognised that they are also in need of help. All members of the school community should treat each other with courtesy, care and consideration.

The aim of this policy is to illustrate the procedures in place to develop a culture where bullying is not tolerated. This is done by:-

- including topics related to bullying in the pastoral programme,
- the way we deal with bullying when it occurs in school,
- the way we respond to cases of bullying when it occurs in materials used to deliver the curriculum
- the standards set by the staff and senior pupils.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

It may be:

- teasing that goes too far
- tormenting, short or long term
- designed to raise the image of a group or individual
- designed to lower self-esteem
- attention seeking
- a quest for superiority
- social exclusion of an individual

BUT bullying is ALWAYS behaviour that is hurtful to the person(s) being bullied. It causes distress whether intentional or unintentional. It is mostly deliberate and repeated. It can be

- physical – pushing, kicking, punching. Damaging or hiding another's property
- verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours or teasing
- social – excluding from a group or activity

- emotional – playing on feelings and friendship groups
- cyber-bullying through emails, texting, chat rooms, inappropriate use of camera or video facilities.

Bullying can have a deep psychological effect and in some cases can lead to suicide.

Bullying can be initiated because someone is different from the rest. This may be because of:-

- Race, culture or religion (taunts, name calling, graffiti, gestures)
- Sexual orientation (homophobic comments)
- Sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual pupils)
- Gender (sexist, homophobic or transgender comments, unwanted physical contact)
- Disability/SEN (name calling, innuendo, exclusion from an activity)

A culture should be encouraged where each of us has responsibility for the care and welfare of others.

Telling a teacher about bullying should be seen as a healthy, friendly act. This ethos should be upheld by all members of the School community.

Staff must be aware that teasing may encourage pupils to go further and overstep the boundary. Staff must exercise their professional judgement in this matter but must be careful never to instigate or encourage bullying as a result of their own teasing of pupils or by ignoring inappropriate teasing by pupils.

All signs of bullying must be stopped and a firm statement made by the teacher that such acts are not acceptable, and the appropriate follow up procedure must be implemented. (See below)

Student initiatives which have been endorsed by the School can make a valuable contribution to the ethos of care within the community e.g. the student support group.

The student planner contains expectations about how pupils should behave towards one another. It also gives guidance on whom a pupil can turn to for help.

When examples of bullying arise in lessons eg History, English, Drama, the teacher should take every opportunity to stress the offensiveness of the behaviour of the bully and the right of the individual to have a safe, supportive social environment.

Staff training

The School's policy and procedures on Anti-Bullying is reviewed every two years or upon publication of new legislation. Staff training will be included as part of the Safeguarding Training for all staff to ensure that staff are confident to tackle all specific forms of bullying.

Anti-bullying policy, practice and skills development will be included in the School's induction process for new staff. *Procedures for dealing with bullying are outlined later in this document*

PSD

The PSD programme is driven by “Every Child Matters”. In Y7, students are taught to recognise what constitutes bullying and are given advice on how to report incidents and seek help. The topic of bullying is revisited throughout the course through “self-esteem”, “communication”, “prejudice”, careers – prejudice, work colleagues and relationships”. The RS GCSE course includes a topic on prejudice where bullying is discussed. There are assemblies which focus on bullying.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING CONCERNING PUPILS

Bullying can only be stopped if it is known that it is happening in the first place. As long as incidents are kept secret there is nothing that can be done.

An atmosphere of trust should exist between the pupils and the staff so that pupils can voice their fears, either of themselves, or of their colleagues being bullied. When a pupil claims that bullying has occurred, the claim must always be taken seriously and never ridiculed or ignored. It should be made clear to the pupil that the allegation is a serious one. Appropriate action should be swift and sensitive.

A person being bullied should talk to somebody with whom they feel that that can talk freely about the problem. This may be any member of staff, a senior pupil or a member of the Student Support Group.

Any immediate action should be taken to relieve the situation, e.g. moving his/her seat in the classroom, minimising the contact between conflicting pupils.

Bullying incidents should be dealt with in the most appropriate manner for each situation and should always involve a Student- Centred approach (see appendix). The following procedure is designed to serve as a guide.

A discussion should take place between the people involved in the incident including at least one appropriate member of staff and possibly other contact people e.g. senior student or parent.

Appropriate staff are seen to be a member of staff who has witnessed the incident or to whom an incident has been reported, the Form Tutor or Personal Tutor of the victim and/or bully, the Head of Year, or the Deputy Head (pastoral) or the Headmaster.

The Form Tutor(s) and Head of Year will be informed of the incident and the actions taken, if appropriate.

How the situation is dealt with will vary according to the circumstances. In serious cases the Headmaster may decide to suspend the bully or remove him/her from the school permanently. Every effort will be made to include parents in discussions, as appropriate, before any final decisions are taken. However the Headmaster reserves the right to respond quickly to serious situations.

Written statements may be taken from the pupils involved and from any witnesses. Written records may be kept by staff at any stage.

Staff investigating incidents concerning bullying should keep written records (who involved, witnesses, time, place and both sides of the story) which are forwarded to the Head of Year, who will then record them on the database under the names of those involved. These can be used to identify groups, places and times when bullying tends to occur and steps can be taken to prevent it, by warning staff on duty, subject teachers etc, as appropriate. This is usually done in briefing so that all staff are aware of the problem.

Parents may be informed either formally by letter if this is deemed appropriate by the Head of Year, or informally by telephone if it is seen as appropriate by the Form/Personal Tutor.

The situation should be reviewed as necessary to ensure that the bullying has stopped.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

A pupil who is being bullied may keep the matter secret. However, the following changes in behaviour may indicate that the pupil is under stress:-

- changes in work patterns
- truanting
- clinging to adults
- staying behind after lessons
- reluctance to go into the playground
- discomfort when changing for PE lessons
- awkwardness when working in small groups in the classroom
- bag, books and belongings going missing
- unexplained bruises or scratches (this issue must be dealt with very carefully by staff who should always seek the advice of Senior Staff. It may be necessary to consider abuse outside school as a possible cause. Staff should consider their obligations under the Children Act)
- improbable excuses for any of the above

On their own these signs may be caused by another reason, trivial or serious. The member of staff should be aware that bullying might be one of the causes. A quiet enquiry at the end of the lesson to check that there is no problem might encourage a pupil to speak of his/her problems.

PREVENTING BULLYING

There are areas around a school where bullying is more likely to occur e.g. the playground, toilets, and near the lockers. Staff on duty at break and lunchtime should patrol these areas regularly. Any suspicious behaviour should be investigated.

Prefects should be encouraged to visit these areas in the course of their patrols.

BEHAVIOUR OF STAFF TOWARDS PUPILS

It should be recognised that the behaviour of staff towards pupils may be seen as bullying. This may be where staff are over-zealous in carrying out their duties but the consequences are very distressing for a pupil. The pupil often feels unable to turn to other members of staff, sometimes due to the fear of not being believed.

Staff should aim to treat pupils with courtesy at all times, acting in a manner which reflects a real care for their welfare. There will be occasions when staff have to make pupils clearly aware of the unsatisfactory nature of their behaviour, and apply sanctions where appropriate, but in all cases they should aim to avoid lowering the self-esteem of the pupil in doing so. It is therefore unacceptable for a member of staff to act aggressively towards a pupil.

Using inappropriate nick-names or making a pupil the subject of ridicule is not tolerated.

Allegations of bullying will be investigated and appropriate action taken.

BULLYING BY TEXT AND E-MAIL (CYBER-BULLYING)

It is against the law to send a message(s) which contain material which is offensive or threatening. Pupils receiving such mail, or their parents, should inform the School as soon as possible. In cases where the source is identified as belonging to the School or to a member of the School, the person involved will be dealt with appropriately.

We shall also treat seriously any information we receive about mail which is exchanged between pupils outside School.

In any of the above cases, the Police may be informed if the nature of the material warrants such action.

The Acceptable User Policy gives further guidance regarding the considerate use of electronic equipment.

APPENDIX A - STUDENT CENTRED APPROACH TO DEALING WITH BULLYING

A student centred approach to dealing with bullying situations is taken to be one which aims to consider the needs of all parties concerned and to offer support to both the victim(s) and the bully (or bullies). Blame and punishment will rarely be helpful to the situation as they usually result in resentment on the part of those blamed and can often make the situation worse. It is however important for everyone involved to acknowledge any responsibility they have towards a situation and to take action to rectify the situation wherever possible. Such actions might include verbal apologies, letters of apology, time or written work to reflect on their actions etc. The emphasis should always be on the recognition of responsibility not on punishment and this should be made clear to students.