



Anti-Bullying Policy

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1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

1.1 Everyone at Bridgnorth Endowed School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve their potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this from happening and obstructs equality of opportunity. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Bridgnorth Endowed School. It is everyone's responsibility to banish bullying and this policy contains guidelines for doing so. Our key aim is to prevent bullying by being proactive in our response to staff and student concerns.

1.2 Where bullying exists the victims must feel confident to activate Bridgnorth Endowed School's anti-bullying systems. We aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied students and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows or suspects that bullying is happening, is encouraged to tell a member of staff.

1.3 The new technologies such as mobile phones and the Internet to intimidate others is an increasing national trend. Bullying by text, e-mail or phone call often leave no physical scars but can be highly intrusive and harmful. The school will enforce strictly its policies with regard to use of mobile phones and the internet and will continue to monitor all e-communications used on the school site.

1.3 This document outlines how we make this possible at Bridgnorth Endowed School.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported or suspected.
- All students and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

3. WHAT IS BULLYING?

While there is no single definition of bullying, the Department for Education identifies three points which most definitions share:

- The behaviour is intended to cause distress
- The behaviour is repeated
- There is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator/s of bullying and the target

'Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.' (Safe to Learn, DFE)

'People doing nasty or unkind things to you on purpose, more than once, which it is difficult to stop.' (Safe to Learn, DFE).

The school works hard to ensure that all students know the difference between bullying and simply "falling out". Bullying can take place between students, between students and staff or between staff, and can include:

- name-calling, taunting, mocking and making offensive comments
- offensive graffiti
- excluding people from groups

- gossiping and spreading hurtful or untrue rumours
- kicking, hitting, pushing
- taking belongings
- cyber bullying – including sending inappropriate, offensive or degrading text messages, emails or instant messages via the internet, setting up websites designed to embarrass or upset individuals or excluding them from social networking sites.
- Homophobic comments

Students may be bullied for a variety of reasons, including:

- ethnic background, religion or culture
- disability, special educational needs or a particular ability
- sexual orientation
- gender (including sexualised bullying)
- size, appearance or health conditions
- social or economic status (poverty, class)
- age/maturity
- home circumstances – certain groups such as students in public care, or young carers, or those with same sex parents/carers or whose parents/carers have mental health difficulties may be particularly vulnerable.

4. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

A student may display signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go to school on the school/public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routines
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go 'missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving
- becomes aggressive, disruptive, unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the school community have a responsibility to challenge bullying if it occurs. All staff at the school are made aware of the procedures that they should follow if an incidence of bullying is brought to their attention. The first point of contact for parents should be the student's Form Tutor and then the Head of House and Behaviour Support Officer. The Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for the Anti-bullying policy.

6. ACTIONS TO PREVENT BULLYING

Prevention is better than cure so at Bridgnorth Endowed School we are vigilant for signs of bullying and always take seriously reports of bullying. We use the curriculum and other appropriate times to reinforce the ethos of the school and help students to develop strategies that combat bullying-type behaviour. We strive to organise our community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, for example, teacher supervision during open access. We use a variety of methods to help students prevent bullying. As and when appropriate these may include:

- House Captains
- Assemblies
- Anti Bullying week
- Internet Awareness week
- Display materials around the school by a variety of means (posters, website etc)
- Behaviour plans for individuals
- Positive achievement assemblies
- Behaviour Plan
- PSCHE sessions
- Student surveys

7. ACTIONS TO TACKLE BULLYING

1. All reported incidents of bullying are investigated and taken seriously. A record is kept of all incidents. If bullying includes racist or homophobic abuse, it is reported to the Headteacher.
2. The following illustrates the steps that may be taken when dealing with incidents:
 - If bullying/hurtful behaviour is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who was witness to it or the person to whom the bullying was reported.
 - An account of the incident is recorded and given to the relevant investigating staff member.
 - This staff member interviews all concerned and will record the incident.
 - Form tutors/class teachers are kept informed and if bullying persists, the tutor/teacher will advise other members of staff as appropriate.
 - Parents are kept informed.
 - Support systems and/or sanctions are used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.
 - The parents of both bullies and victims are informed about incidents and the action taken, or to be taken, by the school. Parents are asked to support the strategies which are proposed to tackle the problem. The bully will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions imposed for repeated incidents will be clearly explained. If appropriate, the students will undergo a process of reconciliation. Bullying sanctions are referred to in the Behaviour for Learning Policy.
 - Persistent bullies may be excluded from school. A monitoring tool is normally used to ensure repeated bullying does not take place. Parents are reminded regularly through letters and newsletters to inform their children that they must tell someone if they being bullied.

If a parent is concerned about bullying they should contact the form tutor in the first instance and then the Head of House. If a parent wishes to take the matter further they should contact the Behaviour Support Officer.

Students are told they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult within the school, and that when another student tells them that they are being bullied, or if they see bullying taking place, it is their responsibility to report this to a member of staff. There is provision for school members to report incidents anonymously through the school email system. Students are encouraged to be "Standbys rather than Bystanders".

8. CYBERBULLYING

Where any form of cyber bullying (as previously defined) affects another student in the school or may bring the reputation of the school into disrepute, the school reserves the right to be involved whether the electronic material was produced within the school or outside. Further the school will review electronic material held or accessed by any pupil in the school including their e-mail account and their mobile phone if we suspect cyber bullying is occurring. Students must be aware that some forms and levels of cyber bullying are illegal and the school will inform the police where necessary.

9. EXTERNAL AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Where necessary we will call on outside resources to aid an investigation, or offer support to a victim and/or the bully. Such agencies include the police, Early Intervention Team and counsellors. This will always be done in partnership with parents.

10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Bridgnorth Endowed School reviews this policy annually and assesses its implementation and effectiveness. This policy is promoted and implemented throughout the school. The school also analyses student questionnaires and uses this data to inform future practice and policy. This policy will be reviewed annually.