Anti – Bullying Policy

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten another person solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. Emotional bullying includes teasing, name calling, taunting and gesturing. Physical bullying includes extortion (taking money), assault and intimidation (forcing someone to do something they do not want to do e.g. steal). While we describe bullying as a conscious desire, bullying-type behaviour can often happen without consciously doing so because it isn't challenged.

PREVENTION

All staff have a duty to stop any bullying or possible bullying they may see and must report any incidents in line with school policy. We can try to prevent bullying by being vigilant and defusing any potential situations observed and by supporting all our pupils. As role models staff:

- Must not misuse a position of power to dominate pupils in the school.
- Will avoid:
    - Sarcastic comments
    - Derogatory nicknames
    - Dominating and humiliating behaviour
- Will listen to pupils when they are willing to talk about bullying
- Will be sensitive to pupils' need for privacy and respect.

Through the School's Personal, Social and Health Education programmes or class/form teacher discussions, we will address the question of how pupils might respect each others' rights to:

- Be physically safe
- Keep own possessions and money
- Be free of insult, derogatory terms and constant teasing
- Be able to associate with other young people for companionship and friendship

And encourage them to take responsibility for:

- The physical safety of others
- Security of everyone's personal possessions and money
- Freedom from hurt by name-calling, teasing
- Including all pupils in play and learning activities.

These ideas are also re-inforced in the list of 'Cargilfield Commandments' on the back of the Good Mark cards. The flexible nature of the PSHE curriculum should mean that it is often appropriate to follow up instances of possible bullying with form or year group activities to reinforce a message.

Across the Curriculum, opportunities also arise through the content of some subjects or through the processes encouraged in discussion, group work and cooperative learning to raise awareness and develop informed attitudes.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF BULLYING

- Unusual behaviour patterns
- Loss of confidence, being tearful, withdrawn
- Unwillingness to become involved in activities
- Being easily distressed or startled, irritable or hurtful to those closest to them
- Work becoming poorer
- Refusing to say what is wrong
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Desire to stay with adults
- 'Mislaid', 'lost' or damaged processions
- Unwillingness to come to school or frequent absences
- Stopping eating
- Unwillingness to go to bed
- Nightmares or bed wetting.

INITIAL RESPONSE

All staff should be ready to listen to any child who suggests that they are unhappy. This will sometimes be reported directly by the child although it is just as likely to come from their parents or a friend.

While this will often go through a class/form teacher, a child should be encouraged to speak to any adult with whom they feel most comfortable.

We have a number of members of staff who have been trained in Mental Health First Aid for children and so, where a child is unsure who to speak to, their names might be suggested.

Children will often worry that they are 'snitching' or that things will get worse if they report them. Where this is the case, it is important to stress that:

- Everyone has the right to be happy and to be safe
- The victim should feel in control of the situation and an adult should explain what they propose to do and try to support their wishes.

With older children especially, it may be that a child will benefit simply by sharing their concerns with an adult and discussing how they might respond assertively to bullying-type behaviour.

It is important, however, that this adult then follows up the concerns and supports the victim in doing this. Research has shown that where victims are encouraged to change their behaviour, to 'stand up for themselves', 'walk away' or 'pretend they don't care' each time they fail to do this makes their misery worse. They feel it is their fault that this is happening to them which it is not. Whatever their inadequacy or difficulty, it is not their fault and it is not their responsibility to stop it. It is the responsibility of the School who must give them that message loud and clear and not compound their unhappiness.

Concerns may be shared with the Pastoral Care Committee so that other staff are aware of the problem and can support discreetly. This might be written on an Incident Form (in the case of a specific incident) or on a Welfare Concern Form – both ensuring that a copy reaches the child's file.

Where we are concerned that wilful bullying is taking place, this must be reported to the Headmaster who will investigate the situation and ensure the appropriate action is taken.

DEALING WITH BULLYING

The way in which adults react to bullying contributes to the ethos of the school and can help to make it more or less likely that bullying will happen in the future. Ignoring the problem helps it to flourish. A heavy handed approach can drive it underground. However, a positive, open response will encourage young people to speak up about matters that concern them and will improve the learning environment by promoting more caring and responsible patterns of behaviour.

How the school reacts to a case of bullying will depend on the circumstances. It is essential to assess the true nature of an incident before deciding how to deal with it. For instance, Bullying can take the form of excluding a child from group activity and this needs to be handled differently from problems created by an individual who persistently bullies others. Such a person's bullying may be merely one manifestation of a plethora of problems.

Sometimes all that is needed is a simple word or two from a member of staff to make children realise what they are doing wrong. At the other extreme, some bullying remains intractable.

As pupils feel safe to talk about bullying they are more likely to report incidents to staff, expecting some helpful intervention. The two main aims of intervention should be:
- To make the victim feel safe and that their concerns are important
- To encourage better behaviour from the bully, colluders and observers

Punishing the bully rarely works; and, in fact, may make things worse when the bully takes further revenge on the victim. If we want to encourage disclosure and want to work positively with bullies then everyone in the School must know that effective action will be taken that will not necessarily lead to punishment. Bullying is anti social behaviour resorted to by ordinary people and we must respond in a way which will be helpful to their learning of improved behaviour. Increasing their anxiety and alienation from us is not likely to work. However for very serious, intentional, repeated or physical bullying it is difficult to argue that this should not be met with the imposition of some sort of sanction which will be decided on a case by case basis by the Headmaster. For persistent cases of bullying a warning may be issued and if necessary the parents informed. In extreme cases, the Headmaster may decide whether the bully stays in school or not.

THE NO BLAME APPROACH (see Appendix 1)

This is an effective approach to dealing with bullying and does not put the victim at risk. As the name suggests, one of the most important things about this approach is that it deliberately avoids accusations, blame and punishment. The first step is to interview the victim with the aim of finding out how he/she feels. The victim will be asked to communicate their distress by drawing a picture, writing something or explaining verbally. With their full knowledge and approval, the next step involves getting together the children involved in the bullying (including bystanders) and perhaps some non-involved children. This group (which might not include the victim) will be made aware of the victim's distress and will be encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and come up with some ideas for making the bullied person happier.

The following is intended as a guide for staff who are advising parents:

ADVICE TO PARENTS OF THE VICTIM

- Encourage your child to talk about the situation with you. Be patient if they are reluctant.
- Sympathise but do not over react. However, bear in mind that telling a child to ignore it may not be the best course of action.
- Assure them that something will be done.
- Explain to your child that most children are bullied at some time and there is nothing wrong with them.
- Ask if he/she can think of any way to alter the situation.
- Build up your child's confidence as much as possible by praising every effort they make to cope with the situation.

You may find that your child is reluctant for you to tell the School. It is usually important that you do share this information with someone at School. Experience tells us that a child is often relieved if their concern is raised by a trusted adult at School.

ADVICE TO PARENTS OF THE BULLY

- Discuss the situation with your child. Explain how serious the situation could become.
- Try to impress upon your child the frightening effect his/her behaviour has upon others.
- Always criticise the behaviour NOT the child.

- Explain clearly that you are working with the School to help him/her effect a change in behaviour.
- It is extremely important to repeatedly express confidence in your child's ability to change.
- Try to spend more time listening and talking to your child. Listening can be a powerful resource.
- Try to increase the child's circle of friends.

RACIST BULLYING

This is any form of behaviour which has the effect of intimidating, humiliating, ridiculing and/or undermining the confidence of a person or group of people due to their colour, nationality or ethnic group. Such behaviour may include:
- Unwelcome comments or gestures
- Physical abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Derogatory comments/jokes
- Written abuse, including graffiti and display of offensive material
- Shunning of particular pupils
- Different treatment

Racist name-calling can be more hurtful than other forms. By implication this type of behaviour denigrates the person's whole family and culture. It is impossible to change the colour of your skin. Such remarks can be more serious than other forms of abuse in that they arise out of, and may reinforce, racial prejudices. The context in which racist bullying occurs will influence the response, as young children parroting a word heard used by another may only require a gentle correction while repeated and deliberate abuse by an older child will need more structured and formal intervention.

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying can be defined as the use of information and communications technology, particularly smartphones and the Internet, to deliberately upset someone else. However, it differs in several significant ways from face to face bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.

The boundaries between home and school often become blurred. In many instances this will involve the school even though the cyberbullying has taken place outside the school. Research into the extent of cyberbullying indicates that it is a feature of many young people's lives including prep school children. It also affects members of school staff and other adults; there are examples of staff being ridiculed, threatened and otherwise abused online by pupils.

Cyberbullying, like all bullying, should be taken very seriously. Although cyberbullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment and threatening communications. The School will contact the police if they feel that the law has been broken.

- Cyberbullying takes different forms: threats and intimidation; harassment or cyber-stalking (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), vilification/defamation, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images and manipulation.

- Some cyberbullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, but it is important to recognise that some incidents of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. The instant nature of digital communication means that children have little thinking time about what they are doing. What may be sent as a joke, may not be received as one, and indeed means the sender may not see the impact of the message on the receiver. There is also less opportunity for either party to resolve any misunderstanding or to feel empathy. It is important that pupils are made aware of the potential effects of their actions and this is addressed through the ICT curriculum programme.

- In cyberbullying, bystanders can easily become perpetrators – by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate, for example, or by taking part in online polls or discussion groups. They may not recognise themselves as participating in bullying, but their involvement compounds the misery for the person targeted.

PROCEDURES FOR THE PREVENTION OF CYBERBULLYING

The Head of ICT has received CEOP Ambassador training and is responsible in collaboration with the Headmaster and CPC for ensuring that:

- Pupils, staff and parents are aware of and understand about cyberbullying through the ICT, PHSE/Health and Wellbeing curriculum, staff INSET and parents' information meetings.

- Procedures for dealing with cyberbullying are included within the School's anti bullying policy.

- Incidences of cyberbullying are recorded and monitored in the same way as face to face bullying.

- Pupils are made aware of how to report cyberbullying incidents including how to contact external reporting routes directly.

- Pupils are taught about the responsible use of technologies and e-safety as part of the ICT curriculum so they can deal confidently with any problems which may arise in or out of school.

RESPONDING TO CYBERBULLYING

- Cyberbullying is a form of bullying and as such the School will deal with it through their existing anti-bullying and behaviour policies and procedures. Any staff who becomes aware of instances of cyberbullying must report it at once to the Headmaster, CPC and Head of ICT.

- The pupil being bullied will usually have examples of texts or emails received, and should be encouraged to keep these to aid any investigation. Pupils are also encouraged to use the additional reporting routes available through CEOP, mobile phone companies, internet service providers and social networking sites. The Head of ICT can also assist when required, in consultation with parents.

- Some forms of cyberbullying involve the distribution of content or links to content, which can exacerbate, extend or prolong bullying. The School, in consultation with parents, will seek to help pupils to contain the spread of these. Options here include contacting the service provider, confiscating any phones and contacting the police in relation to illegal content or an online offence.

- Advice will be given to those experiencing cyberbullying on steps they can take to avoid recurrence e.g. advise those targeted not to retaliate or reply. The Head of ICT will provide advice on "blocking" or removing people from friends' lists. Guidance will also be provided about what types of private information should and should not be in the public domain.

- In consultation with parents, and where appropriate, steps deemed necessary will be taken to identify the person responsible for the bullying. These can include looking at the school system and computer logs, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses and, with police involvement, obtaining user information from the service provider.

- Once the person responsible for the cyberbullying has been identified the procedures laid down in the School's anti bullying policy will be applied. In addition, further technology specific sanctions may be applied which could include limiting the use of internet access or removing the right to having a mobile phone.

PRESERVING THE EVIDENCE

The Head of ICT will advise pupils and staff to try and keep a record of the abuse including the date and time, the content of the message(s) and where possible, a sender's ID (e.g. username, email, mobile phone number) or the web address of the profile/content. Taking an accurate copy or recording of the whole web-page address, for example, will help the service provider to locate the relevant content.

Keeping the evidence will help in any investigation into the cyberbullying by the service provider, but it can also be useful in showing what has happened to those who may need to know including the Headmaster, CPC, Head of ICT, form teachers, parents and police. This should be done by saving the evidence of bullying on the device itself backed up with a written record.

- On **mobiles**, ensure the person being bullied keeps/saves any messages, whether voice, image or text. Messages must not be forwarded to another device as this will result in the information, such as the sender's phone number, from the original message being lost.

- On **Instant Messenger** record all conversations if possible as these carry more weight as evidence as they can't be edited. If not, copy, paste, save and print instead. Conversations can also be printed out in hard copy or sections saved as a **screen grab**.

HOW TO PERFORM A SCREEN GRAB OR SCREEN CAPTURE

A screen grab or screen capture will show anything that is currently on the desktop.

For PCs:
- Press the Print Screen key on the keyboard. This stores the image on the clipboard.
- Open a blank Word document and then paste the image into the document by pressing Ctrl-V (or by clicking on the Paste icon under the Home tab).

For Macs:
- Take a screen shot of the entire screen by holding down Command (key with Apple icon on it) -Shift-3. The picture file will appear on the desktop.
- Alternatively, if you hold down Command-Shift- 4, Mac OS X turns the cursor into crosshairs so that you can select whatever portion of the display you'd like to capture in a screen shot.
- If you immediately hit the Spacebar after typing Command-Shift-4, Mac OS X replaces those crosshairs with a little camera. Using the camera, you can take a screen shot of the Dock, the entire menu bar, a single open menu, the desktop, or any open window.

- **On social networking sites, video-hosting sites or other websites**
  Keep the site link, print page or produce a screen grab of the page and save it. Parents and pupils should ensure they know how to take a copy of what appears on the screen. Generally they need to press **control** and **print screen**, and then paste this into a word-processing document.

- On **Email** the message should be printed and also forwarded to the Head of ICT. Subsequent messages should be treated in the same way and ideally the whole message, including the "header" should be saved.

THE NO BLAME APPROACH
(Appendix 1)

When bullying has been observed or reported then the No Blame approach offers a simple seven-step procedure which can be used by a member of staff (facilitator). The steps are summarised below.

STEP 1 – TALK WITH THE VICTIM

When the facilitator finds out that bullying has happened, she/he starts by talking to the victim. During this conversation the listener encourages the victim to describe how they feel with reflective comments such as, "That must be very hard for you… so you have felt really upset".

The purpose is not to discover factual evidence about this or other events; if the victim wants to include evidence in the account this is always reframed to establish the resulting distress. For example a comment like, "They have all been ignoring me, nobody will talk to me," might be replied to with a response like, "so you felt really lonely and you were upset that you had nobody to talk to."

It is important that the victim understands and gives consent to the process. Sometimes there may be a fear that it could lead to further victimisation but when the non-punitive aspect is fully explained the victim usually feels safe, and relieved that something is being done. He/she may want the perpetrators to understand how much distress has been caused. Talking to someone else who has been through the experience might give further reassurance. The facilitator should end the meeting by:

- Checking that nothing confidential has been discussed which should not be disclosed to the other people involved.
- Asking the victim to suggest the names of those involved, some colluders or observers and some friends who will make up the group
- Inviting the victim to produce a piece of writing or a picture which will illustrate his/her unhappiness
- Offering the victim an opportunity to talk again at any time during the procedure if things are not going well.

The victim might not be invited to join the group to present his/her account as it is possible that he/she will make accusations, provoke denial or justification and undermine the problem-solving approach.

STEP 2 – CONVENE A MEETING WITH THE PEOPLE INVOLVED

The facilitator arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved or suggested by the victim. A group of six to eight works well. This is an opportunity for the facilitator to use his/her judgement to balance the group so that helpful and reliable young people are included alongside those who behaviour has been causing distress. The aim is to use the strengths of group members to bring about the best outcome.

STEP 3 – EXPLAIN THE PROBLEM

The facilitator starts by telling the group that he/she has a problem – he/she is worried about "John" who is having a very hard time at the moment. He/she recounts the story of the victim's unhappiness and uses the piece of writing or picture to emphasise their distress. At no time does he/she discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

STEP 4 – SHARE RESPONSIBILITY

When the account is finished, the listeners may look downcast or uncomfortable and be uncertain about the reason for the meeting. Some may be anxious about possible punishment. The facilitator makes a change of mood here by stating explicitly that:

- No-one is in trouble or going to be punished.
- There is a joint responsibility to help John to be happy and safe.
- The group has been convened to help solve the problem.

STEP 5 – ASKING THE GROUP MEMBERS FOR THEIR IDEAS

Group members are usually genuinely moved by the account of John's distress and relieved that they are not in trouble. No-one has been pushed into a defensive corner by accusations and the power of the group has shifted from the "bully leader" to the group as a whole, whose members withdraw consent for the behaviour to continue.

Each member of the group is then encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. These ideas are stated in the "I" language of intention. "I will play with him at break." "I will ask him to sit with me at lunch." Ideas are owned by the group members and not imposed by the facilitator. He/she makes positive responses but does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

STEP 6 – LEAVE IT UP TO THEM

The facilitator ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. No written record is made – it is left as a matter of trust. She thanks them, expresses confidence in a positive outcome and arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

STEP 7 – MEET THEM AGAIN

About a week later, the facilitator discusses with each student, including the victim, how things have been going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the young people involved in the process.

These meetings are with one group member at a time so that each can give a statement about his/her contribution without creating a competitive atmosphere. It does not matter if everyone has not kept to his/her intention, as long as the bullying has stopped. The victim does not have to become the most popular person in school, just to be safe and happy.