

# **Anti-Bullying Policy (Whole School including EYFS)**

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**Independent Day School for Boys and Girls**

**Our Lady of Sion School**

Last Reviewed: 09/08/2017 (updated October 2016)

Frequency of Review: 3 Years

Next review: August 2020

## **Our Lady of Sion ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURE (PUPILS)**

**This is a whole school policy and includes Early Years Foundation Stage.**

This policy has been written with due regard to Preventing and Tackling Bullying (October 2014) and Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014).

At Our Lady of Sion School, the ethos is to foster mutual respect and understanding and to demonstrate “Consideration Always” in every situation. Young people have a right to feel safe in school. Our policy extends beyond the immediate school environment. Any reported bullying outside the school premises will be investigated and if bullying is found to have occurred, the bully may be disciplined when she is on school premises under the lawful control of the staff. This includes cyber bullying. The Sisters of Sion have asked that we actively encourage our students to always consider the feelings and needs of “the other” and as we actively promote their charism, this forms an important part of our bullying prevention and response to it when it occurs.

### **Statement of Intent**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Any behaviour, which could be termed as "bullying", is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We encourage our children and our staff to report any concerns so that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff as a matter of urgency. At Our Lady of Sion School, our policy aims to prevent bullying.

It is therefore important that we continue to create a culture and communication network where children and young people are easily able to share with staff if they are being bullied or have become aware that one of their peers is being bullied.

We believe that the bully needs help just as much as the child who is being bullied and we endeavour to help both children with the co-operation of parents. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving and this can be achieved through the focused attention and support of the Pastoral team including the Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral), Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral), Key Stage Coordinators and Form Tutors.

### **What is Bullying?**

Bullying is repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, SEND or because a child is adopted or is a young carer – it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (Social Websites, mobile

phones, text messages, photographs and email). In some instances 'bullying' may be regarded as abuse leading to the implementation of reporting procedures to Children's Services of the Local Authority (See Child on Child/Peer on Peer section of the Safeguarding Policy).

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, threatening or obscene gestures
- **Racial** - using racial taunts, graffiti, gestures because of someone's colour and/or origin
- **Sexual/Sexist** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments because of gender.
- **Verbal insults** – banter, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing and name-calling including comments made against particular groups for example because of disability, Special Educational Needs or on grounds of religion, cultural background, gender, sexual orientation or transgender status
- **Cyber** - all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, social network sites, threats by text messaging & telephone calls, and misuse of photographic technology, eg cameras & videos
- **Religious** - unkind words or actions because of someone's religion
- **SEN/D** - unkindness because of physical or mental disabilities or having Special Educational Needs.
- **Homophobic** - treating someone unkindly because people think that they are or might be homosexual
- **Family related** - unkindness because a child is adopted or is a carer, or the like.

### **The Seriousness of Bullying**

Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying is serious as it can make the lives of its victims a misery. It undermines their confidence and self-esteem and can destroy their sense of security. Bullying impacts upon its victims' attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be targeted and can have lifelong psychological damage. At worst, bullying can be a factor in pupil suicide. It is acknowledged that bullies have complex reasons for their behaviour and may need help. The consequences of the bullies being allowed 'to get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victim. All pupils deserve the right to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is.

A child at Our Lady of Sion School may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. All staff should be aware of these possible signs and ensure that they remain vigilant at

all times and follow up any of the listed indicators (see below - or any other concern) through sharing with their DSL.

The child:

- Feels unwell in the morning
- Cries him/herself to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins truanting
- Reluctant to make the journey to school - Is frightened of walking to or from school, doesn't want to go on the school/public bus, begs to be driven to school
- Changes his/her usual routine
- Unhappiness
- Unexplained behavioural changes e.g. moody, bad tempered, aggressive or withdrawn, anxious, depressed, lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions or money going "missing"
- Wanting extra pocket money for no particular reason (to pay bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

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

### **Dealing with Bullying**

Bullying by its very nature is insidious because children and young people are likely to feel that "telling" will only make matters worse for themselves and leave them even more at the mercy of the bully/bullies. The "victim" must be offered immediate support and must be made to feel that they have done the right thing in coming forward. It should be remembered that by telling someone, they have undertaken something which is very difficult.

Any strategy for dealing with bullying must ensure that it protects the child or young person being bullied. For example, it is more appropriate for a member of staff to approach the alleged bully on the basis "We have noticed", or "It has been brought to my attention", rather than to say that it was the victim who brought the matter to their notice.

**Ultimately, Our Lady of Sion School must continue to actively promote a culture of sharing concerns. Staff and children need to be regularly reminded to share any concern (however small it may seem) as what may initially seem like an insignificant piece of information could in fact be instrumental in safeguarding/protecting a child.**

**“If you see/hear something that causes you concern – share it.”**

### **The Procedure**

A member of staff may become aware of a bullying concern. When this happens, he/she should refer to the DSL through the Welfare Referral Form, following the procedure below.

When a child informs a member of staff that there may be bullying happening, we start investigations as follows:

- The member of staff who initially hears that there is a potential bullying concern will report this to the DSL through the Welfare Referral Form.
- If a parent contacts the school with concerns about bullying including cyber-bullying, the DSL will be informed immediately and communication between the DSL and the parents will commence as a matter of urgency.
- The DSL will see the pupils involved individually and record their “statement” about the incident(s) being investigated. If appropriate and possible, two staff should be present at any such interview where bullying is being investigated.
- If the DSL needs to delegate the above action, it will be handed over to the appropriate Key Stage Coordinator or Form Tutor. The notes from this meeting will be shared with the DSL as a matter of urgency.
- If there is reason for the DSL to believe that bullying is taking place, he/she will then contact the parents of both parties and put his/her findings to them.
- It is our belief that a child who bullies needs help just as much as the “victim” of bullying. We endeavour to help both pupils with the co-operation of the parents.
- During investigations, there may well be speculation among the children’s peers and their parents. It is important that we are aware of this and take appropriate action to ensure that rumours are scotched and the investigation is satisfactorily concluded.
- Careful monitoring will be undertaken by all staff of the pupils involved, discreet or overt, whichever is deemed appropriate to any given situation. Regular communication with parents and appropriate staff will commence to enable the DSL to be assured that the situation is being resolved and there is an holistic monitoring of the situation.
- The details of the investigation as it continues will be recorded on the Bullying Log by the DSL.

- If after investigation, the concern is not deemed to be actual bullying, details of the investigation will be recorded on the Pastoral Log to inform any subsequent investigation should the concern return.
- Bullying cases will be reviewed at the weekly DSL meeting (or more regularly where necessary) to ensure that the case is successfully resolved and remains resolved. The Bullying Log uses RAG coding. The case will only “Go Green” when there has been a significant period of time (one term) without any further bullying incident. Even when a case “Goes Green”, the DSLs will still review the case each week to remain mindful of it.
- If bullying is found to be present, an appropriate sanction is applied and this is recorded on the Bullying Log.

All members of staff at Our Lady of Sion School recognise that “bullying can happen here” and each will actively monitor the children in his/her care. Sharing concerns with the DSLs is very much part of the life of a staff-member at our school.

### **Dealing with Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is any bullying behaviour that takes place ‘virtually’ via mobile devices like phones and tablets, through online social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and is also common on gaming sites. Cyberbullying can happen in or outside school – whenever and wherever children have access to phones or the internet. Examples of this kind of behaviour include inappropriate text messaging, e-mailing or blogging, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet, excluding individuals from group chat and creating false personas to mock or humiliate others.

The person being bullied will usually have examples of texts or emails received and should be encouraged to keep these to aid in any investigation. There are also additional reporting routes available through mobile phone companies, internet service providers and social networking sites.

Some forms of cyberbullying involve the distribution of content or links to content, which can exacerbate, extend and prolong the bullying. There are advantages in trying to contain the spread of these by contacting the service provider, confiscating phones and contacting the police if the content is illegal.

Take steps to identify the person responsible for the bullying. Steps can include:

- Looking at the school system and computer logs;
- Identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
- Obtaining user information from the service provider (with police involvement).

The DSL will respond to Cyberbullying according to “**The Procedure**”, taking into account the advice given (within this policy) when dealing with cases of cyberbullying.

**Detailed procedures relating to Online Safety and appropriate use of mobile technology can be found in the school's E-Safety Policy.**

### **Record Keeping**

All cases of bullying are recorded in the Bullying Logs, which are held securely and centrally on the school system to provide a clear picture of the bullying patterns within the school. The log holds information about incidents and those involved (victim and perpetrator). The schools DSLs meet weekly to review the Bullying Logs and to discuss any patterns that are emerging. Actions are agreed to ensure that the experience of bullying is stopped swiftly and successfully.

Victims of bullying are closely monitored and concerns are raised at Staff Briefings and within the wider pastoral team through Key Stage Coordinator meetings. The Bullying Log provides the necessary information to enable the DSL/Pastoral Team to actively monitor and support those children in need.

### **Bullying and the Police**

Bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the United Kingdom. Some incidents of bullying are not actually crimes and, therefore might not be a matter for the police. However, other types of bullying are illegal and can be reported to the police. These include bullying that involves the following (whether face to face or online):

- violence or threats of violence;
- assault (including sexual assault);
- malicious communication;
- harassment e.g. name calling, threatening behaviour, abusive phone calls, text messages, e-mails and Facebook messages;
- theft;
- intimidation;
- sexting;
- any of the above that are committed because of the victim's disability, gender-identity, race, religion, belief or sexual orientation

**A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. In cases such as this, the DSL will make a referral to the MASH according to procedures set out in the school's Safeguarding Policy.**



## **Bullying Outside School**

Bullying outside school is any incident of bullying that occurs anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, in the town or village centre or cyberbullying. The Department for Education’s guidance for preventing and tackling bullying states that “where bullying outside the school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on.” We want our school community to remain safe and happy and therefore are very keen to respond to any reports of bullying outside school and especially if this is having an impact on the school community. Developing positive and caring citizens is a vital part of our provision and therefore responding appropriately to reports of bullying outside school is an important part of our pastoral provision. It is very important that we encourage our students and their parents/family members to communicate any such concerns with us. Communicating this message to parents/family members is achieved through our Learning Platform, Safeguarding Briefings and within our regular newsletters

## **Keeping Informed about Bullying**

At Our Lady of Sion School, we recognise that bullying “could happen here”. All staff are reminded to be vigilant regarding indicators that point towards safeguarding/child protection/bullying concerns. Sharing any concern (however small it may seem) is encouraged and expected as part of the caring culture of the school. As part of the induction of new staff and in the annual safeguarding updates (August/September), the principles of the anti-bullying policy are shared and revised.

Through our PSHEE, Tutor-Time, Assembly programme, projects, drama, stories and literature children and staff are informed about the importance of reporting bullying along with the importance of being kind to everyone. The ethos of anti-bullying is embedded throughout the curriculum. Promoting an understanding of the many differences between people and challenging prejudice-based language (amongst other foci) is a vital component of the preventative strategies that the pastoral team use in their drive to prevent/reduce the cases of bullying and/or cases of unkindness. It is essential that the whole staff—body actively promote the value and importance of an environment of good behaviour and respect, praising members of the school community when this is evident and challenging every case that contravenes this. Through the routes mentioned above, we must actively support all children and young people and continue to be mindful of those pupils with protected characteristics (SEND, LGBT etc).

It is our duty to follow anti-discrimination law. As staff, we must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school. This is achieved through routes mentioned above and through what we do and say. We are role models and this responsibility must be taken very seriously.

## Disciplinary Sanctions

The following sanctions may be applied in accordance with the School behavioural policy.

- **Formal Warning:** The Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral) will speak to the pupils involved and will contact the parents or guardians giving details of the offence and inviting them in to School to discuss the matter and to be present when their child is given a Formal School Warning.  
Parental support for the School's actions should be enlisted if possible. Parents and the student(s) involved in bullying others should be informed that further instances could result in one of the following sanctions:
- **Suspension/Fixed-Term Exclusion:** at the Headmaster's discretion (see the School's Exclusion, Suspension, Removal and Review Policy).
- **Permanent Exclusion:** at the Headmaster's discretion- in cases of severe and persistent bullying. (see the School's Exclusion, Suspension, Removal and Review Policy).

**These are minimum sanctions. In very serious cases, where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm, the incident is treated as a child protection (CP) concern and it will be necessary to make a report to Social Services or the Police.**

The Pastoral Team at Our Lady of Sion School believes very strongly that face-to-face communication with victims and bullies (and parents) is a vital part of dealing with this problem. Sanctions are important and those ultimate sanctions (see above) can be effective in preventing acts of bullying. However, the discussions and conversations that take place during a bullying investigation are crucial and can certainly be instrumental in remedying a case and enabling those involved to learn lessons for life.

The School will raise awareness of the staff through training and collectively we shall take action to reduce the risk of bullying/acts of bullying here at Our Lady of Sion School. The key points from this policy will be prominently displayed on the Safeguarding Notice Board (Learning Platform) and will be discussed with pupils during Tutor-Time sessions. Anti-bullying will feature as a discussion point for the Student Council and the school will engage with Anti-Bullying week each year. It will also be revisited as necessary during PSHEE sessions to all years and reinforced in other areas of the curriculum as the opportunities present themselves e.g. drama, physical education. The children in the Senior School will be asked about bullying through their "Student Review and Monitoring" programme carried out as part of their Tutor-Time Activity Framework.

Parents will be informed about Anti-Bullying procedures through the school's newsletter, the "Staying Safe" area of the Learning Platform and through Parental Briefings at Parents' Evenings.

### **Useful Links:**

#### **Anti-Bullying Alliance**

- A coalition of organisations and individuals committed to stopping all forms of bullying between children and young people.
- Website contains information and advice relating to all forms of bullying.  
[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

#### **Bullying at School**

- <https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school>

#### **Childline**

- 24 hour helpline for children and young people with concerns about bullying 0800 11 11
- Online support for children and young people with concerns about bullying
- Website with information about bullying including a new short video to build the confidence of children that have been bullied  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

#### **Get Connected**

- Helpline for children and young people under 25 - 0808 808 4994.
- Also a text, email and webchat facility.  
[www.getconnected.org.uk](http://www.getconnected.org.uk)

#### **The Diana Award (Anti-Bullying Programme)**

- Website available to all with information, advice and good practice for young people, professionals and parents.
- Training across UK and Ireland: Training targeting victims, perpetrators and bystanders. Young people can be trained to recognise bullying behaviour and its root causes as well to help their peers tackle bullying online and offline. Professionals can be trained to lead on anti-bullying work and support a peer led programme/student team.  
[www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)

#### **EACH (Education Action Challenging Homophobia)**

- Action line for children and young people with concerns about homophobic bullying.
- 0808 1000 143  
[www.each.education](http://www.each.education)

**Stonewall**

- Website with information and advice tailored to under 21s who have concerns about homophobic bullying.
- 08000 502020  
[www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

**The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)**

- Website with information and resources for children and young people about staying safe online.  
[www.thinkuknow.org.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.org.uk)

**Ditch the Label**

- Ditch the Label provides informative advice, research and engaging content tailored to young people aged 13-25 aimed to reduce the prominence and harmful effect of bullying.
- Ditch the Label also offer email support as well as drop-in chat sessions via the social networking platform Habbo Hotel.
- [www.ditchthelabel.org](http://www.ditchthelabel.org)

<b>Authorised by</b>	Chair of Governors
<b>Date</b>	09/08/17

(Signed copy held by Clerk)

**Related documents:**

- Safeguarding Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Bullying Log
- Behaviour & Discipline Policy
- Expulsion, Removal & Review Policy

