



Anti-Bullying Policy

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Regional Director		Principal			Vice Principal		
Head of Foundation Stage		Head of Primary			Head of Secondary		

Aim

The overall aims of this policy are the prevention of bullying and, should instances of bullying occur, to help staff and students to deal with it effectively. Newlands aims to create an environment where students can grow and flourish without fear. Each student has the right to feel safe in a caring and friendly environment so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and children will know that they can safely tell staff of an incidence, and they will be dealt with promptly, seriously and effectively by staff.

In this respect, the school seeks:

- To ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied
- To ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of the nature and types of bullying that may occur, both in and out of school, and their causes and effects
- To ensure high expectations of students' behaviour, as detailed in the school's behaviour policy
- To use all students, staff and parents as a positive resource in the elimination of any form of bullying, drawing on peer pressure as a means of preventing bullying
- To ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware that bullying is totally unacceptable
- To ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities in addressing bullying issues
- To provide regular staff training in relation to the prevention of and response to bullying
- To develop effective strategies to prevent bullying
- To provide a consistent school response to any bullying and have clear procedures for dealing with incidents
- To provide support for both victims and bullies
- Newlands school has a "zero tolerance" to Bullying

Definition

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, by an individual or a group, which intentionally hurts another individual, either physically or emotionally, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is often difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

It can happen anywhere, both in and out of school.

Bullying can have a negative life-long impact. It can make it difficult for children to learn and can have a lasting detrimental effect on their lives. Young people who have been bullied can become unhappy, moody, anxious and withdrawn, depressed or aggressive. Young people try different strategies to cope with negative feelings, often not successfully.

Bullying can take various forms, including:

- Racial/Religious/Cultural - where someone is made to feel inferior because of their background, culture or religion.
- Sexual/sexist - bullying based on something specifically linked to gender.
- Homophobic - bullying based on sexual orientation
- Disability - any exploitation of a particular aspect of a child's disability and/or special educational needs
- Cyber - bullying via technology. For example, internet/mobile phones, email, social networks, text messages, photographs

Bullying can include name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings, inappropriate touching, producing offensive graffiti, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumors or regularly excluding someone from groups or games. It is also bullying when a young person is pressured to act against their will by others or is harassed by unwanted conduct, which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or humiliating environment.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

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

- Is unwilling to go to school
- Is frequently absent from school
- Regularly has homework which is not done or lost
- Changes his or her usual routine
- Becomes anxious, withdrawn or is lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Going to the nurse's office regularly
- Depressive signs
- Talks about running away, committing suicide or self-harming
- Cries him- or herself to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to achieve less well in schoolwork
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Has tuck money or other money continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Stops eating
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable

- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous or jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- Is evasive or gives improbable excuses in relation to any of the above

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

Action against Bullying

It is essential that all adults in the school community know what to do when they suspect that a child is being bullied and which member of staff to contact. Staff will have a range of appropriate strategies on which to call:

- Skilled observation to recognize and respond to the symptoms noted above.
- Ready receipt of reports of bullying behaviour, which are then investigated, acted upon and the information relating to the alleged bully and their victims reported as appropriate.
- Use of the school curriculum, for example in subjects such as PSHE, Circle time, story time, drama, English and history, to embrace the topic of bullying, including its dangers, how to prevent it and the steps to take when it occurs.
- Use, as above, of other elements of school life, including assemblies, form periods, house meetings, school council and visiting speakers.
- Use of focused training, for example in safe use of the internet.
- Availability of this policy on the school's website to enable parents to understand the school's approach and work together with staff.
- Close parent/teacher liaison to ensure that both home and schoolwork together to help and support the victim and moderate the behaviour of the bully.
- Where appropriate and following discussion with the Heads of Phases' engagement with outside assistance, such as an educational psychologist, school counsellor in helping children who bully others.
- Ensuring that staff are fully aware of times and places when bullying is most likely to occur; organization of the school day and supervision arrangements reduce the likely incidence of bullying. This includes supervision of changing and showering areas, monitoring the use of washrooms at break times and the regular coverage of secluded areas at break times by duty staff.
- Use of the house system, buddy groups and strategies such as a friendship stop as part of the school's pastoral care to encourage vertical bonding between age groups, giving older students a sense of responsibility and younger children a chance to externalize feelings and anxieties that they may not share with an adult member of staff or even their own family.
- All children are given the opportunity to speak to their homeroom teachers or form tutors.

This person is someone they feel comfortable with, who knows the child well and understands that the child may turn to him or her. Where it is recognized that a child may not be comfortable turning to his form teacher or tutor, alternative arrangements will be put in place. This may include an opportunity to speak to the school counsellor, school nurse or school doctor.

- Familiarity of all staff with this policy; staff will sign to say that they have read and understood this policy.
- Raising the awareness of all staff of the dangers of bullying and how to prevent it, through staff training and by regular discussion at staff meetings.
- Dove-tailing this policy with the school behaviour policy so that all concerned are aware of the appropriate procedures and sanctions.
- Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning and Social and Emotional Aspects of Development (EYFS)

Procedures to Follow

This policy only works if it ensures that the whole school community understands that bullying is not to be tolerated and understands the steps that will be taken both to prevent and to respond to bullying. All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe.

The Role of the Head of Phases

The Heads will be informed of any incidents of bullying and will ensure that all incidents are thoroughly investigated and properly logged. The Heads will then collaborate with the Pastoral Team/Designated Safeguarding Lead and other relevant members of management/staff to ensure that an investigation takes place in every case and each situation is treated seriously. If bullying is found to have occurred, the parents of any children involved will be contacted and informed of what action the school is to take.

The Principal will ensure that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and all staff undertake appropriate training in taking action against bullying.

The Role of the Senior Leadership Team

The main roles of the Senior Leadership Team in respect of bullying are:

- Managing and monitoring practices to ensure alignment with the school anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- Maintaining a clear overview of the incidence of bullying and the school's anti-bullying prevention and response strategies.
- Liaison between all parties involved, including parents.
- Ensuring that incident slips are completed by staff in all cases and that a copy is stored in the

incident file.

- On a regular basis, analysis of the incident file so that patterns and trends can be identified and the analysis used to improve policy and practice.
- Promotion and co-ordination of anti-bullying initiatives and projects both within the curriculum and in the wider aspects of school life.
- Deployment of appropriate strategies to ensure that bullies change their behaviour.

The Role of the Staff

It is essential that all members of staff contribute to creating a school ethos which does not tolerate bullying and minimizes the likelihood of incidents ever occurring.

- Staff must ensure that they have read and understand this policy. They must sign to confirm this.
- Staff must ensure that their training in taking action against bullying remains up to date.
- Staff will be aware of and exploit aspects of the curriculum and wider aspects of school life where they can embrace the topic of bullying, including its dangers, how to prevent it and the steps to take when it occurs.

In any case where bullying is reported or suspected, staff must follow this procedure:

1. In most cases the incident should be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who is approached.
2. Listen carefully and intently.
3. Reassure the child that you are sympathetic and that the problem will be resolved.
4. Do not ask any leading questions. Keep questions open and ask questions for clarification.
5. Do not promise to keep the issue confidential – it is important to maintain the students' trust by remaining honest.
6. Make a clear account of the conversation on an incident form as soon as it has ended but try to avoid taking notes during discussion.
7. If there is more than one person who is displaying the bullying behaviours, they will all be asked to write a written account simultaneously before being interviewed. Witnesses/bystanders should also write statements. Year Leaders/Phase Leader will also record the incident.
8. Report the matter as soon as possible to the SLT.
9. Discuss with the SLT how to proceed with, for example, further interviews, liaison with parents and what action is to be taken, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
10. Continue to address the incident as agreed with the SLT.
11. Ensure that the incident continues to be fully recorded on the incident form, together with details of what action has been taken.
12. Liaise with the SLT to ensure that all staff are kept informed of the incident and action taken, as appropriate.

13. Remember that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Staff should refer to the Positive Handling Policy for more details.
14. Ensure that appropriate support is provided for all parties concerned.
15. Talk to parents to inform them if deemed necessary.

Disciplinary Structures to Deal with Incidents of Bullying

The person who is displaying the bullying behaviours must be left in no doubt that bullying is unacceptable and that this conduct will be systematically monitored. As a general principle, however, it is best to avoid confrontation and harsh sanction, as aggression breeds aggression and the bully is likely to become more vindictive.

Warning

If a student is beginning to behave in a manner which could develop into or be interpreted as bullying, wherever possible a warning will be given. In this way it is hoped that many potentially serious situations will never materialize. However, the warning stage is at the discretion of the school, and a student involved in a serious instance of bullying will bypass this stage and be placed onto Stage 1.

Stage 1

Where, after due investigations, the school is satisfied that bullying has occurred, it will be explained to the bully why his/her behaviour is unacceptable, and positive strategies will be pursued to raise his/her self-esteem as well as to protect the victim. The bully's parents will be informed. It is possible that, after a considerable period of time during which the student has not only totally desisted from bullying has also given evidence of positive support of and participation in the anti-bullying policy, that student will be removed from Stage 1. However, this is entirely at the discretion of the school, and any student previously on Stage 1 who is involved in a further instance of bullying will be placed directly on to Stage 2.

Stage 2

If the bullying continues, arrangements will be made to minimize contact between bully and victim. The bully's parents will be called into school to discuss the situation. The bully will sign a statement promising that the bullying will not be repeated. It will not be possible to be removed from Stage 2 or any subsequent stage. It is envisaged that in most circumstances these two stages will be sufficient.

Stage 3

Where there is no improvement in bullying, the bully will be suspended (temporarily internally excluded) from the school for a day. Upon repetition of these behaviours, external exclusion (up to 3 days with KHDA approval) could be warranted.

Stage 4

As a last resort, and when it is clear that the bully consistently endangers the welfare of fellow members of the school community, he or she will be permanently excluded from Newlands School.

Information and Guidance for Students

- As a member of the school, we expect you not to have to put up with any form of bullying behaviour. We can and will help to put a stop to it.
- You should feel free to speak out to your mum or dad or any teacher if you are being bullied. We can help you to cope with it straight away.
- When someone else is being bullied or is in distress, inform a member of staff immediately.
- Do not be afraid to report any incidents. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the bully.
- Do not put up with bullies in your group of friends. Bullies will soon stop if they are left out or are by themselves.
- Take care of how you speak and act towards other students. Always aim to be considerate and helpful.
- Treat other people as you would wish to be treated.

Information and Guidance for Parents

- You may not recognise that your child is being bullied. However, changes in their manner, behaviour and general state of health can sometimes be explained by bullying.
- Encourage your child to talk about it but be patient. It is quite natural for him or her not to want to discuss the matter and not to want you to do anything about it.
- Listen and try not to interrupt.
- If you are concerned or unsure, please talk to a member of staff as to how to approach the conversation so the questions are open and not closed.
- Reassure them that you are sympathetic and that it is a problem that can be solved. It happens to most people at some time during their lives.
- Ask him or her if there are ways of changing things and help them to try to develop strategies to cope, strategies which should then be practised.
- Try to keep the situation in proportion and so remain good-humoured.
- Encourage your child to talk to their room teacher or tutor about the matter.