



*Tomlinscote School  
Sixth Form College*

*A Specialist Language College*

# Anti – Bullying Policy

<b>Policy Type:</b>	Mandatory
<b>Approved By:</b>	Resources Committee
<b>Effective From:</b>	November 2016
<b>Revision Date:</b>	November 2017

## Tomlinscote School & Sixth Form College

### Anti-Bullying Policy

#### Definition

*Bullying is to, deliberately and often persistently, hurt, threaten or upset any student or adult in the school physically or emotionally, in person or using any form of communication.*

#### Introduction:

Tomlinscote School & Sixth Form College believes that every student and member of staff has the right to be happy at School and College. No child or adult deserves to be bullied and bullying of any kind will not be tolerated. Once bullying is identified, every possible effort will be made to stop the bullying and to support both the victim and re-educate the bully.

#### Aim:

Our aim is to provide an environment where all students and staff feel safe and are encouraged to report any incident of bullying and feel comfortable in doing so, confident that it will be pursued.

There are many different definitions of bullying in use, however most agree that the type of action that makes behaviour bullying, as opposed to “having a laugh”, venting frustration or a non-bullying incident of physical or verbal violence/aggression is behaviour that is:

- Calculated
- Repetitive
- Selective

It usually involves an imbalance of power between the person on the receiving end of the bullying and the person or persons doing the bullying.

Bullying can be:

- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, and hitting or pinching, any form of violence, or threat of violence – actual or implied.
- **Verbal:** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, use of discriminatory language
- **Emotional:** tormenting, threatening ridicule, humiliation, and exclusion from groups or activities (eg “the silent treatment”).
- **Cyber:** the use of the internet or related technologies to hurt, harm or expose other people to ridicule, in a deliberate, repeated or hostile manner. This can happen both inside and outside of school and at any time of the day or night.
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact, the use of sexual or sexist language.
- **Extortion:** demanding money or gifts, getting other students to do homework.

Bullying may involve negative use of language associated with potentially vulnerable groups:

- **Sexual orientation or gender identity** – homophobic taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Race** - racial taunts, graffiti, gesture
- **Faith** – taunts about faith, religious beliefs or lack of belief, religious dress or lifestyle.
- **Disability/Learning difficulties** eg retard, spastic.
- **Poverty** – associated with students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds so may not have the most up-to-date phones, clothes etc

Bullying differs from friendship fall out or other aggressive behaviour:

‘If two children or young people of about the same strength have the odd fight or quarrel. It is not bullying.’

### **Implementation:**

The Staff, Governors and Student Council have been involved in the drawing up of the Anti-Bullying Policy. All students in the lower school attend a cross-curricular ‘Anti-Bullying Day’ that reinforces the policy. The policy forms part of the ethos of the school. Responsibilities suggested in this policy form a coherent strategy included in other key policies such as Behaviour, Equality, E-Safety, Race Equality and Health, Safety and Welfare.

The student planner also advises students and parents what to do if someone they know is being bullied.

The majority of cases of bullying, when they occur, are between students, however, the policy also addresses issues to do with the bullying of adults within the School and College.

### **Expectations**

All students have the right:

- To feel happy safe and secure in their School and College
- To move around the site and not be frightened of anything or any person
- To be treated with respect
- To be respected no matter what their ability, colour of skin, nationality, religion, physical appearance or sexual orientation
- To be protected against the bully
- To be treated equally by all members of staff
- To be able to tell a member of staff if they are being bullied and to be advised about the action taken
- To be supported whether they are being bullied or are the bully

All adults have the right:

- To be able to conduct their role without interference from other people that damages their confidence and self-esteem
- To be respected by colleagues, students and their parents

## **Responsibilities**

### **Students:**

Students are often the first to become aware that a peer is being bullied and are expected to support each other in telling an adult. Students are expected to consider their own actions as an individual or in particular cases where a group bullies an individual over a period of time. Students are expected not to bully other students or attempt to intimidate staff.

### **Staff:**

1. Take all incidents of bullying seriously
2. Offer the victim immediate support by:
  - Moving closer to those involved – making their presence known
  - Taking action as quickly as possible
  - Separating those involved (avoid physical contact unless absolutely necessary, and then using only the minimum of force necessary to prevent further harm being inflicted)
  - Reassuring the victim that staff can and will help
  - Comforting the victim
3. The bully must be told by the member of staff directly that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and action taken to prevent behaviour reoccurring
4. All incidents should be recorded on an Incident Report Form, with an account of the action taken and passed to the HOY.
5. HOY or SLT action will be notified to the parents of all students involved by telephone or in writing as appropriate
6. Feedback to staff involved if possible
7. All incidents of bullying referred to the HOY or member of the SLT will be logged in a bullying file kept in the staff room area and logged in the conduct log in SIMS by the HOY.
8. The school believes in the 'no blame approach' but that it is essential that individuals accept responsibility for their behaviour and reflect on the impact that the behaviour has on others. Bullies will be supported in changing their behaviours, whilst victims will be supported in recognising that it is not their fault
9. Restorative Justice approaches used where appropriate
10. Anti-Bullying will also form part of the curriculum in the Tutorial Programme, PSHE and, where appropriate, in other subjects.
11. An Anti Bullying Day is held in Year 7.

### **Executive Group:**

Support the implementation of the School and College's policy and, through the School Council, raise awareness of it. An Assistant Principal will monitor the bullying log and the feedback of the success of interventions to the SLT.

### **Governors:**

Approve the Policy and support the school in its implementation of the policy against bullying.

### **Monitoring**

Tomlinscote monitors the impact of policies and procedures in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The effectiveness of such policies are assessed through Tomlinscote's self evaluation procedures, including consultation of its students. Furthermore, the effectiveness of this Anti-Bullying Policy will be formally assessed by the HR Committee on an annual basis, by reference

to school records, including (but not limited to) the Incident Log, the Bullying File, anonymous questionnaires to students, the Exclusion Data spreadsheet, and Prejudice Related Incidents Collection Spreadsheet.

### **Links to other policies**

- Behaviour and Discipline
- Drugs Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- IT Acceptable Use Policy
- E-Safety
- Race Equality
- Equality

Code of Conduct

Content Review:

November 2016

Date of next content review:

November 2017

## **Racist Bullying**

Britain is a multi-racial and multi-faith country and everyone has the right to have their culture and religion respected by others. Nobody has the right to call your child names or to treat them badly because of their colour, race or religion. It's illegal and it can be stopped. Racist bullying is not just about the colour of your skin, it can be about your ethnic background or religion too. Racist bullying is the only type of bullying that schools must record.

## **Homophobic Bullying**

Homophobic bullying can involve physical or mental violence by a group or an individual. It is often aimed at someone who has poor defences and who, as a result, may be significantly upset. What distinguishes it from other forms of bullying is the language that is used. Words like "queer" and "poof" and "lezzie" have been used abusively for many years. They have now been joined by words (such as "gay" and "lesbian") which were formerly descriptive but which now may be used as a derogatory adjective to describe objects and people that may have no connection whatsoever with homosexuality. Both boys and girls may be subjected to homophobic abuse.

Homophobic name-calling, for example, should be challenged and managed in the same way that racist or sexist behaviour is.

## **Restorative Justice**

Restorative approaches enable those who have been harmed to convey the impact of the harm to those responsible, and for those responsible to acknowledge this impact and take steps to put it right. It explores strategies that they could adopt to avoid the situation happening in the future.

The most important thing teachers can do is to strive to create a positive, open, tolerant ethos in which matters of concern to young people are discussed calmly.

## **Guidelines and advice for staff for dealing with students**

It is accepted that there are as many bullying situations as there are bullies. We shall always need to apply our professional judgement to make decisions, based on individuals involved and on the nature of the bullying. The following guidelines are intended to provide more details to the actions outlined in the main policy.

### **1. Always take the report of bullying seriously**

It is important to react quickly but also objectively. If the situation becomes more emotionally charged, it could escalate and increase the bully's power.

### **2. Investigate the bullying thoroughly and take action quickly.**

Any reports of bullying should be referred to the HOY. Statements should be taken from all students involved in any bullying and completed on a green incident form. Other sources of information to consider may include CCTV footage. Action to deal with the bullying should be taken as quickly as possible.

### **3. Other staff**

Where staff have witnessed an incident a gold incident form should be completed. Copies, along with a green student form should go to the HOY and to the victims and bully's files. The same applies to any letters sent home. Colleagues may need to be informed if the incident arose out of a situation where staff need to be vigilant, for example at break times, in less accessible areas to the school.

### **4. Reassure the victim**

Victims often need to be reassured that the bullying will not get worse as a result of it being reported. It is important that the victim is not made to feel badly about having come to see a member of staff.

### **5. Offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim**

This will vary according to the situation, but reassurance is a key strategy. Coming to school with friends, avoiding areas where the victim might meet the bully, joining lunch-time clubs or going to the library where there is staff supervision, staying close to where members of staff are on duty at break and lunchtime but without "clinging to them", are all quick and easy strategies that can be offered.

### **6. Speak to the bully**

Make it plain to the bully that you disapprove of bullying behaviour and so does the school. Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view. Discuss the ethos of the school, tolerance, value and support for others.

### **7. Contact with parents or home**

It is good practice to contact home of both the victim and the bully, even if there is an uncertain outcome. Parents / carers who learn subsequently about bullying incidents are often distressed or angry if they have not been informed. Parents should be reassured that the incident has/is being dealt with.

Likewise, it might be appropriate to invite in the parents of the student who has been carrying out the bullying to express concern, and give a clear warning of further sanctions should this behaviour continue.

### **8. Sanctions**

An appropriate sanction should be given, if the bullying has continued despite giving advice and contacting home. Where a sanction is given, it must be explained clearly - what it is and why it is being given. Both the victim and the bullying may need support to avoid similar incidents occurring again. Restorative Justice may be used where appropriate. Where bullying continues despite support and sanctions, further more serious sanctions need to be used as well as parental meetings. This should usually involve the Head of Key Stage, escalating up to Head of School and Executive Principal if appropriate.

### **9. Monitor the victim after the bullying has been dealt with**

It is important to talk to the victim of bullying on a regular basis after the situation has been resolved. This is to check that it has not started again in the same or a different form. It is also important to ask staff, particularly the form tutor, and other students to be vigilant.

### **10. Bullying Log**

The Bullying log is kept in the staffroom. A form needs to be completed for each incident of bullying.

## **Guidance for Parents**

### **Talk to your child and listen to what he or she has to say**

Here are some things to remember if you are talking to your child who you think may be being bullied.

- Be patient - make time to listen to your child.
- Ask questions but do it sensitively - don't interrogate. Show your child that you care. Be careful not to say or do anything which could make an already anxious or lonely child feel even more alone.
- Do not take any action before you discuss with your child what you could do, and what he or she could do. It may take a little longer for you to agree the best course of action than if the decision is taken by you alone, but this is time well spent. But make sure you do something. If bullying goes on for a long time it can cause damage to your child's educational and personal development.
- Do not make promises you can't keep. It is very important that your child knows that he or she can trust you. For example, do not promise your child that you will not tell the school in an effort to make it easier for your child to share something with you. This might cause difficulties when working with the school in trying to resolve the issue. And remember that if you discover that a child is in danger, whether that danger comes from an adult or another child, you must act even if the child wants you to do nothing. If the school is unaware of any incidents they will not be able to deal with it.
- Tell your child that he or she has done the right thing by talking about what has happened, that bullying is wrong, and that those who are doing the bullying must change their behaviour.

### **Contact the school – Procedures for raising concerns if your child is being bullied**

- If you feel that your son or daughter is being bullied at school remember there are staff who have a lot of experience in resolving bullying issues.
- Your child's tutor or Head of Year won't always be available to speak to you immediately as they are likely to be teaching. The best course of action is to contact the Student Support Officer (SSO), KS3 or KS4, for your son or daughter's year group who works very closely with the Head of Year. If you share your concern with the SSO about bullying then they will either arrange for the Head of Year to call you, or arrange for you to come to meet with them. Sometimes this might be a case of leaving a message. Try to resist the desire to come to the school to see someone straight away as this is not always possible and may result in frustration while you wait.
- Ask your child to write down the details of any incidents. This is important because when the bullying is being dealt with the detail needs to be recalled and it is easier to do this when it is written down. Do not exaggerate. Be honest and stick to the facts as you know them as teachers need to know how serious the bullying is in order to manage the situation effectively.
- If the bullying is connected to Social Media, ask your child to screen shot the page and print it out.
- When speaking with the HOY, remember that this may be the first time that the teacher has heard about the bullying and remember that your child may not have told you all the facts.
- The HOY will then plan to resolve the situation by challenging and talking to the bully and gathering information from other students, members of staff or any other relevant sources. The meeting will hopefully reassure your son or daughter that the bullying will stop and the Year Coordinator will explain how it will be resolved.
- Once the details of the bullying are clear, a sanction will be given to the bully and support offered to your son or daughter to make sure that he/she feels safe.
- The HOY or member of staff who has dealt with the bullying will monitor the situation by asking your son or daughter or other students if there have been any further incidents.

Where relevant they may ask members of staff likely to come into contact with your son or daughter to be vigilant and to also report back.

- If you are still not happy and you do not believe the bullying has been resolved then contact the Head of KS3 or KS4 whichever is relevant to your child.