

# DUNHURST



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

**PARENTS VERSION**

### JANUARY 2010

(following consultation with staff, parents and children over  
the spring and summer 2009)

**Incidents of bullying are recorded in the Welfare Book, Conduct Book or  
Day Book. Individual pupils' files will contain outcome.**

## **DUNHURST ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Dunhurst School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.

We will continue to review the Anti-Bullying Policy regularly. Everybody is endeavouring to establish collectively a culture of mutual respect where bullying is not tolerated at any time in our school community.

All members of the school community must understand the seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage to the victim with potentially life-threatening results. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

### **Why Is It Important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying hurts. 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.

Although bullying at Dunhurst will not be tolerated, we recognise that pupils who bully do so for different reasons. We are in this respect also committed to providing support and guidance for the bully.

At this school we are confident that when bullying occurs, it is dealt with in a firm, sensitive and caring way. Our prime concerns when dealing with bullying are firstly:

- To prevent any continuation of the bullying
- To provide support to the child being bullied
- To improve the behaviour of the bully

### **What are our aims at Dunhurst?**

#### **We will:**

- Ensure that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, has positive feelings about Dunhurst, is able to fully concentrate on their work and is free from intimidation.
- Accept and welcome newcomers into our community.
- Be committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.
- Develop a culture in which bullying is not tolerated and is challenged. We recognised that bullying can only thrive in a climate of silence. Our policy will encourage “speaking out”: by those who are bullied (DON'T SUFFER IN SILENCE), by those who witness bullying and by those who hear about incidents of bullying.

### **How will these aims be achieved?**

#### **We will:**

- Publicise our anti-bullying policy inside school and on the website
- Recognise the need to have the co-operation of parents and families in eradicating the problem of bullying/resolving a bullying incident.
- Always address bullying issues. We understand that no two scenarios are the same and each incident will require intervention in a different way.
- Have a pro-active commitment to anti-bullying education through a PSHE programme.
- Support the lives of all members of our community by use of counselling, family counselling and other external professional agencies.
- Staff Training and Communication

Staff were trained throughout the Anti Bullying Policy consultation (January – April 2009) on all issues with regard to bullying and in particular how to spot signs of bullying. Dr Tom Smiley, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, is advisor and trainer to the staff, parents and children on all bullying matters and training is ongoing.

- Bullying issues will be raised and discussed in our community by:
  1. Pupil Concerns agenda item in weekly staff meetings (Minutes)
  2. Boarding Staff meeting held weekly (Minutes)
  3. A written log can be made in
    - i. Day Book
    - ii. Welfare Book
    - iii. Boarding log books
 These written 'logs' allow patters to be identified.
  4. In PSHE lessons and assemblies; year group meetings, drama, current affairs and across the curriculum.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is when a member of the Dunhurst community could be made to feel:



due, very often, to the repeated actions of another member of the community. It is the perception of the child being bullied and other children's perceptions that are the important factors.

Examples of bullying can be:

Emotional	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (eg hiding books, threatening gestures).
Physical	pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, "dirty" looks, inappropriate body language and invasion of space that intimidate or any use of violence.

Racist	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making inappropriate or insulting comments about a person's looks, dress, race, religion, disability etc.
Sexual	unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
Homophobic	because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
Verbal	name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, malicious teasing, exclusion of other students by deliberately and frequently leaving them out of social interactions and activities.
Cyber	All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging calls. Misuse of associated technology, ie camera and video facilities.

## **How does Dunhurst deal with Bullying?**

The framework for dealing with incidents of bullying is based around four aspects:

1. Revealing/Reporting incidents
2. Collecting Evidence and Recording of Incidents
3. Actions
4. Support and Education

### **1. Revealing/Reporting Incidents**

We will encourage people to SPEAK OUT with confidence and to make the reporting of incidents as easy as possible. We want to provide as many initial contacts as possible for pupils to report incidents with confidence within the school. It has to be the pupil's choice as to whom they reveal the problem. Possibilities are as follows:

- ✓ Tutor
- ✓ Subject teacher
- ✓ SMT – Penny, James, Kate, Alan
- ✓ Counsellor
- ✓ Matron
- ✓ Office staff
- ✓ Duty staff

Pupils can feel confident that any of the above will listen to their problem and pass the information on for actioning. To help pupils do this, they may wish to speak to a peer listener friend or parent.

### **2. Collecting Evidence and Recording Incidents**

The person to whom the pupil has revealed their problem will immediately inform the Tutor and a member of the SMT giving as much information as possible. The pupil should try and tell us:

- Who is involved
- The nature of the perceived bullying

- How often it has happened and for how long
- Where it takes place
- Specific examples, where possible

Necessary communication will be made to the relevant parties and parents of those involved.

### 3. Actions

All instances of bullying will be different and will be responded to differently, as is deemed to be appropriate. Where intervention is early and no physical violence is involved, we recognise that the most important outcome is that the bullying should stop.

- In incidents where the intention is not there to hurt, the bullying can be diffused early on
- In cases of more severe incidents, those where physical aggression is involved or repeated incidents of bullying behaviour by the same person, then sanctions will be dispensed by the school and parents will be informed. It is the expectation that the bullying will stop. If further bullying or retaliation occurs, then, in line with general disciplinary procedures, strategies adopted may range from a pastoral support programme (in-house or by use of external agencies as appropriate) to suspension or permanent exclusion.

### 4. Support and Education

**How will we look after the person involved?**

#### i. Support for the person being bullied

- We undertake to provide support for our pupils by taking their concerns seriously and by dealing with the problem quickly.
- We will try to gain support for the bullied person from friends and classmates.
- We will, when appropriate, inform the bullied person and their parents about the actions taken.
- We will give advice as to what to do if there is a further incident.
- We offer counselling support if needed or requested.

#### ii. Support for the bully

- The school community abhors bullying, but we recognised that it can occur and that pupils who bully do so for different reasons. Bullies often have low self-esteem and are, or have been bullied themselves.
- It is vital that everyone recognises that it is **bullying behaviour and not the student** that the school will not tolerate. We are committed to providing the support that is necessary to put the bully back on the rails and to provide them with the skills needed to build lasting and meaningful friendships.

#### iii. Education

The school has a developing coherent and coordinated PSHE programme as part of a wider pastoral curriculum. The principal focus of this programme is Relationships, which

includes work on the theme of bullying. The topic of bullying will also be addressed in year group and whole school assemblies.

Bullying, and dealing with it, will become central to regular staff training.

## **ADVICE TO PUPILS**

Bullying takes place at some point in all schools, but also in adult work places, and it can happen at home. It happens to children and adults.

### **Bullies only prosper where there is silence and fear.**

We aim for Dunhurst to be a “speaking out” school where bullies will not prosper. Their actions will not be tolerated and they will be exposed because people will tell.

We want people to tell us if they are bullied and we want them to tell us if they see bullying taking place. Also, we want everyone to make it known to bullies that they disapprove of their actions.

### **1. What you can do if you know someone is being bullied**

- If you see someone being bullied or in distress, please take action. Watching and doing nothing can suggest that you support the bully.
- Do not tolerate bullies in your circle of friends or social groups.
- You must tell a member of staff. Choose any member of staff that you trust; any teacher will listen. Possibilities are:
  - Tutor
  - Subject teacher
  - SMT – Penny, James, Kate, Alan
  - Counsellor
  - Matron
  - Office staff
  - Duty staff
- If you do not, the bullying is bound to continue. Bullies thrive on the fear of others. We can't do anything if we don't know.

### **2. What to do if you feel you are being bullied**

- **Tell a member of staff and your parents. To help you do this, you may wish to speak to a peer listener or friend. The school can make it stop.**
- **If you are nervous of telling a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you.**
- **Don't fight back. It could make matters worse.**
- **Trust the help of friends and staff to help make the bullying stop.**
- **Bullying needs to be confronted for the benefit of the bully as well as to stop the bullying.**

### 3. Everybody needs to remember .....

- Bullies themselves often have problems and they may be doing the bullying because it makes them feel better about themselves.
- The bully may also be feeling unhappy.
- Some bullies do not realise that they are bullying. They may think that what they are saying is harmless, particularly if it is a joke or a comment that has been said to them at another time.
- However, one unpleasant comment does not necessarily stand in isolation. You may be the fourth person to have been called by 'that name' by someone in an hour. The accumulative effect of name-calling can be devastating.
- People may appear to be fine on the surface but in reality they may be suffering. We do not have the right to put anyone in this situation.
- A sign of maturity is the ability to foresee the consequences of one's words and actions.
- We respect and celebrate difference. If you have problems with this on any occasion, or about a particular person, speak to a teacher of your choice.
- Bullying needs to be stopped or confronted to help the bully as well as the person being bullied.
- If you find it difficult to talk to anyone at school or at home, ring Childline on freephone 0800 1111. This is a confidential helpline.

## ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Discovering that a child is, or has been, the victim of bullying is very upsetting.

- Please trust the school to support your child and to deal with any bullying situation, and make the bullying stop.
- Please tell the school at the earliest opportunity if you suspect your son or daughter is being bullied or if you suspect that they are being bullied. Contact the Tutor or a member of the SMT immediately. The Head is contactable on her mobile (07833 668 359) and is on 24 hour call.
- If your child tells you they have been bullied, they need to be reassured that they have done the right thing in telling you or the school.
- Bullying is unlikely to stop without intervention from responsible adults.
- Sometimes a child will go to extreme lengths to avoid telling anyone that they are being bullied, but there may be other signs, as listed on the attached sheet.
- Encourage your child to feel comfortable talking to you about the issue. Assess the seriousness of the situation. Sometimes a tiff between friends or exclusion from a group will blow over as quickly as it started. Regular monitoring of the situation is essential to ensure there is no repetition or continuation of the bullying from another person.
- It is natural for a parent to be angry in these circumstances, but it is inadvisable to confront the bully or the bully's parents yourself. This usually creates more complications and does not help your child. We ask you to trust the school to contact a bully's parents.
- Always include your child in decisions about the course of action you wish to take. For example, it may be that they would prefer to tell their Tutor themselves. Children who are being bullied are extremely sensitive about the way in which the situation is handled.
- There are many reasons why someone is bullied. The school will work with parents and the child to support them and to improve the situation for the child.
- Some bullying incidents are more complicated than one child's version may indicate. Bullying situations are best resolved by taking a calm, measured approach that ensures a positive outcome rather than acting in the heat of the moment to lesser effect.
- The internet and Cyberspace are great ways to connect with people and with the world. They are technologies to enjoy and explore and are going to play an ever increasing part in our lives. However, as we all know, this will involve risks and dangers: we need to be aware of these and to acquire and develop the knowledge and skills to reduce and avoid them. At Dunhurst we will continue to educate the children, parents and staff in the safe use of mobile phones and the internet.

## Some Possible Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking into school
- doesn't want to go on the school bus or train
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- 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
- has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- shows stress related physical symptoms



## DUNHURSTIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



- ❖ Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and kindness.

This means I will not laugh at, ignore or hurt other people's feelings.

- ❖ Everyone has the right to be a valued individual within the school community.

This means I will accept and respect people for who they are and try to include others in work and play.

- ❖ Everyone has the right to be safe in school.

This means that no one should hit, kick, push, taunt with words or hurt each other.

- ❖ Everyone has a responsibility to respect other people's belongings and take care of their own possessions.