

# **Anti-Bullying Policy**

## **Aims and Ethos**

The ethos of Broadlands Hall School is one of mutual respect and tolerance. The staff are committed to providing a safe and caring environment for all students attending the School.

The School is mindful of the document 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (October 14) which all staff are encouraged to read. A copy of this document is available in the School Office and on the school website.

Broadlands Hall School has a policy on equal opportunities for all and any bullying, however minor, is treated very seriously.

Because of the special nature of students attending Broadlands Hall School, it is vital that we have a zero tolerance of bullying in all its aspects, whether physical or mental and students are encouraged to respect one another's differences. Students will be made aware of this and will be regularly reminded at group meetings of the need to treat others as they wish to be treated themselves. This policy is reinforced in the Homes.

Acceptance of this policy by all students attending the School forms a part of our standard terms and conditions.

## **The Potential Problem**

Bullying, by its very nature, is insidious because students 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.

Any strategy for dealing with bullying must ensure that it protects the child being bullied. For example, it is more appropriate for a member of staff to approach the bully on the basis "We know what is going on" rather than to say that it was the victim who brought the matter to their notice.

## **Definition of Bullying**

We believe that bullying can be defined as inappropriate behaviour from an individual student or group of students towards another which is deliberate, may be repeated over time and is hard to defend against. It may take the form of physical actions (including sexual) verbal (including chat rooms and text messaging) or emotional (being excluded from a group, tormenting or spreading rumours).

Bullying may include actions or comments that are racist, homophobic or focus on disabilities or other physical attributes.

Examples of bullying behaviour include:

Hitting, kicking or punching another child, Spoiling someone else's belongings or work, making sexist remarks ~ Calling names / Teasing  
Excluding individuals from a group activity ~ Giving 'nasty' looks  
Making racist remarks ~ Spreading rumours  
Not talking to somebody or inciting others not to talk to an individual.

### A Definition of Cyber bullying

Mr Bill Belsey, the creator of the website <http://www.cyberbullying.org> defined this unpleasant phenomenon in the following terms:

“Cyber bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others”.

Cyber bullying can involve Social Networking sites such as Myspace and Facebook, email and mobile phones (used for SMS messages and as cameras).

### Cyber bullying – preventative measures

In addition to the preventative measures described above, Broadlands Hall School ensures that:

- All students are tutored in the safe use of the internet. This includes a stringent policy on students only using the internet when an adult is present to monitor the suitability of the site
- Our internet content is filtered and our IT Technician monitors this regularly.
- The Headteacher will impose sanctions on any child who tries to access inappropriate sites by withdrawing permission for the child to use the internet for a given period of time.
- Teachers will give guidance on the safe use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace although access to these sites is blocked in the School.
- Students receive guidance on how to keep information safe on mobile telephones.
- Mobile phones are not permitted in any area of Broadlands Hall School.

## Signs of Bullying

Some of the physical and emotional symptoms linked to bullying are:

### Emotional

- Loss of confidence
- Loss of self-esteem
- Irritability
- Aggression
- Anxiety
- Panic Attacks
- Depression
- Suicidal thoughts

### Physical

- Sleeplessness
- Nausea
- Shaking
- Heart-racing
- Laziness
- Skin complaints
- Stomach aches
- Migraine or headaches
- Unexplained Bruising

## Preventative Measures

- The PHSE programme will include topics surrounding the issue of bullying.
- All students have access to a phone where they can call external specialists such as Childline, Kidscape or the Samaritans in private.
- Broadlands Hall School will actively encourage an environment in which bullying is seen to be totally unacceptable.
- Broadlands Hall School will encourage students to report any incident of bullying or unkindness to a member of staff and will make students aware that quick and appropriate action will be taken where appropriate.
- Staff supervision will always be at a level where any instances of bullying will be quickly detected. All areas will be properly monitored by either staff or senior students.

## The procedures for the dealing with reported bullying are:

- The member of staff discovering the incident will immediately control the situation and reassure and support students as appropriate.
- The incident will be reported to the Head Teacher or to the Principal and to the Manager of the Care Homes (or Senior Staff on duty) and full details will be recorded.
- The victim will be interviewed by the Headteacher or her deputy with a member of the Care Staff in attendance to support the child.
- Individual students will be questioned regarding the incident and a full picture of the situation will be gathered.
- The child who is bullying will be encouraged to understand why his actions are unacceptable to both the School and to other students and why they have caused distress. The child will be offered guidance on modifying his behaviour and disciplinary sanctions will be discussed.
- A way forward will be agreed, deploying the guidelines of Restorative Justice where useful and relevant. This may include sanctions, counselling and recompense to the victim.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put into place.
- Depending on the seriousness of the incident, students will be punished either internally, or in a more serious case, the Social Worker and Placing Authority will be contacted to discuss the placement. Any incident of a serious nature will be reported to the Principal.
  
- Staff members who suspect another staff member of bullying are actively encouraged to speak to the Headteacher. In the case of the Headteacher being involved, staff should speak to the Principal. In very serious cases, it may be necessary to inform the Police.

## Staff Training

- Discussions are held in Staff Meetings and all staff are vigilant to bullying throughout the day in all areas of the School. Any cases of bullying are reflected upon and the School Policy re-visited and amended as necessary.
- It is important to note that Broadlands Hall believes the bully, as well as the bullied, need support and that a 'positive' Restorative Justice approach through class discussion, assemblies etc is the best way to inculcate good behaviour.

### Follow up to check that behaviour has ceased.

- Depending on the seriousness of the incident, students will be punished either internally in conjunction with the Manager of the Home. Any incident of a serious nature will be reported to the social workers / parent(s) or guardian of both the child who is bullying and the child who has been bullied.
- The child who is bullying will be encouraged to understand why their actions are unacceptable to both Broadlands Hall.
- Staff members who suspect another staff member of bullying are actively encouraged to speak to the Headteacher or The Principal. In the case of the Headteacher being involved, staff should speak directly to The Principal.
- Teachers will be made aware of the problem and will assist in keeping a watchful eye on the situation in future.

### Follow-up and Monitoring

- It is an essential part of the policy to follow-up any incidents of bullying to ensure that it does not start again. Research shows that bullying is less likely to continue if all parties are aware that it is being checked. This should be done by the nominated Teacher within 2 weeks of the initial incident and thereafter for as long as deemed necessary.
- The child who was being bullied will be supported by all staff in the School and, if applicable, counselling will be made available.
- The child who was bullying will be encouraged to understand why their actions are unacceptable to both Broadlands Hall and to other students and will also, if appropriate, be offered counselling.

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