

Parkstone Grammar School



ANTI BULLYING POLICY



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PREFACE

This policy has been designed and produced in conjunction with students, through the School Councils, and staff to produce a document relevant to the needs of all people within the community of Parkstone Grammar School.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

“Parkstone Grammar School believes that every student and member of staff has a right to study or teach without discrimination or threat and be able to fulfil their potential. We define bullying as the intentional hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying is usually repetitive or persistent, although some one off attacks can have a continuing harmful effect on the victim”.

Bullying can be

- Physical – Pushing or shoving, tripping up, kicking, spitting, hitting
- Emotional – consistently humiliating someone, name calling, using insulting names or comments, isolating someone or, deliberately ignoring another person purposely to make them unhappy or persistently giving particular looks and encouraging others to do it
- Driven by a prejudice – this might be homophobia, racism or victimising those who have special needs, disabilities or who are gifted and talented. It may be picking on a ‘looked after’ child because they are cared for away from home or it may be picking on a student who cares for a sick relative
- Indirect – Spreading rumours whether true or not, gossiping about someone or talking about someone behind their backs to intentionally hurt that person
- Cyberbullying – any form of bullying using a mobile device or internet, chat rooms, social networking sites, instant messaging or email
- The following may also be deemed as bullying if the actions form part of an ongoing pattern of behaviour against a victim
- Some person or group always leaves someone out or shuns them
- Someone makes threats of violence against someone else
- Someone damages someone else’s kit or clothing deliberately
- Someone takes someone else’s belongings deliberately without permission
- Someone tries to physically force someone else to do something they do not want to do
- Someone tries to force someone else to do something sexual they do not want to do

Anti Bullying strategies within Parkstone aim:

- To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop harmful behaviour
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way



- To safeguard a student who has experienced bullying and to trigger support services for the student
- To apply disciplinary sanctions to the students causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possible through multi agency support.

Within Parkstone Grammar School we will take every necessary step to prevent bullying occurring.

We will ensure that:

- All adults will model respectful behaviour
- The rights of all people in the institution will always be respected
- The school will work together to reduce any racism, homophobia or sexism that may exist within the establishment
- Through the taught curriculum and extra-curricular work we will help everyone to understand and respect people with disabilities
- Systems will be in place that will allow all people to report bullying incidents in an easy safe manner
- Staff and students will work together to work and support bullies to change their behaviour
- Sanctions are in place and used appropriately for any bullying incidents

If a student/member of staff reports a bullying incident we will:

- Listen respectfully to the victim
- Take steps to stop the bullying with the young person's permission
- Meet with the perpetrator/s to try and resolve the problem
- Inform them that their behaviour is hurtful/unacceptable
- Encourage the perpetrator/s to acknowledge the hurt they have caused and learn from the incident
- Not humiliate or put at risk any person involved or who report an incident
- Make clear that any bullying cannot be tolerated and appropriate sanctions will be imposed
- Provide opportunities for perpetrators to change their behaviour but if this fails further steps will be taken. For students these include, as appropriate
 - Parents to be informed
 - After school detentions imposed
 - Internal suspension
 - Short term fixed exclusion
 - Permanent exclusion

We will monitor and follow up incidents to ensure the bullying has stopped.



PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

The Leadership of Parkstone Grammar School promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos. To this end the school has signed up to the Anti-bullying Charter. However, we are aware as a school that more needs to be done than sign a piece of paper to reduce bullying within an educational establishment. As a result we use a variety of preventative measures to encourage an atmosphere conducive to anti-bullying. Frequent opportunities exist within the taught curriculum at Parkstone to discuss issues around diversity and draw out anti-bullying messages. These include, amongst others, PSHEE, Drama and RMP as well as other subject areas. In addition the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme develops appropriate skills amongst our students in such areas as empathy and the management of feelings.

Opportunities throughout the school calendar are used to raise the awareness of our students to the negative consequences of bullying. These include:

- Anti-bullying week, usually run by students to promote strategies to reduce bullying
- Key Stage and Year Group assemblies
- Attendance by students at the LA anti-bullying events

Anti-bullying helplines are frequently advertised around the school on notice boards and through tutor notices.

The School also has a team of trained Anti Bullying Ambassadors in Years 10 and 11 that can be called upon in an attempt to resolve possible friendship problems that may lead to bullying becoming an issue.

CONCLUSION

No one at Parkstone deserves to be bullied. Any student or member of staff should feel able to report freely bullying issues, whether they be perceived as real or not, to any adult within the school. For students this may be their Form Tutor, Head of Year, Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher or any member of staff they feel comfortable talking to. Staff should report to their Line Manager or other staff they feel they can discuss the matter with and should refer to the "Dignity at Work Policy". All discussions will be treated in confidence and any actions taken will only occur once permission has been sought and given by the victim.

The school is aware that the nature of bullying and the bullies' tactics change and evolve through time. Cyberbullying is an example of how things change. As a consequence this policy and the various processes outlined within the appendices will be monitored and revised on an annual basis to ensure all necessary systems are updated.



APPENDIX 1

REPORTING A BULLYING INCIDENT

Students should feel free to report bullying to any responsible adult within the school and in confidence. Responsible adults may be their Form Tutor, Class Teacher, Assistant Head of Year, Key Stage Manager, Headteacher or any member of the Support Staff that may come in contact with. Any reported incident should be fed to the appropriate Head of Year where students reporting the incident will expect an effective and fair investigation.

Any parent concerned that their daughter is experiencing bullying should report the matter directly to the Form Tutor, Head of Year, appropriate Deputy Head or Headteacher.

Staff experiencing bullying from another member of staff, student or parents should follow the procedures outlined in the policy "Dignity at Work".

The School has a bullying reporting tool on its website called "TALK – Don't Suffer in Silence". This reporting tool is also exclusively available to students on the School's VLE. Parents and/or students can use this button to report incidents of bullying by using a confidential email service sent to a member of the Leadership Group. Once received the member of staff makes a decision as to what level the incident should be dealt with. It may be referred to the appropriate Key Stage Manager, Head of Year, Form Tutor or Anti Bullying Ambassadors, depending on the severity of the case.

All investigations completed should be rigorous and involve due care and sensitivity to the victim. Note taking should be made throughout the investigation and used as "hard" evidence for all parties concerned. At all stages the investigation should be transparent to all parties. Permission should always be sought and gained from the victim to deal with the bully

Parents will be informed promptly when any bullying issue comes to light. Regular updates will be provided as to the progress of the investigation and parents will be involved in the final outcome. The school sees the role of parents in two distinct ways.

- To support the school in its sanctions in dealing with the bully(ies) and provide further support, in addition to any external agencies who may work with the bully, to resolve the problem
- To support the victim with any issues that may need to be tackled as a result of the incident, possibly with access to external agencies

Once the case has been thoroughly investigated and it is apparent that a form of bullying has taken place, investigating staff should make clear to the perpetrator (s) that what they have done is wrong and hurtful. Attempts may be made to resolve the problem through mediation or conflict resolution but this will depend on the severity of the incident. Staff should encourage the bully to appreciate the hurt they have caused and hopefully learn from the incident. It should be made clear to all parties the sanctions that will be imposed and the reasons for these particular sanctions. At all times the safety and sensitivity of the victim is paramount.

In particular cases it may be deemed necessary to seek assistance from external agencies, such as the Educational Psychologist or CAMHS to support either the victim or the bully.

Once decisions and sanctions, if appropriate, have been taken, the school will follow up with the victim and the bully at a later date to ensure no recurrence has occurred and that a resolution has been made. The timetable will depend on the nature and severity of the incident. It will be discussed with both victim and perpetrator so all parties are clear as to the outcome of any possible review.



APPENDIX 2

SANCTIONS

Disciplinary or conflict resolution measures in relation to bullying serve several purposes within the school. These are:-

- To impress upon the perpetrator(s) that what she/they have done is unacceptable
- To deter her/them from repeating the behaviour
- To signal to others that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing similar.
- To ensure that the person has learnt from the incident and it may provide an opportunity for the person to put right the harm they have caused.

Any measures taken in a bullying incident should be transparent and consistent. Measures will be explained fully to the perpetrator as well as the victim to ensure fairness and rigour. The level of the sanctions taken will very much fit the level, persistence and severity of the bullying incident. i.e. the punishment should fit the crime.

Where possible and appropriate, referrals may be made to the Anti Bullying Ambassadors to resolve any possible conflicts. Cases are dealt with in strictest confidence along with any possible outcomes.

Where this is judged not to be the most appropriate route and that perpetrators need to be made accountable for their actions the following possible sanctions exist:-

- Detentions – either at lunchtime or after school
 - Internal suspensions
 - Fixed Term exclusion
 - Permanent Exclusion
- } At the discretion of the Headteacher
} only



APPENDIX 3

CYBERBULLYING

Parkstone Grammar School is aware that new technologies have a very positive power to transform our students' lives for the better. However, we are mindful of the fact that when things such as the Internet and mobile telephones are misused they can cause real pain and distress. There is no doubt that we have to respond to the growing challenge of cyberbullying and as a result we will constantly monitor the way in which we respond to incidents and update our policy accordingly.

Cyberbullying can be defined as:

“the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile telephones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else”

It may be an extension of face to face bullying but differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying

- The invasion of home and personal space
- The difficulty of controlling electronically updated messages
- The size of the audience
- The perceived anonymity of the perpetrator (s)
- The profile of the person doing the bullying and their target

Although cyberbullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment and threatening and menacing communications. As a school we will contact the police if we feel these laws have been broken.

Forms of cyberbullying:

- Threats of intimidation
- Harassment or “cyber stalking” e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages
- Vilification/defamation
- Exclusion or peer rejection
- Impersonation/identity theft
- Unauthorised publication of private information or images
- Manipulation

As with other methods of bullying, cyberbullying is unacceptable within the community of Parkstone Grammar School, be the victims students or adults within the school.

The school will investigate thoroughly any reported incident of cyberbullying in the same manner as with any bullying incident. The protocols for an investigation are similar to a bullying incident as outlined in Appendix 1 of the Anti-bullying Policy. The only difference is that copies of any malicious messages, images, chats should be saved and shown to the adult investigating the report.



Preventative Strategies

The school does not tolerate cyberbullying and has specific curriculum time devoted to teaching about the issues surrounding cyberbullying and how to prevent it.

Staff, students and parents receive regular advice on E Safety and reducing the risk of being cyberbullied.

- Staff training sessions updating knowledge & understanding of E Safety
- Students receive through the taught curriculum e.g. in PSHE and ICT how to keep safe; how to save malicious texts, messages and images for future reference in case an investigation needs to take place
- Both students and staff are subject to and have signed up to an Internet Accepted User Policy. Indeed for each session on a computer all persons in the community have to agree to the schools A.U.P.
- A piece of software monitors constantly computer usage of students identifying malicious, unacceptable words/phrases or inappropriate sites.
- Service providers for mobile telephone operators, social networking sites, instant messages services, email providers, video hosting sites and chat rooms all have contact details for moderation and blocking individuals or groups and students are reminded that these exist and should be used where appropriate.

Reporting a Cyberbullying Incident

Staff or students should try to keep a record of the abuse, particularly the date and time, content of the message (s), and where possible the sender's ID (eg username, email, mobile telephone number) or the web address of the profile/content. This can enable service providers to locate the content of an offending web page.

Keeping the evidence will help in any investigation into cyberbullying by the service provider, but can also prove useful in showing what has happened to those who need to know, including parents, staff, pastoral care staff and the police.

This can be done by:

- On mobile telephones, keep/save any messages whether they be voice, images or text. Do not forward to another person.
- On instant messages, record, where possible and/or archive the conversation. They can be copied and pasted, saved and printed or a screen capture could be used. Be wary of copy/paste as the evidence can be edited and therefore prove useless.
- On social networking sites, video-hosting sites or other websites keep the site link, print the page or produce a screen grab of the page and save it
- On a chatroom site print the page or produce a screen grab of the page
- On email, ask the victim to print it; or save the message for viewing by the member of staff investigating the incident and encourage them to save any subsequent message. Preserving the whole message and not just the text is more useful as it will contain headers.



It is worth noting that the Headteacher has the power “to such an extent as is reasonable” to regulate the conduct of students when they are off-site as a result of the Education & Inspections Act 2006. This may relate to cyberbullying which we recognise is often likely to take place out of the school environment but may significantly impact on the school life of those students involved. Similarly the Act provides a legal protection for staff wishing to confiscate items from students, including mobile devices when they are causing a disturbance in a class or otherwise contravene school behaviour/anti bullying policies. Staff may request students to reveal a message and show them the content of their telephones for the purpose of establishing if bullying has occurred. Refusal by a student to do so might lead to disciplinary procedures. Staff may, in the presence of the student, search through a mobile device where the student is suspected of involvement.

Once an investigation begins the first step is to attempt to identify the bully (ies). With new technology there appears to be a degree of anonymity but there should be ways to identify the perpetrator (s). However, it is important to recognise this may not be the bully as another person’s telephone may be used or school network account. Locating, where the information was originally sent from does not, by itself, determine who the bully is.

Some questions for an investigator should include:

- Was the bullying carried out using the school network? If yes, check with the ICT department who will use Securus.
- Are there dependable witnesses to be interviewed?
- Was it carried out using a mobile telephone? If so the service provider should be able to block the abuse. The police may need to be involved.
- Did the bully withhold their number? If so, the date and time of the message should be noted. Service providers can trace calls but again the police need to be involved as mobile operators will only disclose this information to the police.
- Has a potential criminal offence been committed? If so, the police may have a duty to investigate

Sanctions

Once identified, the cyberbully(ies) will be sanctioned. The range of sanctions are similar to those outlined for any bullying incident in Appendix 3. Technology- specific sanctions may also be included such as limiting internet access for a period of time or removing the right to bring a mobile telephone into school. However, if a criminal offence has occurred it may be necessary to pass the case to the police for further investigation and possible criminal charges. These may relate to:

- The Protection from Harassment Act (1997)
- Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- The Communications Act (2003)
- Malicious Communications Act (1988)
- Public Order Act (1986)
- Obscene Publications Act (1959)
- Computer Misuse Act (1990)
- Defamation Act (1996)



The school will try to work with the bully to change attitudes and behaviour.

When delivering sanctions as listed above it is important to consider how cyberbullying and its impact differs from other forms of bullying. Key considerations include:-

- Attempts by the bully to disguise their identity
- The public nature of posted material and the extent of the humiliation
- The difficulty of controlling copies of the material and gaining closure over the event

Determining appropriate sanctions for incidents will require sensitivity to the impact on the victim as well as consideration of any intentional or potential awareness of the consequences by the perpetrator. The investigation may also have to consider the possibility that the cyberbullying incident could be part of retaliation to a previous bullying endured by the perpetrator.