LEICESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This is one of the policies concerned with pastoral care. It should be read in conjunction with the corresponding Accessibility policy, Attendance policy, Pupil Behaviour Policy, Pupil Use of ICT policy, SEND Policy, Safeguarding Policy and RSE Policy.

This policy has been written with regard to the guidance given in the DfE guidance: Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2017), Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (September 2022), Working Together to Safeguard Children (September 2018, updated February 2019 and December 2020), and Cyberbullying: advice for Headteachers and school staff (2014).

INTRODUCTION

Bullying in any form is not accepted at Leicester Grammar School. We should all make every effort to prevent it occurring. Those being bullied should be given the help and support that they need. Those doing the bullying must be reprimanded, but it should be recognised that they are also in need of help. All members of the school community should treat each other with courtesy, care and consideration.

The aims of this policy are:

- To take bullying seriously and show it will not be tolerated
- To outline the procedures in place to develop a culture where bullying is not tolerated. This is done by:
    - including topics related to bullying in the Life Education programme,
    - employing Anti-Bullying Ambassadors to promote an anti-bullying culture
    - dealing promptly and decisively with bullying and allegations of bullying when they occur in school,
    - reiterating a consistent narrative about anti-bullying in response to cases of bullying when it occurs in materials used to deliver the curriculum,
    - upholding high standards among staff and senior pupils and role modelling expected behaviour.
- To outline how we will identify and protect those who might be bullied
- To promote positive attitudes in respect of relationships with others
- To take action to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is defined as “Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally” (DfE Safe to Learn – Embedding anti-bullying work in schools.) It implies a wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone so as to cause that person distress. Bullying is regarded as a very serious matter and all reports of bullying will be dealt with as such. The possible psychological effects of bullying must not be underestimated and in some cases can lead to suicide.

Bullying may be:

- teasing that goes too far
- tormenting, short or long term
- designed to raise the image of a group or individual
- designed to lower self-esteem of another
- attention seeking
- a quest for superiority
- social exclusion of an individual

BUT bullying is ALWAYS behaviour that is hurtful to the person(s) being bullied. It causes distress whether intentional or unintentional. It is mostly deliberate and repeated.

It can involve actions that are:

- physical – pushing, kicking, punching. Damaging or hiding another’s property
- verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours or teasing
- sexual – including child-on-child abuse
- social – excluding from a group or activity
- emotional – playing on feelings and friendship groups
- cyber-bullying through emails, texting, chat rooms, inappropriate use of camera or video facilities.

Bullying can be initiated because someone is different, such as through:

- Race, culture or religion (taunts, name calling, graffiti, gestures)
- Sexual orientation (homophobic comments)
- Gender (sexist, homophobic or transgender comments, unwanted physical contact)
- Disability/SEND (name calling, innuendo, exclusion from an activity)

Protected Characteristics

Every member of our school community is respected and valued as an individual, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Vulnerable students and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The school considers the individual situation of all pupils, and especially those with special

educational needs, disabilities or vulnerabilities when considering a response to bullying or an allegation thereof. Some students are particularly vulnerable and may be especially affected by bullying, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Others may be particularly vulnerable because they are going through a personal or family crisis or suffering from health or fitness problems. Students in care that are frequently on the move may be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer. Those with caring responsibilities may be vulnerable because they are socially isolated. These vulnerable young people may be at risk of turning to social media for comfort and so may also experience cyber-bulling. It is also important to note that those who are bullied sometimes become a bully themselves as, a form of protection and, while this will involve a sanction, it must be acknowledged that this individual also needs help.

Anti-Bullying Culture

Each of us has responsibility for the care and well-being of others by promoting a culture of tolerance and kindness. Telling a parent, teacher or other trusted adult about bullying is sensible, and healthy and should never be viewed as 'telling tales'. Pupil-led initiatives, such as our Student Support Group and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, offer different outlets for support and ways to report concerns.

Staff must be aware that teasing may encourage pupils to go too far and overstep accepted boundaries. Teasing and/or banter is, therefore, not acceptable and is recorded as child-on-child abuse. Staff should exercise their professional judgement in this matter but must be careful never to instigate or encourage bullying as a result of their own teasing of pupils or by ignoring inappropriate teasing by pupils.

All signs of bullying must be challenged and a firm statement made by the teacher that such actions are not acceptable, and the appropriate follow up procedure must be implemented. (See below)

The pupil planner contains expectations about how pupils should behave towards one another. It also gives guidance on to who a pupil can turn for help.

Staff training

The school's policy on Anti-Bullying is reviewed every two years or upon publication of new legislation. Staff training is included as part of regular safeguarding training for all staff to ensure that they are confident to tackle all specific forms of bullying.

Anti-bullying policy, practice and skills development is included in the school's induction process for new staff. Procedures for dealing with bullying are outlined later in this document

Life Education

The Life Education programme is underpinned by the Department for Education's Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy. In Y7, pupils are taught to recognise what constitutes bullying and are given advice on how to report incidents and seek help. The topic of bullying is revisited throughout the course through "self-esteem", "communication", "prejudice", "relationships", "internet safety", "treating others with respect" and "making a

positive contribution". The RS GCSE course includes a topic on prejudice where bullying is discussed and our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors lead assemblies that focus on bullying.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING CONCERNING PUPILS

Bullying can only be stopped if it is known that it is happening in the first place. As long as incidents are kept secret there is nothing that can be done.

We promote a positive relationship between pupils and the staff so that pupils can voice their fears, either about themselves, or about their peers. When a pupil reports that bullying, in any form, has occurred, the claim must always be taken seriously and the victim kept safe. The pupil must never be ridiculed or ignored or made to feel they are creating a problem by reporting it. It should be made clear to the pupil that the allegation is a serious one. Appropriate action should be swift, decisive and sensitive.

A person being bullied should talk to somebody with whom they feel that that can talk freely about the problem. This may be any member of staff, a senior pupil or a member of the Student Support Group or an Anti-Bullying Ambassador.

Any immediate action should be taken to relieve the situation, e.g. moving his/her seat in the classroom, minimising the contact between conflicting pupils.

Bullying incidents should be dealt with in the most appropriate manner for each situation and should always involve a pupil-centred approach (see appendix). The following procedure is designed to serve as a guide.

1. A discussion should take place between the people involved in the incident including at least one appropriate member of staff and possibly other contact people e.g. senior pupil or parent.
    a. An 'appropriate member of staff' is one who has witnessed the incident or to whom an incident has been reported, the Form Tutor or Personal Tutor of the victim and/or bully, the Head of Year, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Headmaster.
2. The Form Tutor(s) and Head of Year will be informed of the incident and the actions taken, if appropriate.
3. How the situation is dealt with will vary according to the circumstances. In serious cases the Headmaster may decide to suspend the bully or remove him/her from the school permanently. Every effort will be made to include parents in discussions, as appropriate, before any final decisions are taken. However, the Headmaster reserves the right to respond quickly to serious situations.
4. Written statements may be taken from the pupils involved and from any witnesses. Written records may be kept by staff at any stage.
5. Staff investigating incidents concerning bullying should keep written records (who was involved, witnesses, time, place and both sides of the story) which should then be recorded on CPOMS. These reports can be used to identify patterns of groups, places and times when bullying tends to occur and steps can then be taken to prevent it, by warning staff on duty, subject teachers etc, as appropriate. This is usually done in briefing so that all staff are aware of the problem.

6. Parents may be informed either formally by letter if this is deemed appropriate by the Head of Year, or informally by telephone if it is seen as appropriate by the Form/Personal Tutor.
7. The situation should be reviewed as necessary to ensure that the bullying has stopped.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

A pupil who is being bullied may keep the matter secret. However, the following changes in behaviour may indicate that the pupil is under stress:

- changes in work patterns
- truanting
- 'clinging' to adults
- staying behind after lessons
- reluctance to go into the playground
- discomfort when changing for PE lessons
- awkwardness when working in small groups in the classroom
- bag, books and belongings going missing
- unexplained bruises or scratches (this issue must be dealt with very carefully by staff who should always seek the advice of Senior Staff. It may be necessary to consider abuse outside school as a possible cause. Staff should consider their obligations under the Children Act)
- improbable excuses for any of the above

On their own these signs may be caused by another reason, trivial or serious. The member of staff should be aware that bullying might be one of the causes. A quiet enquiry at the end of the lesson to check that there is no problem might encourage a pupil to speak about his/her problems.

PREVENTING BULLYING

There are areas around a school where bullying is more likely to occur e.g. the playground, toilets, and near the lockers. Staff on duty at break and lunchtime patrol these areas regularly. Any suspicious behaviour is investigated and reported if necessary.

Prefects are encouraged to visit these areas in the course of their patrols.

BEHAVIOUR OF STAFF TOWARDS PUPILS

It should be recognised that the behaviour of staff towards pupils may be seen as bullying. This may be due to staff being over-zealous in carrying out their duties but the consequences are very distressing for a pupil and pupil often feels unable to turn to other members of staff, sometimes due to the fear of not being believed.

Staff should aim to treat pupils with courtesy at all times, acting in a manner which reflects a real care for their welfare. There will be occasions when staff have to make pupils clearly aware of the unsatisfactory nature of their behaviour, and apply sanctions where appropriate, but in

all cases they should aim to avoid lowering the self-esteem of the pupil in doing so. It is therefore unacceptable for a member of staff to act aggressively towards a pupil or attempt to belittle or humiliate them.

Using inappropriate nick-names or making a pupil the subject of ridicule is not tolerated.

Allegations of bullying by staff will be investigated by the Headmaster and appropriate action taken.

BULLYING BY TEXT, E-MAIL SOCIAL MEDIA AND OTHER FORMS OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION (CYBER-BULLYING)

It is against the law to send a message(s) which contains material which is offensive or threatening. Pupils receiving such messages, or their parents, should inform the school as soon as possible. In cases where the source is identified as a member of the school, the person involved will be dealt with appropriately.

We shall also treat seriously any information we receive about messages which are exchanged between pupils outside school.

In any of the above cases, the Police may be informed if the nature of the material warrants such action.

The Pupil Use of ICT Policy gives further guidance regarding considerate and appropriate use of electronic equipment.

APPENDIX A - PUPIL CENTRED APPROACH TO DEALING WITH BULLYING

A pupil-centred approach to dealing with bullying situations is taken to be one which aims to consider the needs of all parties concerned and to offer support to both the victim(s) and the bully (or bullies). Blame and punishment will rarely be helpful to the situation as they usually result in resentment on the part of those blamed and can often make the situation worse. It is however important for everyone involved to acknowledge any responsibility they have towards a situation and to take action to rectify the situation wherever possible. Such actions might include verbal apologies, letters of apology, time or written work to reflect on their actions or the use of restorative justice techniques. The emphasis should always be on the recognition and acceptance of responsibility, not just on sanctions, and this should be made clear to pupils.