

John Colet School **Anti - Bullying Policy**

The aim of this anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn and adults work in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and can affect both students and staff; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will everybody be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at John Colet School.

Definition

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The main types of bullying are:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, any use of violence, theft)
- Verbal (name calling, teasing, racist remarks)
- Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments)
- Homophobic (focussing on issues of sexuality)
- Cyber (e-mail, text messaging, misuse of cameras/videos, internet misuse e.g. chat rooms and web sites)

Encouraging other people to engage in any of these types of behaviour is also bullying.

Recognition

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as;

- Becoming shy and nervous
- Feigning illness
- Being frightened of walking to and from school
- Taking unusual absences
- Truanting from school
- Clinging to adults
- There may be evidence of changes in work patterns
- Lacking concentration
- Becoming aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable

Students must be encouraged to report bullying.

The school's teaching and support staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with the school's policy.

Dealing with incidents

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the form tutor of the student and the student's Head of Year
- The member of staff (form tutor or Head of Year) dealing with the incident will interview all concerned and will record the investigation
- A student who reports bullying will be encouraged to keep a diary or a positive/negative log
- Parents/carers will be informed if this is felt to be appropriate
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned
- Restorative Justice may be offered
- The situation will be monitored
- Persistent bullying will be dealt with by the Assistant Headteacher (Student Support) or the Headteacher
- A member of staff who feels bullied can report this to a member of the staff well being committee or a senior member of staff including the Headteacher

Students who have been bullied will be offered the following support

- An opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor or member of staff of their choice
- An opportunity to discuss the experience with the school counsellor; to use the school 'Drop In' facility which is run by the school health nurse or a referral to the Connexions advisor based at school
- A reassurance that the matter will be dealt with
- The offer of continuing support
- Help with the restoration of self-esteem and confidence
- The opportunity to have a 'buddy'. This will be an older student who will provide support
- Provision of a safe area for the student at breaks and lunchtimes

Students who have bullied will be helped by

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- Informing parents or carers to help change the attitude of the student

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- Official warnings to cease offending
- A genuine apology to the victim
- Involvement of parents/carers
- Detention
- Signing a behaviour contract

- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- Fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion
- Involvement of the community police

Raising Awareness

In an attempt to eradicate bullying behaviour, the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in

- PSHE
- Form tutorial time
- Assemblies
- Subject areas, as appropriate
- Participation in anti bullying week
- Articles in the school newsletter asking parents to be vigilant about cyber bullying
- Promoting Help organisations such as Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk or Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk

Anti - Bullying forms part of the ethos of the school. Staff and students must be assured that bullying is wrong and will not be tolerated.

The school will offer an e-mail address for students so that they can report incidents in confidence. A box will also be located in the school library for students to post information slips into regarding bullying incidents they have either witnessed or experienced.

The Role of the Bystander

The whole school community, including students, teachers and other members of staff have a responsibility to report any incident of bullying if they witness or know of its existence.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. The Heads of Year and the Assistant Headteacher (pupil support) will monitor bullying incidents involving students. The Headteacher will monitor bullying incidents involving staff.

Consultation

This policy was drawn up with the help of

- A focus group of 14 students representing various year groups in the school
- Teaching and non teaching staff at the school
- The school counsellor
- Governors from the school
- The Behaviour and Attendance Consultants for Buckinghamshire

Cyberbullying

'Cyberbullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself.'

Report to the Anti-Bullying Alliance by Goldsmiths College, University of London

The advent of cyberbullying adds a new and worrying dimension to the problem of bullying – there's no safe haven for the person being bullied. Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can follow children and young people into their private spaces and outside school hours. Cyberbullies can communicate their messages to a wide audience with remarkable speed, and can often remain unidentifiable and unseen.

Research commissioned by the Anti-Bullying Alliance from Goldsmiths College, University of London, identifies seven categories of cyberbullying:

- **Text message bullying** involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.
- **Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras** is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks.
- **Phone call bullying via mobile phone** uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.
- **Email bullying** uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them.
- **Chat room bullying** involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.
- **Bullying through instant messaging (IM)** is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online.

Bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyberbullying