

The Blue Coat School Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and both cannot and will not be tolerated.

The Blue Coat School is committed to ensuring that all students are treated with respect and dignity, irrespective of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, disability, sexual orientation or age.

The School wishes to provide an environment of positive and constructive working relationships which maximizes students' skills and abilities and sets good examples to all students.

The Blue Coat School recognises that bullying can prevent some students attending School. It hinders their participation and it diminishes their achievement. It is unacceptable in as much as it prevents students from benefiting from a full understanding of the School's ethos. The Blue Coat School is also determined to ensure that we strive to fulfil the five outcomes from 'Every Child Matters':

These are:

- Safety
- Health
- Enjoyment and achievement
- Economic well being
- Positive contribution at School and in society.

Bullying can prevent achievement of these outcomes. It impacts on safety and health, prevents enjoyment and, since it may have a derogatory effect on learning and achievement, may hinder participation and future economic well-being.

Our ethos is based on tolerance and acceptance, and the School motto, 'Not for oneself, but for all'. The Blue Coat School is committed to attempting to eradicate bullying and to ensure that victims and perpetrators alike are treated with care and sensitivity. Bullying will be dealt with in the PSHE curriculum but teaching will be supplemented by visitors from outside agencies. We hope, through the curriculum, to build self-esteem, self confidence and responsible assertiveness.

Aims and objectives

- To provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear where students are encouraged to report bullying.
- To reduce and eradicate wherever possible, instances in which students are subject to any form of bullying.

- To establish an effective means of dealing consistently with bullying and or providing support to students who have been bullied.
- To provide appropriate support for students who are accused of bullying.
- To ensure that all students and staff are aware of the anti-bullying policy and that they fulfil their obligations to it.
- To ensure that dealing with bullying via the School's protocol is underpinned by an understanding of the issue within a safeguarding context.
- To meet any legal obligations which rest with the School.
- To respond effectively any instances of bullying that are reported.

Definition of Bullying

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

Different types of Bullying include:

- **Physical** – hitting, kicking, spitting, tripping someone up, stealing/damaging someone's belongings.
- **Verbal** – name calling, insulting, racist remarks, threats of physical violence, spreading rumours, constantly putting a person down etc.
- **Indirect (known as emotional/psychological)** – spreading rumours, excluding somebody from social groups, sending malicious messages.
- **Racist** – racism means you are subjected to abuse and harassment because of your race, colour or beliefs. (E.g. insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual perceived ethnic origin or faith, name calling, graffiti, racially motivated violence.
- **Sexual** – sexually insulting language/gestures, name calling, graffiti, unwanted physical contact.
- **Homophobic** – insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived sexuality, name calling, graffiti, homophobic violence.
- **Electronic/cyber** – bullying by text message, bullying on the internet (in chat rooms, on bulletin boards and through instant messaging services) hate websites.

This list is intended only as an illustration, not an exhaustive list of the complex and wide ranging nature of bullying instances in any school.

All of the above are unacceptable and both cannot and will not be tolerated at The Blue Coat School.

The procedure for creating and maintaining an anti-bullying culture at The Blue Coat School.

The Blue Coat School curriculum is used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and the School's anti-bullying policy.
- Utilise PSHE schemes of work and PLTS time, where needed, to highlight bullying related issues and how to deal with them.
- Develop self esteem through, for example:
 - Displays of individuals' work
 - Verbal praise and other rewards
 - Encouraging students to stand up for themselves and not to allow others to make their lives unhappy
 - Students being given responsibilities within School
 - Students being encouraged to express their opinions and ideas.
- Reinforce that bullying will not be tolerated through school assemblies/tutor time.
- Remind students that bullying is not acceptable via posters on School notice boards/form rooms/classrooms/computer screen savers.
- Provide written guidance to students in the School planners to explain what they should do if they are being bullied or if they see another student being bullied.
- Empower students so that they realise that they must not stand by and let bullying happen. If they witness bullying taking place and take no action, they become part of the problem and as such are condoning it.
- Provide a forum in which concerns about bullying can be discussed on a regular basis through the Key Stage councils.

Strategies/responding to incidents when they occur.

Students who have been bullied should report this to their Form Tutor/or Head of Year.

Students who see others being bullied should report this to their Form Tutor/Head of Year.

Members of staff who receive reports that a student has been bullied should report this to the appropriate Head of Year.

Reports of bullying will be logged by the Head of Year who will enter the incident on the SIMS Behaviour System. They will refer serious cases to the Deputy Headteacher in charge of Pastoral Care.

Where bullying is of a racist or homophobic nature, we will report this to the Local Authority Education Welfare service using the Racial Incident Report form or Homophobic Report form.

All reports will be taken seriously and will be followed up by contact with the child and/or parent to ensure there has been no repetition.

Students who are bullied will be:

- Listened to and taken seriously and the incident will be discussed only with the necessary people.
- Assured that it was right to report the incident(s).
- Reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied.
- Involved in the process of deciding what action is to take place to help and stop the bully.
- Able to discuss strategies to deal with emotions and feeling and to understand and cope with bullying, and to rebuild confidence.
- Discourage from hitting back.
- Offered the chance to talk with staff from other agencies if needed – e.g. EWO, Connexions.
- Engaged in follow up meetings to ensure that any action taken is working.

Staff will always try to ensure that all children in the School both are, and feel, safe.

Students who are bullies:

- Will have their behaviour challenged.
- Will be treated fairly.
- Will be given the opportunities, advice and assistance to develop to change behaviour and encouraged and supported in doing so.
- Will be helped and supported in taking reasonable steps to repair the harm caused.
- Will be told that sanctions may be imposed.

Sanctions

There will always need to be some form of sanction when a person has been found to bully. However, significant discretion is required to ensure a fair outcome. The nature of the sanction imposed is at the discretion of the Deputy Headteacher (Children's Services) working in conjunction with other members of SLT and the relevant Head of Year.

- Official warnings to cease offending i.e. letter home.
- Parents invited to School to meet Key Stage Manager/Head of Year/Deputy Headteacher.
- A formal letter of apology to the person who has been bullied.

- Detention.
- Exclusion from certain areas of School premises.
- Minor fixed term exclusion – internal or external.
- Major fixed term exclusion – internal or external.
- Permanent exclusion.

Everyone within School is expected to:

- Act in a respectful way towards one another.
- Adhere to and promote the objectives of this policy.

Students are expected to:

- Report all incidents of bullying.
- Report suspected incidents that students may be afraid to report.
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in School.

Staff are expected to:

- Adhere to the anti-bullying policy.
- Utilise the Child Protection Protocol (Appendix A) and Bullying Incident Management Form (Appendix B) when seeking a longer term resolution of a bullying incident.

Parents/carers will be expected to help by:

- Supporting The Blue Coat School anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- Encouraging their child to be positive members of the School community.
- Discussing with School any concerns that their child may be experiencing or involved in some other way.

Concerns, complaints and compliments.

The Blue Coat School recognises that there may be times when parents and or students feel that the School has not dealt well with an incident of bullying and this be brought to the attention of the Headteacher.

We would also be pleased to receive compliments as feedback from parents and students when things have gone well in order to assist in the process of monitoring.

Evaluating/Monitoring this policy

The Blue Coat School will monitor and evaluate our anti-bullying policy using the following measures:

- The numbers of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period.
- From the comments received from the Key Stage Councils.
- Students' perception of bullying in School through questionnaires/discussions etc.
- The number of days' absence which are thought to arise as a consequence of bullying.
- Number of complaints/compliments that are received from parents.
- Comments made by visitors and other people connected with the School.

Child Protection Protocol

Dealing with allegations of, or suspected evidence of, bullying in the Blue Coat School.

Bullying is defined as ‘deliberate hurtful and repeated behaviour that is difficult to defend yourself against’.

It is essential that in order to deal with bullying successfully and effectively:

1. The child who may be being bullied is listened to
2. Steps are taken that make them feel safe again
3. Assistance is provided in order to help that child rebuild their confidence

In parallel to this:

1. The child engaging in bullying behaviour is held to account
2. Advice and assistance is provided to help that child to behave in ways that do not cause harm in future
3. The child is helped and supported in taking reasonable steps to repair the harm caused.

IN EACH CASE THERE MUST BE ACTION ON ALL THREE OF THESE STEPS, and there must be documented evidence that all six steps have been pursued over a reasonable time frame.

Bullying Incident Management Form

Names and forms of students involved

Names and forms of students involved

Names and forms of students involved

Date of Incident coming to light

Evidence that you have listened to the child who is being bullied

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Steps taken to make the bullied child feel safe once more.....

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Assistance provided to help the child to rebuild their confidence (if needed).....

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Parents of bullied child contacted and informed Yes No (delete as appropriate)

Date of call Call made by (Staff member)

What steps have been taken to hold the offender to account?

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What advice has been provided (and by whom), to help that child to behave in ways that do not cause harm in the future?.....

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What help has been given to help the child to take reasonable steps to repair the harm?

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Signature of staff member Date

The Blue Coat School Anti-Bullying Policy Summary for Parents

The Blue Coat School defines bullying as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to appropriately defend themselves. Bullying can be verbal, physical or psychological and usually involves intent to cause distress. A clear distinction needs to be made between bullying and being upset because a child has fallen out with friends or as a result of a single thoughtless act.

The Blue Coat School will strive to provide a supportive, caring and safe environment in which students can learn without fear of being bullied. Whilst no School can realistically expect to stop all bullying we will do our best to spot the danger signals and take appropriate action.

The School will provide support through the curriculum, the pastoral system and mentoring to eradicate bullying behaviour, to challenge the behaviour of the bully and to empower the victim.

Staff know they need to be alert to signs of bullying and to act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with the School policy.

If bullying is suspected or reported, the member of staff who has been approached will deal with the incident immediately. A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Head of Year. They will investigate the history of all involved and will speak to all involved and keep a record of the incident.

The Head of Year will follow procedures designed to support the victim and encourage the bully to cease their anti-social behaviour.

Support for the victim will be:

1. To offer immediate opportunity to discuss the incident.
2. They will be reassured and given strategies to cope in the short term.
3. They will be offered longer term support to restore self-esteem and confidence.
4. They will be given some say in how the bully is dealt with.
5. Their parents will be notified about the bullying incidents and what is being done by School to stop the incidents.
6. Parents will be discouraged from sorting out the bully themselves.
7. The victims will be discouraged from retaliation of any kind.

Support for the bully will be:

1. Those who have bullied will be made to discuss what happened and to establish why the student became involved.
2. They will be helped to understand that what they did was wrong and the need to change.

3. Their parents will be informed of their behaviour with the expectation that they will help change the attitude of the student.
4. Support will be offered to the offender through mentoring and the involvement of other agencies as required.
5. Sanctions will be imposed taking into account the severity of the incident and the past history of the bully.
 - Official warnings to cease offending with records kept on file
 - Detention at break and lunchtime to curtail opportunities to re-offend
 - Exclusion from certain areas of School premises
 - Fixed term exclusion
 - Permanent exclusion

Copies of the full policy are available on request.