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St Aubyn's School Anti-Bullying Policy

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At St Aubyn's School, our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop his/her full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed; but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

The school prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions. This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website and on request. It is also available and known to staff, including recently appointed staff.

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

"Bullying may be defined as: *Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally*". Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools (DCSF)

Bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including sexual), verbal (including email, chat room and SMS messages), and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, sexual or sexist, homophobic, which focus on religion, cultural background, disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve everyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.



CYBERBULLYING – DEFINITION

Mr Bill Belsey, the creator of the web site: <http://www.cyberbullying.org/> defined this unpleasant and particularly intrusive phenomenon in the following terms:

“Cyberbullying 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.”

Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Facebook and Myspace, emails and mobile phones, used for SMS messages and as cameras.

THE SCHOOL’S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

- At St Aubyn’s School, we always treat bullying, including allegations of bullying, very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school’s policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles. Bullying can be so serious that it causes psychological damage, eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide, and, whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.
- The School’s behaviour and discipline policies will be followed, as appropriate, and the person responsible for the bullying behaviour may be sanctioned. If there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm it is then considered by DSL and becomes a safeguarding matter.
- In capacity as Designated Safeguarding Lead, a decision will be taken whether Child Protection procedures are to be implemented, usually in discussion with the Head. If so, the matter will also be recorded in the Child Protection log and dealt with accordingly, including referral to Children’s Social Care or other appropriate external agencies if appropriate.
- Counselling may be given if it is considered that this will alleviate the problem. Both parties may need counselling (a current staff member is on a councillor’s course and conducts this role)

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet



- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoiled by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits and behaviours (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the School Nurse with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We take the following preventative measures in place in order to ensure that bullying does not become a problem which is associated with St Aubyn's School:

- All new pupils are briefed thoroughly on the school's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that whistle-blowers who act in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported.
- All new members of staff are given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and in how to react to allegations of bullying in their first week in post. They are required to read the school's policy as part of their induction. We use appropriate assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our PSHE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other.
- Other lessons, particularly RE, PSHE, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills.
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place in line with our policy on whistle-blowing.
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are kept securely in the care of the Headmaster in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored.
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of teachers, tutors and Heads of Department, who support the Headmaster and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of bullying.



- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies. Inset sessions are held regularly, using outside experts.
- Our School Nurse is an important part of our pastoral support. Pupils may refer themselves to her and she is available to give advice and support.
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

CYBERBULLYING – PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

In addition to the preventative measures described above, the school:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its policies and agreements for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use.
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- Adheres to national guidelines regarding e-teaching and the internet.
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from "buddy" lists and sharing personal data.
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- Mobile phones are not permitted in school and must be handed in before the start of the school day.
- Has an e-safety policy

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved.
- He/she will inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible.
- The member of staff will calmly explain the range of disciplinary measures that are potentially involved.
- The victim will be interviewed on his/her own and asked to write an account of events. If the child is too young to write, the member of staff will note his/her account.



- The bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events. Again, a member of staff will note the accounts of our youngest pupils.
- The incident should be recorded and signed and dated before it is given to the Head of Department who is responsible for keeping secure all records of bullying and other serious disciplinary offences.
- In serious incidents, the Head of Department will inform the Headmaster.
- The victim will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator. It will be made clear to him/her why revenge is inappropriate. He/she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself.
- The alleged bully will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions as set out in the school's Behaviour Management Policy; for example, detention, withdrawal of privileges or suspension. In particularly serious and/or persistent cases, the bully should expect permanent exclusion.
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with the school's Behaviour Management Policy.
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, may, or may not, be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.
- In very serious cases, and only after the Headmaster has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Social Services. However, it is the policy of the school to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the school's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely. The school may exclude a pupil, either temporarily or permanently, in cases of severe and persistent bullying and in the event that the support put in place for the bully does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level.

EYFS CHILDREN

Our youngest children are equally encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They have to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect other's possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity. The Nursery teachers and the Head of Pre Prep are in day to day charge of the management of behaviour in the Nursery and the Reception year.



We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions; but sometimes we may remove a treat for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see the EYFS Curriculum Coordinator, Head of Pre Prep or the Headmaster, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action; but such instances are rare. Parents are always informed via a note when any sanction or reproof is needed, and in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, they will be invited into the school to discuss the situation with their child's Teacher and the Head of Pre Prep, to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our complaints procedure (which is published on our web site and in the whole-school handbook) if they feel that their concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of EYFS children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted, if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled. (The complaints policy explains how to complain to Ofsted).