

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

The Governing Body of Trent College and The Elms is determined to minimise the instances and the impact of bullying within School.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and their victims. It is not an inevitable part of school life nor a necessary part of growing up. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour.

All pupils have the right to an education free from bullying and it is the responsibility of all members of the School to ensure that The Elms is a supportive, safe and caring environment.

The School acknowledges the seriousness of bullying and that it can lead to psychological damage and in extreme cases suicide.

Definition

Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Cyber-bullying is the use of information and communications technology, particularly mobile phones and the Internet deliberately to upset someone else.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti social behaviour, these include:

1. **VERBAL BULLYING** : This may involve name calling, may make use of written notes, e-mails, or mobile phone messages and/or may include threats of physical violence.
2. **PHYSICAL BULLYING**: This often consists of deliberate jostling, bumping or shoving and those responsible may easily maintain that it is accidental when detected for the first time. Physical bullying may also involve theft or damage to property. Not all theft or damage is bullying, but bullying occurs where the intention is to create fear and to use power improperly.
3. **MANIPULATIVE BULLYING**: This may involve manipulating social networks (including electronic networks) with the intention of excluding, ostracising or marginalising individuals from their friends and normal relationships. Manipulative bullying may also involve the spreading of rumours, posting of electronic images without the other persons consent or malicious accusations.

Bullying frequently focuses on individual differences and anything that is implied to be different from the perspective of the instigator. In this respect it undermines the School's ethos of promoting equal opportunities and disregards the teaching of important social and moral principles. Bullying may seize upon aspects of body shape or appearance or focus on parental, cultural or ethnically-based lifestyle choices. It may dwell upon race, religion or nationality. It may also reflect parental lack of awareness and bigotry or neighbourhood feuds. Sexual bullying may involve misogyny or homophobia and focus on alleged sexual attractiveness or lack of it.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED

1. Go straight to a member of staff and discuss the matter in private. Remember your silence is the bully's greatest weapon. If you do not feel you can tell a member of staff then tell a friend.
2. Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
3. Be proud of who you are. It is good to be an individual.
4. Try not to show that you are upset. A bully thrives on your fear.
5. Stay with a group of friends as much as you can.
6. Tell yourself that the bully will not feel good about their own behaviour and they need help. By informing a member of staff of the whole background, you can help the bully and yourself.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED

PUPIL ACTION:

Take Action! Tell someone, ideally, a member of staff immediately. If not a member of staff then a Prefect, your parents or a friend.

STAFF ACTION:

Create a school environment characterised by warmth, positive interest and involvement from adults. Monitor and supervise pupil activities to try to ensure that bullying does not occur. Be vigilant and look for any early signs of bullying in your classroom and around the School site. These may include the sudden deterioration in a pupil's work; spurious illness and erratic attendance; arriving late for lessons; a desire to remain with adults; damaged or disappearing schoolbooks and other property; an appearance of isolation. Whilst such behaviour might be symptomatic of other problems, it might be the early signs of bullying, and the problem should be investigated and, where necessary, referred to the Class Teacher in the first instance and then on to the Key Stage Leader, Deputy Head or Head as appropriate.

SCHOOL ACTION:

1. Pupils are made aware of what constitutes bullying, its outcomes and how it can be dealt with through our main curriculum, PSHE programme and assemblies.
2. Pupils are encouraged to report bullying and not to join in or stand idly by. They must understand that bullying is not an acceptable part of life within our School and that everyone has the responsibility to ensure that it does not happen.
3. It is important that pupils reporting incidents of bullying are taken seriously and listened to and that positive action is seen to be taken. Staff who observe intimidatory behaviour or have it reported to them should write a brief summary of the incident and pass this on to the Class Teacher and the relevant Key Stage Leader.
4. All students holding any position of responsibility are given a briefing on the Anti-Bullying measures taken by the School and the Anti-Bullying policy.
5. Discuss and draw up class rules – these should be displayed at all times.

PARENT ACTION:

Parents should report any anxieties they may have to the Class Teacher in the first instance. These would be passed on to the Key Stage Leader, Deputy Head or Head as necessary. Parents can be reassured that the School will treat their concerns seriously, and confidentially, and that they will be kept informed of any action taken.

DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

Incidents of bullying are likely to be treated as a matter of serious misconduct within our School's sanction structure.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to deal with such incidents. Indeed, the adult "on the scene" is often best placed to take prompt action and to deal with each individual incident in an appropriate manner. There is no one way of dealing with incidents; however, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. It is important, in the first instance, to reassure the victim of bullying that they were right in coming forward. Staff should liaise with the key stage leader, deputy head or head where appropriate to determine the most appropriate course of action.
2. Where practicable, the pupil(s) involved should be encouraged to write down their version of the incidents. If this is not possible (due to the age or ability of the child involved) an older child or adult should write down their version of events. Find out the facts, talk to the bullies and the victims individually.
3. Guidance and support will be given to both the victim and the bully. Pupils may be referred to the School Counsellor. An education plan may be mounted if the bullying is about a particular issue (death, divorce, disfigurement) but not focussed on a particular pupil.
4. Depending upon the seriousness of the incident the School may call a meeting with the parents, the pupil may receive a formal or final written warning, or, in the most serious cases, the pupil may be required to be withdrawn from the School. The resultant action will always be consistent with the School Behaviour Management Policy.