

# **BOTTISHAM VILLAGE COLLEGE**

## **COLLEGE POLICY**

### **COUNTERACTING BULLYING**

**Governor Committee  
To review policy:**

**Curriculum**

**Staff member with  
Responsibility for review:**

**Deputy Principal**

**Date of last review:**

**February 2009**

**Date of next review:**

**February 2012**

# **Bottisham Village College**

## **Counteracting Bullying Policy**

Bottisham Village College is committed to providing a welcoming and supportive environment in which everyone (students, staff and all other users) is valued individually; this is reflected in the College aims. The College recognises that every individual is potentially at risk from bullying. Bullying is always unacceptable and the College declares its intention to confront it whenever and wherever it may occur.

### **Definition**

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, often repeated over a period of time; it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can occur in different forms. For example

- ◆ Physical (hitting, hiding , theft)
- ◆ Verbal (name calling, insults, threats, racist remarks)
- ◆ Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)
- ◆ Sexual harassment (repeated and unwelcome physical contact, comment or suggestion or jokes of a sexual nature)
- ◆ Cyber-bullying – the use of electronic means to bully others (text message, email, social networking sites, distribution of defamatory images etc.).

Students who are being bullied show changes in behaviour. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lack of concentration or truanting from school.

### **Collective responsibility**

The Principal has a legal duty under The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students.

All staff at the College are collectively and individually responsible for preventing bullying and taking action when it occurs within the school day or using school facilities. Everyone has the right for their complaint to be taken seriously and acted upon. All complaints will be investigated and anyone judged to be guilty of bullying will be punished appropriately and the punishment recorded.

### **Investigations**

Where an incident of bullying is reported the school will adhere to the following procedure:

1. **Gathering information** - This will be completed by interviewing students and gaining statements from witnesses. These statements will be treated as confidential and for internal use. They will not be explicitly shared with other students / parents but may be provided to the Police if requested as part of a criminal investigation. The school may also use CCTV footage, where available, to build a picture of the events.
2. **Considering the information gained and forming judgements** – This may involve speaking again with students who are implicated in the statements.

- 3. Deciding on a course of action** – The course of action to be taken will be considered in the light of the specific context of each case. At this stage outcomes will be shared with parents along with any sanctions imposed.

Whilst it is impractical to invite parents to attend each stage of these investigations, it is vital that parents have the opportunity of discussing outcomes with a view to how the school can be supporting their son / daughter, leading to more positive behaviours.

## **Implementation**

### **Students**

If they are bullied they have several options:

- talk to parents who can then talk to school
- talk to an adult they trust
- talk to one of the school buddies who are assigned to each form group

They need to be specific about details.

### **Staff**

It is recognised that in many incidents of bullying, staff deal with victims and bullies in lessons and around the school in ways they feel are appropriate. However, to ensure a standard response, the following practice should be followed.

Any punishments given should be recorded, so that Heads of Learning can be alerted to any patterns that may be forming, as well as providing documented evidence of the behaviour of certain individuals. Specific details need to be recorded.

Incidents of bullying should never be ignored, however minor they may seem. It is important for the whole community to see that the College will not tolerate bullying in any form.

Incidents of bullying can be traumatic for individual students. Staff should therefore bear in mind the following points when dealing with complaints of incidents of bullying.

#### **1. LISTEN**

- ◆ Listen sympathetically
- ◆ Remain calm and reassuring
- ◆ Do not dismiss the complaint
- ◆ Indicate that you are glad the student has informed you
- ◆ Accept the student's language and terminology

#### **2. BELIEVE**

- ◆ Remember it can take some courage on the part of the student to confide in a member of staff. To be disbelieved can add to the existing stress.

#### **3. ACKNOWLEDGE**

- ◆ Acknowledge the student's feelings

- ◆ Show that you understand that it is difficult for the student to discuss this with you
- ◆ Reassure the student but explain the need to take the matter further

The following steps need to be taken when dealing with incidents.

- ◆ If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident needs to be dealt with appropriately by the member of staff who has been approached
- ◆ If parents report the bullying, they need to hear a response within 24 hours
- ◆ A clear account of the incident needs to be recorded by the staff member, or the incident needs to be reported to the Head of Learning so that they can make a record.
- ◆ Other individuals or groups may need to be interviewed, and their accounts recorded
- ◆ Form tutors and CLT line managers of both the bully/ies and victim/s need to be kept informed
- ◆ Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned
- ◆ Parents will be kept informed of outcomes

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- ◆ Offering an opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor or member of staff or one of the buddies
- ◆ Reassuring the student
- ◆ Restoring self-esteem and confidence (using the Locality Team, if appropriate)

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- ◆ Discussing what happened
- ◆ Discovering why the student became involved
- ◆ Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change
- ◆ Informing parents or carers to help change the attitude of the student
- ◆ Referral to the Locality Team, if appropriate

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- ◆ Official warnings to cease offending
- ◆ Detention/Special Report
- ◆ Minor fixed term exclusion
- ◆ Major fixed term exclusion
- ◆ Permanent exclusion

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, form tutorial item, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Surveys and questionnaires will help inform the school about anti-bullying work needed in the school (eg, Health Related Balding Survey).

## **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

CLT will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. A copy of the policy will be on the staff intranet and it will be referred to in September INSET by Heads of Learning. By implementing an annual student questionnaire the school can respond to findings and monitor the extent of bullying at the College.

The school has gained the Bullying Charter for Action Award. This acknowledges that we are working with staff, students and parents to create a school community where bullying is not tolerated. This Charter needs to be reviewed every three years.