



## Anti-Bullying Policy

(Including Cyber Bullying)

Approved	/ /
To be reviewed	/ /
Signed (Chair of Governors)	
Signed (Proprietor)	

## Aim

The aim of Priory Park Community School's Anti-Bullying Policy is to prevent bullying of any kind and to ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the community, including teaching and non-teaching staff, Learners and parents or guardians should have an understanding of what bullying is and be familiar with the School policy on bullying; therefore, the aim of the policy is to help members of the School community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly, to prevent it.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable, and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in the community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously.

This policy is available on the School website, and electronic shared staff area and by request from the school office.

This anti-bullying document is also compliant with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Academy (2013), Standard 12: Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships and the Single Equality Act, 2010. The policy has regard through significant requirements to the relevant legislation and current DfE Guidance – Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Academy Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies (July 2011).

## Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time that intentionally hurts another Learner or group physically or emotionally, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves and is often motivated by prejudice. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include: -

- Physical (including sexual) assault.
- Verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing or making offensive remarks.
- Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the act of using the Internet, cell phones, video games, or other technology gadgets to send, text, or post images intended to hurt or embarrass another person. "It is also defined as acts of aggression through computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices" (Jackson & Cohen, 2012).
- Indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours.

Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidatory but is often hidden and subtle. It includes actions or comments that are racist, religious or cultural, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, sexual or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape), age or any reference to Special Educational Needs.

The seriousness of bullying cannot be emphasised enough. Bullying is among the top concerns that parents, carers or guardians have about their children's safety and well-

being at and on the way to and from their School. Bullying is also a top concern of children and young people themselves. Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem; and destroys their sense of security and can be psychologically damaging. Bullying impacts on its victims' attendance and attainment at their School, marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives. At worst, bullying has been a factor in Learner suicide.

It is acknowledged that bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and may well need help. It should also be recognised that the consequences of being allowed to 'get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victim. All Learners deserve the opportunity to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment, assault and threatening behaviour. If staff members feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police.

## Counter Bullying Procedure

### What to look for:

Learners who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from the School. Members of staff and all members of the community must be alert to the signs of bullying; legal responsibilities are known, and community members should act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with School policy. Surveys have shown that in the vast majority of bullying incidents, MOST people knew that what was going on was wrong. Sometimes people, either through lethargy, peer group pressure, or tacit support for what is going on, fail to take action.

### What to do:

The way to stamp out bullying is for people to be aware of the issues involved, and to be clear in their own minds what action to take should cases arise:

#### If you are the victim:

1. If you feel able to, confront the bully by verbally making him/her aware that you think that what he/she is doing is wrong.
2. Share your feelings with someone else.
3. If possible, talk to a member of Staff about the incident. If you would rather not go straight to a member of staff, talk to your friends, or any trusted adult. They may well be able to advise on an appropriate course of action or will be able to involve other people who can. There are also people outside the School who would be willing to help. Childline: 0800 1111

#### Procedure if a Learner witnesses bullying behaviour

1. Support the victim by offering your friendship and make it clear that in your opinion what is happening to them is wrong.
2. Encourage them to speak out on their own behalf by confronting the bully, or with their permission, confront the bully yourself.

3. Accompany the victim to a trusted adult or suggest that you see a member of staff on their behalf.

**Procedure for members of Staff should you witness an incident of bullying or it is reported to you:**

1. Reassure and support the Learners involved.
1. Advise them that you are required to pass details on to the relevant member of the pastoral team.
2. Inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible. In the case of incidents involving learners, the Headteacher should be informed. Headteachers must record all incidents of reported bullying and ensure that all key staff members are informed so that they can be observant. The Headteacher will keep a central log of all complaints or incidences of bullying, monitor the situation and record the way in which they were dealt with.

**What will happen?**

The victim will be interviewed by the senior member of staff, on their own, and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. The victim is also given the opportunity to discuss his own reactions and behaviour towards the bully.

The victim is given support and advice and counselling is suggested if deemed appropriate. Once the senior members of staff are clear that a bullying offence has been committed, the bully and any others involved will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them.

Details of the incident will be recorded on all the Learners' files. The Head teacher is copied in so that it can be recorded as a bullying incident. The pastoral team will decide on an appropriate course of action. In the first instance the senior member of staff will interview the Learner or Learners whose behaviour has caused distress and give them a formal bullying warning; making it clear that any further incident (or discussion about the current incident) would be considered to be further bullying. It will be made clear why the behaviour was inappropriate and unacceptable. Support and counselling will be offered. A suitable sanction will also be given.

If the senior member of staff decides it is appropriate, or it is a Learner's second offence, the Head teacher will become involved and the parents or guardians of the perpetrator/s will be informed by letter or telephone. The following sanctions may be applied in accordance with the School behavioural policy.

**Formal School Warning from the Headteacher.**

The Headteacher will speak to the Learners involved and will contact the parents or guardians giving details of the offence and inviting them into the School to discuss the matter and to be present when their child is given a Formal School Warning. Their support for the School's actions should be enlisted if possible.

**Fixed Term Exclusion at the Headteacher's Discretion**

These are minimum sanctions. In very serious cases it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or Social Services. However, it is the policy of the School to attempt

to resolve such issues internally using our own disciplinary sanctions, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

The School will raise awareness of the staff through training and take action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur. The key points from this policy will be prominently displayed on School notice boards and will be discussed with Learners during teacher led child protection sessions. Anti-bullying will feature as a discussion point for Student committees and feedback will be taken to senior staff. It will also be revisited as necessary during PHSE sessions to all years and reinforced in other areas of the curriculum as the opportunities present themselves e.g., drama, physical education. Opportunities will also be sought to allow parents or guardians to contribute to the School's actions to prevent bullying.

Annual Learner surveys will be used to facilitate an understanding of the level and type of bullying that Learners might have experienced.

Incidents of reported bullying will be followed up by senior staff, to monitor that the problem has been resolved. The record of bullying offences will be reviewed by the Headteacher and the Pastoral teams regularly at periodic meetings to watch for patterns and check that the policy is effective. We are absolutely confident that the vast majority of our community will agree with our sentiments on bullying. It is our intention to identify and take action against those who do not.

Priory Park Community School is committed in the use of Restorative Conversations which facilitates the following:

- Sends a strong message of care to the student.
- Gives the student an opportunity to say "what happened"/give the student a voice
- Communicates to the student how it made them/you feel
- Reiterates your high expectations
- Creates a plan that sets all involved up for success