



THE ORATORY

THE ORATORY SCHOOL (OS)
Anti Bullying Policy

1. Aims

- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure that pupils 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 will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able fully to benefit from the opportunities available at The Oratory School. This policy, if correctly implemented, should help both staff and pupils to deal effectively with bullying when it occurs, but even more importantly to prevent it.
- 1.2 This Policy is to be known and followed by all teaching staff, and it is made known to new staff as part of their induction. It is provided to parents of new boys in the Parents' Handbook and on request. A summary is provided to new boys, and is discussed with their Tutors, and is displayed in all Houses. The policy is reviewed and updated annually by the Second Master.

2. Definition of Bullying

- 2.1 Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically and/or emotionally. It can take place in or out of school, and can be carried out by adults or pupils.
- 2.2 No form of bullying will be tolerated at The Oratory School. Bullying is extremely serious and dangerous in that it can cause the victim lasting psychological damage. All pupils and staff must be aware that, although bullying is not specifically a criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.
- 2.3 It is important to distinguish between a one-off comment and what has become bullying. This policy, therefore, largely concerns itself with persistent bullying rather than the occasional breach of good manners. However, even in minor situations children should be reprimanded so that no example of unkind behaviour towards another goes unchecked.
- 2.4 It is important that a consistent approach is used when dealing with instances of bullying. It is also important that reaction to unpleasant incidents be immediate and that even minor incidents should not be ignored.

3. Examples of Bullying

3.1 Examples of bullying are:

- I. Threats of violence, actual physical intimidation, verbal harassment, deliberate exclusion, personal fagging and interference with others' personal possessions.
- II. Activities of any kind which are motivated by racial, religious, cultural, sexual or sexist, homophobic or anti-disability prejudices, and which hurt, threaten or frighten others.
- III. Misuse of social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email which hurt, threaten or frighten others. (See Appendix 1: ICT Code of Conduct)
- IV. Initiation ceremonies of any sort.

4. Bullying and Children with Special Educational Needs

4.1 Reports show that children with SEN and disabilities are more likely to experience bullying than their peers.

4.2 For all children with SEN and disabilities discrimination based on their needs can be a challenge. Children with SEN and disabilities may:

- I. Be adversely affected by negative attitudes to disability and perceptions of difference.
- ii. Find it more difficult to resist bullies.
- iii. Be more isolated, not have many friends.
- iv. Not understand that what is happening is bullying.
- v. Have difficulties telling people about bullying..

4.3 Therefore staff should be particularly vigilant and sensitive when the victim is a pupil with SEN or a disability. However it is important to recognise that all children are potentially vulnerable to bullying and that learners with SEN and disabilities maybe bullied for a range of other reasons too.

5. Detection of Bullying

- 5.1 All members of staff should always be on the look-out for signs which may point to bullying of one sort or another. It is imperative that staff keep their eyes and ears open, be conscious of what is going on around them and what is being said. Staff must never allow one pupil to sneer at another, to laugh at another's failure to answer a question, and so on.
- 5.2 The pupils will, generally, inform staff if there is anything unpleasant going on. However, staff should always be on the look-out for signs of bullying. These may also be symptoms of other problems which will normally also require pastoral attention. Such signs are:
- I. A decline in work effort or standards
 - II. A growing lack of interest or commitment in some or all areas of school life
 - III. Withdrawal in class or from other groups
 - IV. Disturbance of or loss of possessions
 - V. Unexplained bruises, scratches, etc
 - VI. Evidence of poor sleeping habits
 - VII. Frequent visits to the school nurse or the matrons for minor or non-existent ailments
 - VIII. Any extremes of distress, e.g. easy tears

6. Detecting the Bully

- 6.1 Whilst it is natural to concentrate on looking for victims, we should also look for signs which might identify the bullies themselves. These signs will not necessarily indicate bullying but they may be surface symptoms:
- I. Bragging and over-confident showing off
 - II. An assertive tendency to shout down or intervene in class or any other group
 - III. A tendency to 'behind the hand' sniggering or comments
 - IV. An inclination to gather 'disciples'

7. Actions to Discourage Bullying

7.1 The main aim here is to create an anti-bullying ethos which needs to be constantly reinforced by all adults. Pupils need to be aware that both staff and parents disapprove of bullying behaviour and will act if it is brought to their notice. All pupils must be encouraged to bring such behaviour to the notice of the staff

7.2 Some courses of action to discourage bullying are:

- I. Frequent discussion at staff, House and prefect meetings, to try to achieve a common approach to what bullying is and why it occurs.
- II. Discussion of particular cases, when there are signs of bullying, is important and enlisting the advice and support of other adults involved, e.g. Deputy Head Pastoral, Housemaster, Tutor, and, on occasion, prefects.
- III. Keeping a close eye on vulnerable pupils, looking out for particular instances of bullying.
- IV. During the normal patrolling of school spaces by duty staff and prefects, care should be taken to look closely at those areas where bullying behaviour might be expected to occur.
- V. Above all, a constant reminder to all pupils that bullying is unacceptable and that it is totally acceptable to report cases of it and not to hope that it will go away and to encourage open discussion.

7.3 Openness of discussion and confrontation of bullying behaviour is half the battle. Occasions when bullying issues should be discussed are:

- I. Full school assemblies
- II. House assemblies
- III. Tutor periods
- IV. PSHE lessons
- V. RE lessons
- VI. Whenever the occasion demands

8. Measures to Deal with Detected Bullying

8.1 The following approach will be adopted when incidents of bullying are reported:

- I. Find out all the facts. Normally, this will be done by speaking to both the victim and the perpetrator, and witnesses if available, separately and as soon after the event as possible.
- II. The bully/bullies must be spoken to firmly to make sure that they understand why their behaviour is bullying and unacceptable. Under no circumstances must the bully be bullied as this will make the situation worse.
- III. Report the incident to the boys Housemaster and Deputy Head Pastoral (normally via My Concern).
- IV. Consultation will take place between the Housemasters and Deputy Head Pastoral to coordinate an appropriate course of action for investigation.
- V. The first stage is likely to get all parties involved to write a statement of what has occurred.

8.2 Once a clear understanding of what has happened has been established a decision on sanction and next steps will be made (and recorded via My Concern).

8.3 If the same person is involved in a further incident, the matter will be taken up by the Housemaster, Deputy Head Pastoral or if appropriate by the Headmaster, who will take one or more of the following steps:

- I. Again the bully will be spoken to in an attempt to find out why he or she is behaving in an anti-social manner. Some form of written explanation will be asked for if necessary.
- II. A Restorative justice meeting with both the bully and the victim will take place. The tutors or Housemasters of both may be asked to join the discussion. Other pupils who have witnessed unpleasant incidents may also be involved. The purpose behind these discussions is to help the bully to come to terms with what he has been doing.
- III. Some form of punishment may be given.

- IV. If outside agencies become involved the Deputy Head Pastoral will co-ordinate this.
- V. The parents of both the bully and the victim will be informed. It may be necessary to have a full discussion with all parties concerned. It is important, without being alarmist, to keep parents informed. Parents may be invited into school.
- VI. A report of the incident and any communication with parents will be stored via My Concern.
- VII. In extreme cases, a persistent bully may be suspended for a period of time. If he fails to respond to positive efforts on the part of the school, he may be asked to leave the school.

9. The Victim

- 9.1 While every effort must be made to help the bully to modify his behaviour, one must not lose sight of the victim and the fact that he may also need help. We should try to help those who are likely to be victims to minimise the characteristics which make them susceptible. There are, generally, two sorts of victims:
 - I. The passive – he is unassertive in the peer group
 - II. The provocative – he draws unwelcome attention upon himself through certain patterns of behaviour, e.g. hyperactivity
- 9.2 Victims should be helped through discussion to realise why they may be victims and how they can help themselves with assistance. It may be a case of helping them to be more positive or assertive, or less selfish or aggressive. Above all, they need to think about relationships and how to maintain friendships.
- 9.3 Victims must be given as much support as possible both from staff and from their peer group. They must be encouraged to say no to bullies and to tell if they are bullied.
- 9.4 As much as possible should be done to raise the victim's self-esteem. (Frequently, the bully, too, may have low self-esteem).

10. Outside agencies

Childline	0800 1111
NSPCC (Child Protection Helpline)	0800 800 5000
OFSTED Helpline	0800 528 0731
Childnet	www.childnet-int.org
CEOP	www.ceop.gov.uk

11. Conclusion

Children will always test the boundaries of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Staff should always be aware, therefore, that unpleasant incidents will take place as they are inevitable. It is important for staff not to turn a blind eye, to be vigilant, to be constructive in dealing with all incidents of unpleasantness, and then there will be a very low incidence of bullying at The Oratory School.

This document is available on the school's website and on request from the School Office.