

# ALDRO



## Anti-Bullying Policy Policy 10a

<b>Author:</b>	Assistant Head (Pastoral)-TWR
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## **Any form of bullying is totally unacceptable behaviour at Aldro.**

### **AIMS**

Our aim is to ensure that Aldro is a school in which boys grow up happily, free to pursue their own interests but with consideration from others and free from fear. We hope to prevent bullying before it occurs through the continuing vigilance of boys and staff, by educating boys in their responsibility for themselves and each other and by agreeing a clear definition of bullying so that everyone in the community has a clear understanding of what we consider to be unacceptable behaviour.

The anti-bullying policy reflects the good practice and advice contained in DofE advice Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017) as well as having regard to The Equality Act 2010.

A copy of the Behaviour Policy (9a) is published on our website and is available from the Headmasters PA, with details of sanctions applied for misbehaviour.

### **RELATED POLICIES**

This policy is to be read in conjunction with other related policies:

Behaviour Policy (9a)

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (7a & 8a),

E-safety Policy (7h)

Learning Support Policy

Pupil Diversity and Equality Policy (17a),

SMSC & PSHE (2d)

### **DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can take many forms either directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile 'phones, text messages, photographs and email).

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

### **EFFECTS OF BULLYING**

Bullying can be so serious that it can cause 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.

Bullying can take various forms including:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, any form of violence or threats.
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- Emotional: tormenting, ridicule, humiliation, exclusion.
- Initiation Ceremonies: these can be intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation
- Racist: taunts and/or gestures.
- Sexual: physical contact, abusive comments, homophobic bullying
- Cyber-bullying: Use of the internet (e.g. social networking sites, email) and mobile 'phones to deliberately and repeatedly tease, taunt or bully someone with words, pictures or video.

***All these things are ALWAYS unacceptable at Aldro.***

## **PEER-ON PEER ABUSE**

Peer-on-peer abuse is abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil. It can manifest itself in many ways and can include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, initiation/hazing violence and rituals, sexting, sexual assault, gender-based issues and harmful sexual behaviours including sexual violence and sexual harassment. Aldro believes that all bullying and peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and must be dealt with in this context. Abusive comments and interactions should never be passed off or dismissed as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Nor will harmful sexual behaviours be dismissed as the same or “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”. Please refer to the Safeguarding Policy for further details on peer-on-peer abuse and the management of allegations.

## **SEND**

We should be alert to the fact that pupils with special educational needs or disabilities are often at greater risk of being bullied than other pupils based on their educational difficulties or disability.

## **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 spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self-confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre 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, experiencing 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 STRATEGIES AND MEASURES**

### **Education**

Education must be at the heart of any effort to eliminate bullying. All aspects of school life offer opportunities to further such education. The PSHE programme will include certain specific periods assigned for learning how to recognise, cope with and prevent bullying. This includes information and teaching about differences between people and diversity.

Through assemblies, lessons (particularly although not exclusively RS and PSHE), our behaviour policies and charitable activities, Aldro promotes the differences between people and teaches the seriousness of using prejudice-based language. For example, because of the nature of the language used, calling another boy ‘gay’ is an offence which carries an immediate and significant sanction – most usually a Stripe. As a result of this approach use of the word ‘gay’ as a derogatory term has been largely eliminated.

Low self-esteem and low self-confidence are often breeding grounds for bullying. At Aldro, pupils are encouraged to develop their self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience. This happens explicitly in chapels, assemblies and PSHE lessons, but it is also implicit in every area of school life, where all effort and achievement are acknowledged and celebrated – for example the Squad mark system.

### **Red Card**

The “Red Card” (see the end of the policy) is a document in Student Planners that is the basis for our anti-bullying policy and is regularly explained to the boys, who are expected to sign up to this at the start of each academic year. Clearly, the language used may not be readily understood by the youngest boys and the form tutors have an essential part to play in explaining this.

The Red Card system along with notices around the school reminds pupils how they can report any concerns about bullying or bad behaviour.

Our “Code of Conduct” is also relevant to our anti-bullying policy (see the end of the policy).

### **Awareness and Reporting**

All staff need to be fully aware of the need to raise awareness of anti-bullying practice amongst the boys and we also need to ensure that we raise staff awareness through training and regular updates in staff meetings and pastoral care team meetings (PCT).

Boys are encouraged to report any incident of bullying and reassured it will be taken seriously - this includes bullying that takes place outside school. Pupils are encouraged to speak to their Form tutor, the matrons, the school Counsellor, a prefect or any member of staff that they feel comfortable talking to

Boys are also encouraged to realise that if they are aware that other boys are being bullied then they have a clear responsibility and duty to seek advice and help. In particular, the role and responsibilities of the ‘bystander’ are explained to boys, staff and parents.

Incidents should be reported to Form Tutors, the Matron, the School Nurse, Housemaster, the Assistant Head (Pastoral), Deputy Headmaster or Headmaster. Prefects have a responsibility to be vigilant and report any suspected cases of bullying to a member of staff. Any prefect or member of staff is available to listen, and concerns should be brought to the attention of parents.

Staff will be able to use their knowledge of the pupil to identify changes in his behaviour that might indicate bullying. Boys are encouraged to bring their concerns about incidents involving other boys to the attention of appropriate staff. Form Tutors have particular responsibility for the overall welfare of the boys in their forms and potentially have a very important role in identifying incidents of bullying.

Staff are encouraged and trained to be aware of the needs of all pupils at Aldro, including those with special educational needs or disabilities as well as gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils. Staff are also aware of their legal responsibilities with regard to bullying and safeguarding issues.

The priority given to pastoral care of each individual and the importance of good personal relationships will minimise the risk of bullying.

### **Supervision**

Good and effective supervision by duty staff as well as vigilance by all staff and boys is vital in reducing incidents and possible incidents of bullying. We must be aware of those vulnerable times and places which

should be visited regularly; awareness of any vulnerable individual should also be exercised and shared with the staff team for vigilance.

### **Thresholds**

When dealing with any issue it is imperative that staff ascertain, and boys understand the difference between:

Thoughtlessness

Unkindness

Meanness

Bullying

Although the first three of these could lead to the fourth (bullying) with a time element, it is important to consider if the perpetrator ('bully) understand what he has done. It is also important that any difficulties the boy might have are considered-for example if he is an EAL student or has a LS issue and therefore may not understand what he has said or done.

### **Parental involvement**

Parents are asked to report any bullying concerns which take place either in school or out of school. It is essential that all parents fully understand that it is unacceptable for them to permit their children to access inappropriate websites at home. For example, it is not legally acceptable for a boy under 13 to hold social media accounts such as Facebook or Instagram.

### **Pupil Involvement**

Pupils have input into the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures. This happens formally through the school council and also through feedback from pupil surveys which seek to identify areas of concern amongst pupils. This input also happens informally through pupil feedback in Prefects' meetings, Form Tutor periods and PSHE lessons.

## **CYBERBULLYING – PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

**In addition to the preventative measures described above, Aldro School:**

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its guidelines for the safe use of the internet.
- Implements a firewall and filtering system (utilising Sophos software) whereby certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and the IT department monitors pupils' use. (Further details of this system are available in the E-safety Policy)
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- Issues all pupils with their own personal school email address. Access to social media sites such as Facebook and Instagram are not allowed inside school, even if above minimum age.
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from lists and sharing personal data.
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile 'phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- States that mobile phones are not permitted in classrooms, public areas of the school, or where they may cause annoyance to others.
- States that the use of cameras on mobile 'phones are not allowed in school, or in the boarding house.

- Expects parents to ensure that pupils do not break the law by holding social media accounts such as Facebook and Instagram which have a minimum age of 13.
- Will ensure that any use of electronic devices in lessons is monitored appropriately – see E-safety policy
- Provides occasional training sessions to educate parents about online-safety e.g. Brave the Rage

Further advice and information are available from DfE – Cyber bullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff, 2014

## **ALLEGATIONS OF BULLYING**

### **Investigation of Incidents**

The Assistant Head (Pastoral) will ensure that all incidents are investigated thoroughly either by him or by another appointed and appropriate member of staff (for example, the Form Tutor). Investigations should include:

- The victim
- The bully
- The bystander: Any observers if appropriate to be interviewed separately.

### **Action to be taken following a bullying incident:**

- 1) The victim and alleged bully(ies) should be seen as soon as possible by the Assistant Head (Pastoral), or, if he is unavailable, either the Form tutor or the Headmaster. If none of these are immediately available, the boys concerned should be kept under supervision and if possible, isolated from one another until they can be interviewed. We also have an Independent Listener, whose number is displayed on key notices on the vestibule walls.
- 2) If the alleged incident involves physical bullying, the victim must be seen first by a Matron.
- 3) All the boys concerned should write an account of what happened which should be signed and dated. If in the course of investigation boys admit things that they failed to include in their account, they should write a new account.
- 4) The parents of the victim and the perpetrator(s) must be informed, in a calm and reassuring manner and, where necessary, meetings with them should be arranged to ensure that they are fully informed as to what has happened and the actions that we are taking.
- 5) The boy(s) involved in the bullying must be made aware that their behaviour is entirely unacceptable, and parents informed.
- 6) A “no blame” approach might be appropriate if it is clear that the motive for the incident was thoughtlessness or insensitivity rather than malice, and if the perpetrator(s) do not have a record of previous bullying. The parents of the boy(s) should still be informed. (Please see guidelines for staff at end of document)
- 7) The sanctions for bullying incidents should be significant and boys (and parents) must be made aware that that the sliding scale of punishments leads to suspension, whether temporary or permanent (see below). Sanctions are imposed in order to show pupils who bully that their behaviour is wrong and to prevent similar future behaviour. Sanctions are applied fairly, consistently and consider the circumstances of the individuals involved.

- 8) Information about the incident must be passed on to other staff so that we are all fully informed.
- 9) It is likely that a wider group of boys may need to be informed as well, highlighting the incident, the impact on the victim, and underlining the absolute unacceptability of the behaviour.
- 10) Detailed records of the investigation, its outcome and sanctions applied must be kept not only by the investigator, but also in the central pastoral (bullying) file.
- 11) Pupils who are being bullied need to be compassionately supported by staff; and pupils who may bully others also require prompt professional help and guidance, including the possibility of counselling.
- 12) Perpetrators of bullying should also be directed into positive patterns of behaviour through listening, support and education. This will very often be undertaken by the Form Tutor or other designated member of PCT (Pastoral Care Team) staff but may require specialist intervention from the school's Learning Mentor or Counsellor or an outside agency.
- 13) Incidents of bullying where there is a risk of a child suffering 'significant harm' should be treated as a Safeguarding concern and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Or one of his deputies) notified. This is also referenced in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (7a + 8a).
- 14) In severe or repeated bullying incidents, where there is a risk of significant harm to a child at Aldro or elsewhere, then it may be necessary for external agencies (such as police/children's social care) to be informed or consulted, as directed by the Headmaster.

### **Sanctions for bullying**

Bullying is regarded as a completely unacceptable form of behaviour and there is a sliding scale of punishments in place.

- The first instance of bullying will result in the perpetrator receiving a stripe (a school detention). Parents will be informed via a letter from the Assistant Head (Pastoral). During the school detention there will be an opportunity for the pupil(s) concerned to reflect on their actions and the effect that their actions have had on others. This is a key element of the education process and has proved very effective in promoting positive behaviour outcomes.
- A second instance of bullying could be treated in a similar way with regard to receiving a stripe, but the punishment in school will be more significant. It could involve a longer detention or the possibility of having a detention period during another activity (for example, games), and a meeting with the Headmaster.
- A third instance of bullying will result in the bully being suspended from school for a period of time (around a week).
- Continuing bullying will lead to the permanent expulsion of a boy from Aldro.

Whilst this is a clear "sliding scale", it is possible that under certain circumstances the full scale could not be put into place. For example, if a boy who had just received his first punishment for bullying an individual

was to be caught bullying the same victim within a few days of his first punishment, it would potentially be appropriate for him to move straight to suspension.

One other essential part of this process of sanctions for bullying is that the parents of the bully must be kept fully informed about the incident and the punishment that the boy has received.

It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support himself [MS5].

### **Record Keeping and Monitoring**

The Assistant Head (Pastoral) keep records of all bullying-related incidents, including investigations, actions and outcomes.

The effectiveness of the arrangements in place are measured through Pupil surveys, pastoral monitoring and feedback from pupils, parents and staff.

## The Red Card

**Bullying** is when someone is made to feel unhappy or threatened by the words or actions of someone else.

Bullying may involve persistent teasing, all forms of abuse, exclusion, hitting, threatening or any other form of unkindness, including use of the internet or mobile 'phones. It may involve older boys bullying younger boys, boys of the same age or younger boys taunting older boys.

**At Aldro, all forms of bullying are absolutely unacceptable** and everyone in the school agrees to the following anti-bullying policy: -

1. We agree that we want to stop bullying at Aldro.
2. Because all forms of bullying are unacceptable, we agree that each of us must be prepared to tell someone if we have concerns for ourselves or for others. To see bullying happen and do nothing about it adds to the problem.
3. The sort of people we can tell about any worries we have include: Prefects, Matrons, our Form Tutor, the Assistant Head (Pastoral), Deputy Head, Headmaster, any other member of staff or, of course, our family.
4. All reports of bullying will be treated seriously; boys who are found to be bullies must expect to be disciplined and their parents to be informed. Suspension is a possible sanction in the case of bullying.
5. We will all try to be considerate and thoughtful in our attitude to all those with whom we come into contact.
6. We will all try to be considerate and thoughtful in our attitude to all those with whom we come into contact.

**I agree to all of the above**

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** .....

# ALDRO CODE OF CONDUCT

## We expect every boy to:

- **Be Kind** – in what he says or does, realizing that some people will be different and respecting their opinions, judgements and abilities.
- **Be Polite** – showing courtesy and good manners to all members of the school and the wider community.
- **Be Helpful** – behaving with thoughtfulness and common sense at all times
- **Be Careful** – of other people’s possessions as well as his own and to look after school property
- **Be Determined** – to make the most of all his opportunities
- **Be Alert** – to people being unkind, showing zero tolerance for bullying

## The 'No blame' policy for Bullying –

### Why it Works...

*The first thing the approach does is focus on how the victim is feeling. This causes the bully and supporters to think about the impact of their behaviour.*

### **The Seven Steps...**

*(for this approach to be effective, it is important to follow the 7 steps in a relatively disciplined way)*

☒ **Step One** – Interview with the victim: talk to victim about their feelings, but do not question them about the incidents directly. Ask for name of two friends whom victim trusts to support him?

☒ **Step Two** - Convene a meeting with the people involved: teacher arranges to meet with the people who were involved, minus the victim, but including the two friends.

☒ **Step Three** – Explain the problem: teacher tells them about the way the victim is feeling.

☒ **Step Four** - Share responsibility: How would they feel in that situation? The teacher does not attribute blame but states that they believe the group is responsible and can do something about it.

☒ **Step Five** – Ask the group for their ideas: each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier.

☒ **Step Six** - Leave it up to them: the teacher ends the meeting by asking the group to commit to these actions; passing on the responsibility to the group to bring about some change.

☒ **Step Seven** – Meet them again: about a week later the teacher: i) discusses with the victim and ii) with the group separately, how things have been going. Has there been positive change?

If necessary, steps 2-6 are repeated, until the situation is resolved in the victim's eyes. A final group meeting with ALL parties can sometimes be helpful.

**By avoiding blame and appealing to empathy and responsibility for actions, in most cases situations improve and it avoids reprisals which often follow from a child/ group being 'told off' for bullying.**