



Fettes College

Counter-Bullying Policy 2020-2021

Updated July 2020
Review Date Autumn 2020 (pupil led)
Responsibility – Pastoral Leadership Team

Counter-Bullying Policy

Rationale

The School Aims state that our students should, *“feel safe, valued, have a sense of personal worth, be thoughtful and considerate of the needs of others”*.

The provision of a counter-bullying policy alongside School discipline policies and the pastoral care network in Houses is intended to translate this aim into practice and is based on the Equality Act 2010 which enshrines that there must not be discrimination against the nine protected characteristics. This policy has also been guided by the National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young people (2010).

Aims

The aims of the counter bullying policy are:

- To encourage good values and help to create a happy, well-ordered and caring community
- To raise awareness among pupils, parents and staff as to what constitutes bullying behaviour including cyberbullying
- To ensure all members of the community feel accepted and do not suffer bullying due to any form of discrimination
- To communicate to pupils, parents and staff why bullying is unacceptable, that it will not be tolerated and that victims will be supported
- To ensure that all pupils have knowledge of and access to a support structure within Houses and School so they can share worries and seek help
- To reduce incidents of bullying through implementation of appropriate strategies - preventative and proactive as well as reactive
- To implement strategies for treating bullies and victims which will effect appropriate behaviour changes
- To stimulate awareness and maintain the above aims through the involvement of the whole School community

What is Bullying?

Bullying can take many forms - physical, verbal or psychological. It may be carried out by individuals or groups and is characterised by repeated behaviour against the victim.

Bullying behaviour may include:

- name-calling, teasing, putting down or threatening;
- ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours;
- physical assault;
- stealing and damaging belongings;
- making people feel like they are being bullied or fearful of being bullied; and
- targeting someone because of who they are or are perceived to be.

What is Cyber Bullying?

It must be remembered that bullying also involves the use of social media. This is termed cyber bullying and includes areas such as email & internet chat room misuse; mobile threats by text messaging and calls and the misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities. Cyber bullying can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology, in any form deliberately to upset someone else. However, it differs in several significant ways from face to face bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target. Both the school's Counter-Bullying Policy and the School's ICT Acceptable Use Policy, specifically bans any form of cyberbullying.

Fettes College will not tolerate any form of bullying which relates to groups or individuals within our community including BAME and LGBTQIA. Therefore we will not tolerate racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic or gender based bullying. Working with the pupil led Fettes Equality Society the school has been awarded **Gold LGBT Charter Mark** recognition.

What Action to Take

The principle underlying this policy is that a pupil who is a victim of bullying or who witnesses bullying should feel free to approach any member of Staff for help. The member of Staff is expected to act in accordance with School policy. All Staff have a vital part to play in making it clear that bullying behaviour will not be tolerated, in being vigilant and proactive if they note what may be developing into a bullying relationship and in being approachable and willing to offer help and support.

The Victim

Pupils who feel that they are being bullied should feel confident about reporting any incident and should have as many ways of reporting it as possible, for example:

- Telling a friend who will pass the information on to an adult
- Telling a Prefect who will pass the information on
- Telling his/her Tutor
- Telling his/her Housemaster or Housemistress
- Making an online report as indicated in the ICT Policy
- Telling another member of Staff
- Telling the Medical Centre staff
- Telling the Head of Pastoral Care or Chaplain

Parents of children who may be being bullied need to know:

- The School procedures for dealing with bullying
- The signs to look out for
- That they should contact the Housemaster/Housemistress and know that the matter will be taken seriously and investigated

Pupils need to know:

- The School procedures for dealing with bullying
- The signs to look out for in case one of their friends is being bullied
- That they will be taken seriously
- That any information they give will be dealt with as confidentially as possible

Staff

Members of Staff should follow School procedures when a bullying incident arises (see below). Staff should also:

- Discuss issues of bullying if they arise in the classroom
- Note and report any significant changes in a pupil's behaviour to House
- Watch for interaction between pupils which may indicate bullying
- Note and report to House any pupils who are consistently left out by others
- Be vigilant in informing House of unexplained absences from classes or activities

Investigating and Managing Incidents of Bullying

Staff to whom the incident is reported or who first discover the incident:

- Make the situation safe if necessary
- Refer the incident to the Housemaster/Housemistress
- Be prepared to give a full account of the incident to him/her. It is best to write, sign and date an account of any serious incident as soon as possible after reporting it. Give a copy to the Housemaster or Housemistress and keep a copy for yourself

Housemaster or Housemistress

- Housemaster or Housemistress takes responsibility for investigating the incident
- Bully and bullied may be brought together to try to talk it through
- Clear guidelines for future behaviour are issued to both parties and a code of conduct agreed. Both pupils should know that the situation will be monitored and know of consequences for bully if bullying continues
- Parents of bully and bullied may be informed
- Housemaster or delegate (Tutor, prefect) monitors situation
- Referral to Deputy Head or Head if no improvement is seen. Possible suspension or expulsion in extreme cases

NB: not all incidents will require use of all these steps.

Prevention

- Wherever possible, the emphasis will be on preventative measures rather than simply reacting to incidents of bullying when they occur
- All pupils will take part in PSE sessions on bullying in Prep School and Third Form. PSE Sessions will also occur on cyberbullying
- Members of staff are CEOP Ambassadors to help with the prevention of cyberbullying
- Housemasters and Housemistresses will reinforce the content of PSE sessions within Houses
- All Staff should be vigilant and willing to take appropriate action if they suspect that a pupil is being bullied

Monitoring and Complaints

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis to evaluate its effectiveness and eliminate unlawful discrimination. Anyone who feels that the School has breached this policy should appeal in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy.

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