



SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON
ACADEMY

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY DOCUMENT

January 2015

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

No school can claim with absolute confidence that “there is no bullying here”. Every school has some degree of bullying, even if only slight or infrequent. Parents and children know this. They are reassured by a school which demonstrates both through policy and action that it will respond positively and effectively to bullying.

1.0 Aims:

At Sir William Robertson Academy (here in after known as the ‘school’) we aim to instill in our young people the core British Values of Respect and Tolerance. We believe that every pupil should be enabled to:

- Achieve their full potential as individuals
- Support each other as members of a caring and creative community
- Pursue knowledge and understanding
- Involve themselves in the wide range of activities which the school offers
- Respect other people’s values, beliefs and customs
- Extend their horizons, striving to achieve their best

Sir William Robertson Academy seeks to develop a caring environment where pupils and staff work towards understanding the impact of thoughtless actions upon others. Understanding the impact of bullying and empathising with the victim are central to the school’s approach to the problem. Providing access to teachers and adults who are sympathetic and committed to resolving discomfort created by intimidation is seen as the most effective strategy in dealing with a ‘human’ problem.

Through our school aims of ASPIRE we aim to create an environment where:

- the contribution of all children and young people are valued;
- all children and young people can feel secure and are able to contribute appropriately;
- stereotypical views are always challenged, and children and young people learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others whether arising from race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability or disability;
- children and young people learn to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours both in school and in the wider community;
- all forms of bullying and harassment are challenged;
- children and young people are supported to develop their social and emotional skills.

2.0 What is Bullying?

The Lincolnshire Children’s Services Anti Bullying Strategy defines bullying as:

“Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.”

Bullying can take place between individuals or groups; face to face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods, the recognised categories are:

- **Direct Physical Bullying:**
Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or hiding/damaging belongings including money

- **Direct Verbal Bullying:**
Name calling, teasing, insulting, using verbal threats
- **Indirect Bullying:**
Looks, social exclusion, spreading rumours, gossiping, and graffiti
- **Cyber Bullying:**
Cyber bullying is a more recent problem that has come about through the increased use of mobile phones and the Internet. It can be an extension of face to face bullying, with technology providing the person who bullies with another route to harass their target. However it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; and the perceived anonymity. It may also involve the misuse of associated technology such as cameras and video facilities.

Cyber Bullying can be defined as:

“The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the Internet, deliberately to upset someone.”

3.0 **Why are children bullied?**

Children and Young People are bullied for a variety of reasons; vulnerable groups are particularly at risk of bullying.

Whilst by no means exhaustive, the following are some specific types of bullying which may include bullying related to:

- Race, religion or culture.
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disabilities.
- Appearance or health conditions.
- Sexual orientation.
- Young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying.

Further information regarding some of these types of bullying can be found in appendix 1.

4.0 **Signs, Symptoms & Effects**

Children and young people who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as:

- Becoming shy and nervous
- Feigning illness
- Taking unusual absences

- Clinging to adults

All staff are directed to be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy and the training undertaken.

Effects can be

- Changes in work patterns
- Lacking concentration
- General unexplained behaviour.

5.0 Reporting

All pupils are encouraged to talk to staff about their problems. They may choose any member of staff, but it is usual for this to be either their Base Tutor or Head of House (HoH). A number of pupil mentors are also trained each year (see learning mentor) and can be used if appropriate.

The victim should inform any of the following:

- friend;
- parent;
- teacher;
- trusted adults other than teachers.

In any of the above cases, the emphasis will be upon the 'confidante' reporting the issue on to the HoH, Assistant Headteacher or Headteacher. The pupil planner, assemblies and the 'No respect for bullies' posters in all base rooms, publicise the systems for reporting bullying to every child.

Staff and visitors are made aware of the procedures through annual staff training, briefings and the posters in all base rooms.

Parents are made aware of our 'open door' policy for reporting bullying on entry to the school and regular reminders through pupil planner / newsletters / parents' evenings.

Bystanders are made aware that 'We are a telling school.' Through our 'No respect for bullies' campaign and through our school aims of 'S' is for support and 'R' is for respect.

6.0 Responding

An acceptance that the school is built upon sound relationships where the individual is valued and where staff and pupils are encouraged to support those under pressure, where there is consistent evidence that issues are dealt with in a sensitive and constructive manner, is most likely to lead to pupils feeling comfortable with disclosing issues relating to bullying and intimidation.

Where an issue has been revealed, the school will take the initiative in opening up the matter by:

- Ensuring that clear accounts of what has happened are gathered

- Ensuring that parents / base tutor/ Heads of House/ Deputy Headteacher / Headteacher are kept informed as appropriate.
- Using punitive measures as appropriate, in accordance with usual school procedures and in consultation with the parties concerned.

6.1 Children and young people who have been the subject of bullying behaviour by others, will be supported by:

- Initiating a support structure for the victim that will include an identified member of staff with whom the victim is comfortable, as regular point of contact;
- Establishing clear communications with parents and strategies to employ should there be any repeat;
- Creating the climate for a return to normality by working with the peer-group, if appropriate, and establishing clear ground-rules and expectations.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence through appropriate action
- Where appropriate, the school will initiate contacts with external support agencies;

6.2 Children and young people who have displayed bullying behaviour will be helped by:

- Initially, taking a non-confrontational approach with the bully and discussing what happened:
- Discovering why they became involved;
- Attempting to make the bully realise that their actions are perceived as bullying;
- Attempting to make the bully see the issue from the position of the victim;
- Establishing the wrong doing and their need to change and identify available support;
- Establishing the consequences of any repeated behaviour;
- Maintaining ongoing communication with parents or carers;
- Where appropriate, the school will initiate contacts with external support agencies;
- Monitoring.
- Punishing the bully as appropriate and in accordance with usual school procedures, which might include permanent exclusion if all other responses have been exhausted.

7.0 Promoting anti-bullying messages through the curriculum

In planning the curriculum all teachers are aware through training of their responsibility to ensure that prejudice is tackled, when relevant, in their curriculum area.

The school principally uses the PSHE, RE and base tutor programme to explicitly explore the issues of bullying. This is not a one-off event, but is locked into a 'spiral curriculum' with issues being raised throughout the key stages. Included in the programme are:

- Awareness raising campaigns;
- role-play situations;
- whole-school assemblies that relate the aims of the school, especially *Support and Respect*;
- training in assertiveness, and awareness of prejudice and harassment;

- discussion based upon the code of 'expectations' in the journal and displayed in classrooms;
- 'Cyberbullying'* and strategies for keeping safe;
- raising awareness of the issues related to bullying.
- DVD and other appropriate materials to explore relevant issues;
- Visiting Theatre groups / outside speakers.
- Stand-alone themed days ('Wow' days)

8.0 Monitoring:

The school records all incidents of unacceptable behaviour on the SIMS system and where incidents relate to racist or homophobic issues, in the incident log. This enables close monitoring of the nature and volume of incidents to be carried out. It is then possible to quantify, over time, trends in aspects of unacceptable behaviour.

Pupil views are regularly sought through the use of internal questionnaires and those which are externally analysed (Keele). This information feeds into policy review and will be discussed at school council level.

Use of the annual in-house survey identifies any individuals who identify themselves as being bullied and allows implementation of support strategies, as appropriate.

Every pupil and parent is made aware of the school 'web-based' bully-box via the pupil planner and induction procedures. Pupils, parents and carers may send a confidential e-mail to bullybox@swracademy.org which is monitored by a senior member of the management team. Following discussion by school council, the pupil planner includes a page of advice to pupils about what to do if they are being bullied.

Parents are asked to complete a standard questionnaire which is sent home at the time of annual parents' evenings. There are two sections that relate specifically to bullying.

Ratified by Governors: *21st January 2015*

Review Date: *January 2017*

Appendix 1

Bullying related to race, religion or culture

This may be racist or faith-based bullying. Current political and social issues may be a factor in bullying and harassment e.g. immigration. There is research to support the suggestion that where black and minority ethnic (BME) children experience bullying, it is more likely to be severe bullying. Moreover, bullying incidents can be a subset of the indirect and direct racist hostility which BME children, children of different faiths and traveller children can experience in a number of situations.

Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities

Children and young people with SEN and disabilities, may not always have the levels of social confidence and competence, and the robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying and the whole school community must be aware of this.

Where children and young people with SEN and disabilities are themselves found to be bullying, in most cases (except those related to specific conditions) schools should expect the same standards of behaviour as apply to the rest of the school community, having made the reasonable adjustments necessary.

Bullying related to appearance or health conditions

Those with health or visible medical conditions, such as eczema, may be more likely than their peers to become targets for bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight, and other body image issues, can result in bullying, and obvious signs of affluence (or lack of it) can also be exploited.

Bullying related to sexual orientation

Evidence of homophobic bullying suggests that children and young people who are gay or lesbian (or perceived to be) face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. The child or young person may not want to report bullying if it means 'coming out' to teachers, parents or their peers before they are ready to. Children and young people can also be targeted due to family members identifying as lesbian or gay.

Bullying of young carers or looked-after children, or otherwise linked to home circumstances

Children may be made vulnerable to bullying by the fact that they provide care to someone in their family with an illness, disability, mental health or substance-misuse problem. Young carers may be taking on practical and emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Research has highlighted the difficulties young carers face, including risks of ill health, stress and tiredness, especially when they care through the night. Many feel bullied or isolated. Children in care may also be vulnerable to bullying for a variety of reasons, such as their not living with their birth parents or because they have fallen behind in their studies.

Some pupils are heavily influenced by their communities or homes where bullying and abuse may be common. Some bullying at school may arise from trauma or instability at home related to

issues of domestic violence or bereavement, or from the experience of being part of a refugee family. Siblings of vulnerable children

may themselves be the subjects of bullying by association.

Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying

Sexist and sexual bullying affects both genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls, and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name-calling, comments and overt 'looks' about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty. In addition, uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery or graffiti may be used.

Children and Young people identifying as transgender or experiencing gender dysphoria (feeling that they belong to another gender or who do not conform with the gender role prescribed to them) can be targeted by bullies; this can be confused with homophobia in some cases.

Children and young people can also be targeted due to family members identifying as transgender.

Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying is a 'method' of bullying, rather than a 'type' of bullying. It includes bullying via text message, via instant-messenger services and social network sites, via email, and via images or videos posted on the Internet or spread via mobile phone. It can take the form of any of the previously discussed types of bullying, i.e. technology can be used to bully for reasons of race, religion, sexuality, disability, etc.

Source: 'Stop Bullying in Schools' Lincolnshire County Council 2012

Say No to Bullying

Bullying is repeated or persistent behaviour by an individual or a group that is seen by you as an attempt to hurt, frighten, humiliate or threaten you or someone else.

What is Bullying?

Verbal - Name calling, insults, racist or sexist remarks, threatening or demanding money.

Physical - Hitting, pushing, taking someone's belongings.

Indirect - Spreading rumours, sending abusive text messages/emails, excluding someone from a group.

How to react:

- Try to ignore bullies. Do not worry if people think you are running away. Remember, it is very hard for a bully to go on bullying someone who will not stand still to listen.
- If you can, calmly stand up for yourself and ask them to stop their behaviour.
- Walk away and do not let them see that you are upset. Bullies love to get a reaction. If you can, keep calm and hide your feelings. As one teenager said: 'they can't bully you, if you don't care.'
- Try to stay with your friends and avoid being on your own.

What to do next:

Tell someone you trust. This could be a friend, someone at home or a teacher. Just talking to someone may help you to find a solution to the problem.

What will happen if you tell a teacher?

The teacher will listen to you and offer support. The teacher can talk to the person who is bullying you and hopefully stop the bullying. You should talk to your base tutor, a subject teacher or your Head of House.

You will **always** be given support.

We are 'telling school'.

It is **your** duty to tell if you know bullying is happening.

- Tell someone (e.g. a teacher) what you have seen.
- Tell the victim to report the incident.
- If you are in a group where one member is bullying, show that you disapprove, because by doing nothing you support the bully.

If you really feel you cannot talk directly to someone there are ways to let people know. Complete a 'bullybox' sheet in the library and place it in the box. You or your parents can send an e-mail to: bullybox@swracademy.org **Always tell.**