

Queen's College London



Anti-bullying policy

Reviewed September 2017
Next review July 2018

POLICY STATEMENT

It is important that all members of the Queen's College community recognise that bullying behaviour is not acceptable in any circumstances. All pupils and staff have the right to attend a school where they feel safe, free from harassment and where they know that any worries they have will be listened to and acted upon.

This policy applies to all pupils at Queen's College (hereafter referred to as 'the College') irrespective of their age and whether or not a pupil is in the care of the College when or if bullying behaviour occurs. This policy provides guidance for all pupils, staff and parents about recognising bullying and what to do if a bullying incident occurs.

This policy has been drawn up with assistance from the guidance issued by the DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying (October 2014) and will be reviewed against subsequent government guidance issued from time to time.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

This policy is designed to be clear, practicable and sensible; hence, it is not exclusive, cannot cater for every eventuality and does not lay down rigid rules. It enshrines a central tenet of the philosophy of Queen's College: that the spiritual and moral welfare of the pupil is crucial for the development of happy, confident and courteous individuals who integrate successfully with their peers and contribute thoughtfully to life in the community. In order to achieve this, the College aims to prevent bullying and to deal effectively with bullying if it does occur. We shall do this by:

- maintaining an environment characterised by warmth, positive regard and mutual respect, so that bullying will be less likely;
- raising awareness of bullying and promoting good peer relationships through the curriculum and other activities;
- having clear procedures and action plans to deal with instances of bullying;
- developing effective strategies for recognising and supporting victims of bullying, including victims of homophobic bullying, cyberbullying and bullying related to race, religion, sex and culture, and for recognising and dealing with bullies;
- ensuring that all staff know what to do if they come across bullying, that they treat incidents seriously and that they are consistent in their approach;
- assuring parents and pupils that all reports of bullying will be treated seriously.

DEFINITION

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against certain groups, for example on the grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, sexuality, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer.

Some of the different types of bullying include:

- Emotional (being unfriendly, threatening looks/gestures, tormenting such as hiding belongings)
- Physical (pushing, hitting, shoving or any form of physical violence)
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours)
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments) or sexist comments(related to a person's gender or gender reassignment)
- Exclusion (deliberately ignoring and refusing to allow someone to join in)
- Interference with possessions (hiding, stealing and destroying belongings)
- Bullying on the basis of perceived racial, religious or cultural differences
- Bullying on the basis of a person's special educational needs, learning difficulty, disability, health or appearance
- Homophobic bullying (related to a person's sexuality or perceived sexuality)
- Cyberbullying includes all forms of bullying involving the internet, social websites, chat rooms, mobile phones, email, text messages, photographs, etc. See the College's Safe and Acceptable Use of Technology policy.

Although the definition of bullying includes a repetitive element, the College will be vigilant about seemingly isolated incidents which can form a pattern or the development of an asymmetrical power relationship.

No form of bullying will be tolerated by the College. Bullying is harmful to the person who is bullied, to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and to those who support them, and can in some cases lead to lasting psychological damage or self-harm.

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal and civil laws that apply to threatening behaviour and harassment for which there can be consequences outside the College. Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence, for example it is an offence to send an electronic communication (such as a text message or e-mail) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour she is being bullied. Staff should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a pupil:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to travel by public transport or begs to be driven to school
- changes her usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) or begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries herself to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged or has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully) or has other monies continually 'lost'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen) or stops eating
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- spends time online in isolation

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

PREVENTION

The College aims to prevent bullying from becoming established. This is achieved by establishing a culture in which bullying is not tolerated and where it is seen as the responsibility of all members of the College community to report any instances of bullying. The College promotes this culture through varied means, some of which are outlined below:

- The College Parliament and Food Council provide forums where pupils are encouraged to raise general issues of concern.

- The curriculum is used as a vital means of teaching pupils how to manage feelings associated with bullying and specific anti-bullying issues are addressed in PSHE, Prayers and Form Tutors.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop a strong sense of self-belief. We emphasise with older pupils the role which is expected of them in setting a good example and being helpful to younger pupils and each other.
- The Senior Leadership Team ensures that the College's anti-bullying policy is widely published.
- The College:
 - raises awareness of bullying through publicly displayed anti-bullying material in areas such as classrooms, nurse's notice board, homework diaries.
 - develops pupils' awareness and understanding, and provides peer support, through the prefect system and mentoring schemes.
 - develops staff awareness and understanding through INSET.
 - ensures that all new staff and NQTs are aware of the College's policy and are given appropriate support and training.
 - communicates fully and regularly with parents.
 - develops parents' awareness and understanding, through parent workshops.

Bullying is regularly discussed in staff meetings across the College. The result of these meetings is to feedback information to senior leaders about friendship patterns, particular incidents, any pupil who seems to be isolated, any growing "power base" and any known conflict between a member of staff and a pupil, or between pupils so that strategies can be developed to prevent bullying incidents.

PROCEDURES

Bullying events may be identified in several ways:

- disclosure to a member of staff by the individual being bullied.
- disclosure to another pupil by the individual being bullied.
- witnesses to specific bullying events.

- suspicion of bullying based upon the indicating factors.

In all cases an allegation of bullying will be treated in a serious, open-minded and fair way, and will be investigated thoroughly.

On hearing or suspecting bullying behaviour, a member of staff should first respond quickly and sensitively by offering advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim, then make a written record of what has happened and pass on the information immediately to the pupil's form tutor, Year Tutor, Head of Section in the College.

An appropriate member of staff will be appointed to speak the alleged victim(s), aggressor(s) and witness(es). All pupils will be permitted to tell their version of events without comment upon the nature of the behaviour described. Written records will be kept of all discussions.

If it is clear that there has been a misunderstanding that does not require further investigation or disciplinary action to be taken, this will be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim(s) and the alleged bully(ies) will be guided on how to modify their behaviour so that the misunderstanding does not occur again. The situation will be monitored.

If it is believed that bullying has taken place, the Deputy Head Pastoral (who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead) should be informed, and they will decide on the appropriate course of action. This may include additional investigation taking place and pupils may be interviewed. Again, all pupils will be permitted to tell their version of events without comment upon the nature of the behaviour described. Written records of interviews will be made and agreed by the individuals involved.

The parents of the pupils involved will be informed by the Year Tutor, Head of Section or Deputy Head Pastoral if it is established that bullying has taken place and further action is required.

In serious cases, the action required may include further investigation in accordance with the College's Behaviour Policy and Expulsion, Removal and Review policy.

If at any stage there is a concern that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm, including the risk of self-harm, a report must be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and the procedures in that policy will be followed.

ACTION BY THE COLLEGE

Where bullying behaviour has taken place, the range of actions to be taken by the College will include one or more of the following:

- Providing support and advice for the victim, including support from external services where appropriate. The victim will be closely monitored

by a nominated adult who will work in partnership with the victim's parents.

- Providing support to the bully to help her understand the effect of her action upon the victim and to modify her behaviour. This may also include clear instructions on expectation of behaviour going forward.
- Consideration given to the motivation behind the bullying behaviour and whether external services should be used to tackle any underlying issues of the bully which contributed to the bullying behaviour. Any concerns about risk of harm will be dealt with in accordance with the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Disciplinary action against the bully in accordance with the College's Behaviour Policy. In cases of very serious bullying or persistent bullying, a pupil may be required to leave the College permanently in accordance with the College's Expulsion, Removal and Review Policy.
- Informing other staff of the matter on a need to know basis and monitoring the position for as long as necessary, working with parents as necessary.
- Such other action as may appear to the Deputy Head Pastoral, Senior Tutor or Principal as appropriate.

RECORDS

Staff maintain records of the welfare and development of individual pupils. In addition, every complaint or report of bullying must be recorded. All records are logged in a central file that is kept in the Pastoral Deputy Head's office. The Pastoral Deputy Head monitors these records in order to enable patterns to be identified, both in relation to individual pupils and across the College as a whole, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the College's approach.

Appendix 1 Guidance for pupils

If you think that you are being bullied - never be afraid to ask for help from any member of staff, a prefect or a friend.

Pupil's guide to how to respond if you are being bullied

If you are being bullied the following responses should help:

1. Explain to the bully that their words/actions are upsetting; he/she may not be aware of this. However, if the bullying continues try not to show your feelings.
2. Walk away quickly and confidently, even if you don't feel that way inside.
3. If you are different in any way, be proud of it - it's good to be an individual.
4. The bully will not stop if they think that they can get away with such behaviour. Discuss the problem with your friends, tell a member of staff or ask your friends to tell a member of staff on your behalf.

Pupil's guide to how to respond if you think someone is being bullied and how to prevent bullying

You can help to stop bullying:

1. If the pupil being bullied is in any danger, fetch help. If she is not being bullied, your presence may ease the situation so remain together.
2. Show that you and your friends disapprove.
3. Give sympathy and support to others who may be bullied.
4. Be careful about teasing or making personal remarks. If you think they might not find your comments funny don't say them.
5. If you know of serious bullying tell someone. The victim may be too scared or lonely to tell.

Other sources of help and support

Children's Commissioner: 0800 528 0731

www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/

Childline: 0800 1111

www.childline.org

Appendix 2 Guidance for parents

Parental involvement

Whenever a serious case of bullying is uncovered the parents or guardian of both the victim and the bully would normally be informed either in writing or by personal contact.

If your daughter is being bullied

Parents along with peers will probably be the first to hear of a bullying incident. Parents should contact their daughter's Form Tutor, Year Tutor, Head of Section, Deputy Head Pastoral or Principal if they are worried.

It is essential to stay calm, supportive and find out the facts of the situation; a situation of alleged bullying can be complex to understand as it is possible that the parties involved with have varying perceptions of the events under investigation. Reassurance will be needed in order to persuade your daughter that she has done the right thing by telling you. You may find it helpful to have the following checklist at your side to ensure that correct information is passed to the school:

- Who was involved?
- Where did it take place, when and how often?
- Why did it take place?
- What form did the bullying take?

When you inform the College of these details, you will be told how the College will proceed. The procedures set out in this policy will be followed and we will work with you as required, keeping you informed of action taken. Be reassured that this will be managed sensitively with the needs of all the pupils involved carefully considered.

If your daughter is involved in the bullying

It is important to work with the College to modify the patterns of behaviour which are causing your daughter to bully. Do not panic and blame yourself. Acknowledge that these things do happen and the College has mechanisms in place to deal with this issue. It is helpful to recognise some of the reasons why pupils behave in this way from time to time.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- They are not aware of how hurtful it is
- They are copying the behaviour of older siblings or people they admire
- They have a temporary difficulty integrating in their peer group
- They are bullying others because of encouragement from friends
- They are going through a difficult time personally and need help
- They have not yet learnt satisfactory ways for making firm relationships

To stop your daughter from bullying others:

- Talk with your daughter and help her to understand that what she is doing is unacceptable as it makes other pupils unhappy
- Discourage other members of the family from using aggressive behaviour in order to get what they want
- Suggest ways of joining in activities with other pupils without bullying
- Liaise with the school: Form Tutor, Year Tutor, Head of Section, Deputy Head Pastoral or Principal.
- Make time to have regular chats about how things are going at school
- Check that your daughter has identified an adult at school to whom she can go to if she has a problem or a worry of any kind

Please note that the College will want and need to take action if bullying occurs. The matter will be sensitively handled but it needs to be effective. Action will be taken in accordance with this policy, together with the procedures in the College's Behaviour Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, as necessary.

Guidance

The DfE has published the following guidance document for parents: [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying](#).

Other useful organisations providing support for parents dealing with specific bullying issues include:

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.familylives.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk