



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## (Senior and Junior Schools)

(This document is available on the school website or on request)

*Reviewed March 2017*

The ethos and working atmosphere at QEH, together with this policy, aim to promote and instil values such as respect, tolerance and care for all: it is the responsibility of the whole community, pupils and adults alike, to uphold these values. All members of QEH's community have the right to remain free from bullying or the fear of bullying. All members should feel free to be able to report any concerns related to bullying in the certain knowledge that those concerns will be listened to and the matter investigated by those competent to do so. Those who report an incident of bullying or suspected bullying will be able to do so in safety.

**We regard any form of bullying as entirely unacceptable.** We do not accept "I was just ..." or "I was only ..." as excuses. No pupil at QEH has the right to indulge in behaviour that produces such unhappiness. Every pupil at QEH has the right to live their life free from such interference.

However, in any society incidents of bullying are likely to occur. Bullying can have extremely serious consequences for the victims, both physical and emotional, and often causes profound unhappiness. It is foolish to close our eyes to the issue of bullying, or to pretend that bullying does not happen.

### Safeguarding

Whilst bullying between children is not always a safeguarding issue, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable distress and/or anxiety. Bullying behaviour can raise safeguarding concerns, and when it does so procedures in the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed. Please refer to our *Safeguarding Policy* for more details. A bullying incident will be treated as a children protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm.' This may include referral to the Bristol Safeguarding Children's Board and/or the police.

### Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as the hurting, harming or humiliating of another person, repeated over time. It is behaviour that is meant to inflict, or results in inflicting, distress and unhappiness. It does not necessarily take the form of physical violence, intimidation or the threat of it; it can happen through verbal abuse, persistent and unremitting name-calling, mimicry or deliberate exclusion and unpleasantness. Explaining verbal or physical abuse away as being 'banter' is not acceptable. Bullying includes the inappropriate treatment of others on grounds of race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disability, home or family circumstances, or academic ability. This may happen

verbally, but it may also take place through emails, mobile phone texts, photographs, social networking sites, or other media (cyber-bullying). Bullying can be done by individuals or groups to individuals or groups.

Although bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, harassment and threatening behaviour or communications are criminal offences.

**Cyber-bullying** is carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, against a victim who cannot easily defend him/herself. Mobile, Internet and wireless technologies have increased the pace of communication and brought benefits to users worldwide. Unfortunately, however, their popularity provides the opportunity for misuse through cyber bullying.

At least seven categories of cyber bullying can be identified:

- 1) Text message bullying
- 2) Picture/video bullying via mobile phone cameras
- 3) Phone call bullying via mobile phone
- 4) Email bullying
- 5) Chat room or social network bullying
- 6) Bullying through instant messaging
- 7) Bullying via websites

## **Procedures for Reporting Bullying**

**If anyone sees or is aware of any incident of bullying, of any kind, they are involved in it: ignoring the problem amounts to condoning it. It is the duty of anyone at QEH who knows or suspects that bullying is taking place to tell a member of staff as soon as possible.** We are all required to expose such behaviour, as frequently those inflicting the distress are themselves in need of help and guidance. We should aim to help the perpetrator to adapt their behaviour and attitude. We can only achieve this if people are willing to come forward and if all cases are treated seriously. Staff will deal with the matter in confidence where possible.

**Pupils**, if you are being bullied, witness bullying of someone else or suspect that someone else is being bullied it is important that you tell someone who may be able to help. This may be a friend, your Form Tutor, your Head of Year, the School Counsellor, the School Nurse, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or anyone you feel you can confide in. **Anyone being bullied should tell a teacher, irrespective of any threats made or implied to deter them from doing so.**

***Tell a teacher, tell your family, keep on speaking until it stops and do not blame yourself.***

**Pupils in the junior school:** There is a 'Bully Box' made available to all pupils allowing them to discreetly inform a member of staff of any incidents that they are unhappy and uneasy about. This box is situated in the Junior Library.

**Staff:** Any adult who has concerns about the bullying of a pupil should tell an appropriate colleague (in most cases this will be the Form Tutor, the Head of Year or the Deputy Head (Pastoral)).

**Parents:** Any parent who has concerns about their son/daughter or about any other pupil in the School should inform an appropriate member of staff (in most cases this will be the Form Tutor, the Head of Year or the Deputy Head (Pastoral)).

## **Preventing Bullying and Raising Awareness**

One of the key objectives in seeking to prevent unpleasantness and bullying is to create and sustain, day-by-day, a supportive atmosphere in which people feel valued, able to be themselves, and free from intimidation.

At QEH, the following are ways we try to raise awareness and prevent bullying:

1. The importance of inter-personal relationships and the value of respect for all are often highlighted in full School Assemblies and in Year Group Assemblies. There are specific year group assemblies each year on the appropriate use of language in School between pupils.
2. The issue of bullying plays a prominent part in the School's PHSE programme; the PHSE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School.
3. The school takes very seriously the annual anti-bullying week and anti-bullying strategies are discussed at meetings of the School Council. Pupil surveys are also undertaken.
4. Cyber issues and cyber-bullying have a particular focus in PHSE, pastoral workshops and assemblies.
5. All new pupils are briefed thoroughly on the school's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. This message is reinforced in subsequent years in via Form Tutors.
6. There are signs stating the School's policy towards bullying prominently displayed around the School in classrooms.
7. All pupils, and their parents, are given a copy of the School Code of Conduct each year which contains our values and expectations. These are also displayed in classrooms and printed in school planners.
8. Members of staff seek to be vigilant for signs of bullying or potential bullying, which may include the following: nicknames and ridiculing in class; isolation from others in seating, activities, or around the School; physical jostling in corridors or at the start and end of lessons; evident unhappiness of solitary individuals.
9. All reported incidents are investigated thoroughly and dealt with robustly. The outcome must be action to stop the bullying; this may include strong disciplinary sanctions to act as a deterrent.
10. We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of (Tutors, Heads of Year, The Head of PHSE, the School Counsellor, and the School Nurse) who work with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
11. The School is committed to reducing the risk of bullying through staff training and through research into problem times and locations. The subject of bullying is regularly discussed at staff meetings and staff are made of aware of specific bullying issues.

12. Records of any incidents of bullying are kept in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored.
13. Teachers cannot be aware of everything, and anyone involved in or witnessing bullying is told that they must speak to a member of staff. All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place.
14. The presence of Peer Supporters and Mentors in Year 7-9 can offer support and advice to pupils and can help identify issues between boys. Role models, whether staff or pupils, can also be very influential.

## **Anti-Bullying Procedures and Sanctions**

- At QEH, we always treat bullying, including allegations of bullying, very seriously. Our priority is to stop the bullying.
- When an allegation of bullying is made, pastoral staff (Form Tutor, the Head of Year or the Deputy Head, Pastoral) will provide reassurance to the victim and ensure the allegation is investigated thoroughly, quickly and fairly, so that the facts are established.
- Any disciplinary action that is taken will be informed by the School's *Behaviour Management Policy and Exclusions Policy*, copies of which are available on the School website. Bullying is a clear breach of the *School Code of Conduct* and the full range of sanctions available throughout the School may be used to deal with cases of bullying where found and confirmed. A pupil may lose his place at the School for perpetrating bullying behaviour.
- The School will keep parents informed if and when it may be dealing with a significant bullying situation.
- Support will be offered to the victim, whether through the counselling service or by other means.
- It is important to consider the motivation behind the bullying behaviour. The child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.
- The School has the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving, such as bullying, outside the School premises to such an extent as is reasonable.
- Whilst bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable distress and/or anxiety. Bullying behaviour can raise safeguarding concerns: under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm." In these circumstances the procedures in the School's *Safeguarding Policy* will be followed.

## **Monitoring and review**

A record of incidents is kept by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) to identify patterns. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) liaises with the Heads of Year and other pastoral staff to consider

what can be learned from bullying incidents and to decide what action needs to be taken to prevent bullying, or to prevent recurrences of bullying behaviour.

This Anti-bullying Policy is written with regard to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance document '*Preventing and Tackling Bullying*' October 2014.