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**Beckmead Family of Schools**

**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**2017**

## Aims

At Beckmead School, we aim to provide a safe, welcoming and empathetic environment for all members of the school. This is dependent upon maintaining high standards of behaviour, care, and control so that all students at Beckmead have the right to enjoy learning, free from intimidation, both inside and outside the classroom and within the surrounding community. Bullying deprives people of the right to make progress and to achieve their potential. Specifically, it deprives students of the right to an education within a safe, secure and positive environment. Our community will not tolerate bullying of any kind. We say **NO** to bullying – Reject it – Report it – Remove it.

## Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as the systematic abuse of power by one person or a group of people over another person or group, which is intended to hurt, threaten or frighten another person or group of people. It is often unprovoked and is often repeated and can continue for a long period of time. Bullying can include a wide range of behaviours. These can include:

* Physically aggressive: hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or damaging belongings;
* Verbal: name calling, hurtful comments, mocking of accents, nasty teasing or spreading of rumours, threats, using words to make someone feel powerless or humiliated including hateful comments to do with aspects of difference such as race, age, gender, gender orientation, sexuality, ability, class, religion and culture.
* Emotional: deliberately leaving someone out or ignoring someone.

Children and young people may have occasional disagreements with each other. This kind of behaviour is not bullying but will also be taken very seriously by the school.

## Constructing and maintaining an Anti-Bullying Ethos

The school will endeavour to set positive role models in all relationships within the college community.

All staff will regularly reiterate the message that bullying is unacceptable.

Bullying will feature in the PSHE programme on a regular basis.

Staff will refer to the unacceptable, negative impact of bullying during informal interactions with the pupils.

## Identifying Bullying

Bullying is distinguished from other displays of aggression as it involves the domination of one person by another or by a group. It usually forms a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident.

## Taking Action over Bullying

All members of the school should be alert to the possibility of bullying and should report it if they suspect it is happening. Students who identify that bullying is taking place should alert a member of staff. The person who receives a report of suspected bullying from a student **must** take the report extremely seriously and be seen to be doing so. Once an allegation of bullying has been made a report needs to be completed by student and teacher within 12 hours.

## Investigating and Monitoring

All allegations of bullying will be investigated thoroughly and sensitively. If a teacher is unsure of how to deal with an incident of bullying s/he will seek advice from more experienced staff or the SLT. Students will always receive feedback if they have made allegations of bullying. If allegations are made about a teacher bullying a student, the Head of School **must** be informed and will then decide the most appropriate course of action. All parties involved in any incident, including parents, will be kept informed at all stages in the investigation. Departmental managers/SLT are to monitor to ensure the bullying has not resumed. Persistent or violent bullying will lead to tougher disciplinary measures including exclusion or possible permanent exclusion.

## Desired Outcome

Incidents of bullying will be pursued until the situation is resolved and all parties can return to the safe and caring environment that best supports effective teaching and learning.

## Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and will reflect national advice and guidance.

Dr Jonty Clark, Executive Head Teacher, Beckmead School, 2014

Reviewed Judith Azzopardi

January 2017

**Appendix A**

**Practical Guide for Staff Dealing with Reported Incidents of Bullying**

It is important that action taken by staff is consistent across the school. The following are guidelines intended to provide a framework for action.

**Immediate responses**

Always take the report of bullying seriously.

* It is very important to react quickly but objectively. It is our policy to take statements from students involved in incidents in order to ascertain pupil views as part of the strategy for managing bullying behaviour. The student/s may write freely but are encouraged to use the Pupil Incident Report Form Appendix B.

**Take action as quickly as possible**

* It is vital to investigate the incident properly. If the situation is dealt with purely by reassuring interviews for the victim of warnings for the bully, some crucial piece of evidence may be missed. Therefore all matters should be passed to the Head of School or another member of the SLT.

**Reassure the victim**

* Students will need to be reassured that the bullying will not get worse as a result of it being reported. It is important that the victim is not made to feel unsafe about seeing a member of staff.

**Offer self protective strategies**

* This will vary according to the situation, but reassurance is a key strategy. Coming to the school with friends, avoiding areas where you may meet the bully, staying in sight of members of staff on duty or peers, leaving expensive items at home are all quick and easy strategies that can be offered.

**Speak to the perpetrator of the bullying**

* Make the student aware that the school has a strong policy on bullying and that it will not be tolerated. Encourage the perpetrator to see the victim’s point of view. (Sharp 1990). Explore if there are any issues that the perpetrator is experiencing that may be causing them to bully and if these issues can be supported in any way. Bullying is usually a behaviour that indicates that the child is experiencing / has experienced bullying themselves or can also be a way that a child relieves themselves of emotional distress. The most effective immediate responses to bullying are problem solving rather than accusational. This enables the teacher to work with the students involved to resolve the situation immediately and identify long term strategies to prevent it re-occurring. The Method of Share Concern developed by Swedish psychologist, Anatol Pikas is an example of a problem-solving approach. This approach acknowledges that there is a problem and does not waste time on trying to find out exactly what has happened. During a series of individual discussions with students involved in the situation, each agrees how they personally will help to resolve the situation. The teacher follows a specific script in the individual discussions. An example of the script follows.

The teacher and, the student meet in an empty classroom where there are no interruptions. They are sitting on chairs of equal height and in a way which suggest that they are having an informal chat. The teacher is relaxed and neutral – this is not a ‘disciplinary meeting’. The teacher waits until the student glances at them before they speak.

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| --- |
| Teacher: I hear you have been nasty to XXX. Tell me about it.Student: (Long pause). It’s not me!Teacher: Nasty things have been happening to XXX. Tell me about it.Student: (Long pause). Well, some people have been calling names just messing. I think a bag got damaged or something.Teacher: It sounds like XXX has been having a bad time.Student: I suppose so.Teacher: OK. I was wondering what you could do to make things better for XXX.Student: Me?Teacher: Yes, you.Student: (Long Pause). Well I suppose I could make sure I don’t call XXX names. Teacher: That would be excellent. Try not to call XXX names over the next week and we will meet next Tuesday at the same time to see how you got on.Student: Is that all? OKTeacher: Goodbye.Student: Goodbye. |

It is not important that the student has denied direct involvement in the bullying behaviour – the teacher may know that this is not true but does not challenge the student’s account. The aim of the meeting is an acknowledgement that the student who is being bullied is ‘having a bad time’. This acknowledgement is the point of common concern and enables the teacher to ask the student to take an active role in changing the situation. The following week the teacher discusses how successful or unsuccessful each student feels they have been in stopping the bullying. Success is praised and the students are asked to maintain or increase their efforts.

This is followed up by a group meeting which includes both those who have been bullying the student and the student who has been bullied. In this meeting long term strategies for stopping the bullying are agreed. The outcomes are not necessarily intended to improve the quality of friendship between the two parties but rather identify ways in which they will be able to tolerate each other in the days, months and years ahead.

**Source: Sharp (NAPCE) Reducing School Bullying**

**Involve other staff**

* An incident report should always be written on an incident form when the facts have been ascertained. Copies must always go to the SLT and in pupil files. It is envisaged that bullying incidents will be dealt with through the usual disciplinary channels. Other colleagues may need to be informed if incidents have occurred or where there is a situation where staff should be extra vigilant.

**Involving parents**

* It is usually a good idea to contact home, in the case of all students concern. Don’t allow parents to keep their child at home ‘until something is sorted out’. There is a need to involve both parties in any discussion if the situation is to be satisfactorily resolved. Families who do find out subsequently about bullying often become distressed and angry if they have not been kept informed.

**Parents talking to teachers about bullying**

* Try to stay calm, and bear in mind that the teacher may not know that your child has been bullied or may have heard a different version of what happened. Be as specific as possible about what happened and give dates, places and names of other children involved. Let the school know if things improve as well as if problems continue, if need be arrange an appointment with your child'’ form tutor or year manager. Remember ‘We say **No** to bullying’ – Reject it – Report it – Remove it.

**Sanctions**

* Sanctions may need to be applied if other methods have failed to resolve the situation eg specialist input, social skills work, discussing attitudes with parents. However such methods must always be clearly explained – what it is and why it is being given.

**Bullying Outside School**

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

**Preventative Measures**

The Beckmead Family of Schools uses a wide range of strategies to create an environment aimed at reducing incidents of bullying. These include:

* PSHE lessons, assemblies etc that promote tolerance of difference and ensure students understand what constitutes bullying, including cyberbullying (further guidance in Safeguarding and E-safety Policies)
* Ensuring students are aware of our approach to bullying and how to report incidents of bullying
* Working every day with our students to support the social and emotional issues that might trigger bullying behaviour including therapeutic support
* Activities that promote good peer relationships

**Bullying Between Adults**

Bullying of a staff member by another staff member will not be tolerated and in addition contravenes expectations of behaviour as set out in our School Code of Conduct for staff. If a staff member feels they are being bullied, the route for dealing with this is set out in our School Grievance Code.

**Final Reminders**

We must all be aware of changes in the behaviour of our students, while not over reacting to situations. A victim might seem withdrawn, isolated and not working well. A perpetrator might seem to have a larger than usual group around them, be talking behind someone’s back, be shouting insults in the corridor or have undue power over a group. Share any concerns you have with other staff and the Departmental manager, so that they are aware that there might be a problem.

It must never be assumed that the perpetrator is a bad person. Bullying behaviour can be an aspect of a child’s social, emotional and mental health needs that they need support with. Bullying behaviour can be changed and how to do this can be explored. It is not necessary to keep the issue a secret, as we do not want to miss potential problems. Bullying incidents should not be kept secret from parents however if they are contacted it is important that the facts are clear and the way forward can be agreed upon.

Reviewed September 2017

Judith Azzopardi, Deputy Executive Head Teacher, BFOS.

Appendix B

**Beckmead School ANTI-BULLYING POLCIY**

**STUDENT INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Tutor Group: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Date of Incident \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Describe what happened to upset you: (continue on the back of this form if necessary)

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1. How often has this happened to you?
2. Did anyone else see what happened?

Name of person/s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**We say No to bullying – Reject it – Report it – Remove it**