



BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

This is a Senior School policy

Author: Martin Pepper (MTP)

Action	Responsibility	Date
Reviewed	Martin Pepper (MTP)	January 2018
Approved	Headmaster (ACJ)	January 2018
Next Review	Headmaster (ACJ)	January 2019

This School Policy document is available to all pupils, parents and staff; a copy can be obtained on request from the School Office and is freely available on the School's website.

It is made available to all prospective parents when they visit the School and is automatically given to the parents of all new pupils in the New Pupils' Handbook.

Parents of all pupils are reminded of the policy's existence and availability in Headmaster's emails to Parents during each academic year.

Staff can also use this policy to guide them if they feel bullied or harassed at work. They are protected by the Whistle-blowing Policy.

Principles

- ❖ A supportive School environment characterised by warmth and mutual respect is our ambition. This is stressed to all new and existing pupils and staff. This is stated each term by the Headmaster in his beginning of term School address.
- ❖ There is positive involvement from adults and a sense of co-operation and mutual respect between pupils, and between pupils and staff.
- ❖ Individuality is respected and all members of the School must be enabled to flourish without fear.
- ❖ We publicise the stance that pupils have a right not to be bullied and we all have a responsibility to counter bullying.

Aims & Objectives

The aim of our counter-bullying policy is to ensure that all students and staff that bullying is always unacceptable. All staff, pupils and parents must understand that the negative effects that bullying has on individuals and the School in general. We all encourage an environment where individuals can flourish without fear. Every student has the right to be safe and happy in our School and to be protected when he/she is feeling vulnerable.

The School also recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school. It will do all it can to eliminate any such bullying. The Governing Body values the good relationships fostered by the School and expects that every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously, to include allegations of third party bullying.

The central objective is

- ❖ To minimise the possibility of bullying occurring in any form within Barnard Castle School.

Other objectives include

- i) Maintaining school knowledge that bullying is unacceptable
- ii) Ensuring all pupils, staff and parents are proactive in their approach to guard against bullying.

This policy also details the School's response to cyber-bullying, where web or internet sites and facilities like Twitter and Facebook, are used to abuse or bully others. It is made clear

to all pupils, their parents and staff that it is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.

The Governing Body reviews annually the School's counter-bullying policy and assesses its effectiveness; this will be part of the Headmaster's presentation to Governors at their meeting.

Definition of Bullying

We define bullying as deliberately hurtful behaviour, whether physical, verbal or psychological, repeated over a period of time.

There are different sorts of bullying but the three main types are:

- ❖ physical: any form of physical contact, to include hitting, tripping, kicking, taking or hiding belongings. Wilful interference with property, which includes hiding, damaging, removing and unauthorised borrowing.
- ❖ verbal: persistent or malicious name calling; for example teasing, insulting, threatening and swearing. Any racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, disability names, words, references or suggestions are included. This also includes messages or statements written on internet sites, or as text messages, about others.
- ❖ emotional or psychological: any behaviour, passive or active, which is deliberately unfriendly; including tormenting and any action which makes other people feel uncomfortable, humiliated or excluded; for example spreading rumours, looks, graffiti, intimidating gestures or social exclusion of others. This includes sending messages via text or computer to others in which derogatory or defamatory statements are made about others, and which encourage, support or involve others in abuse or bullying of a third party.

These definitions also include any form of sexual harassment, racial abuse, sexual/sexist and homophobic behaviour, religious intolerance, culturally offensive references or words, inappropriate or offensive references to disability.

Bullying also includes defamatory texts or e-mails, offensive phone calls or any other offensive electronic messages or images. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites, social web-sites, mobile 'phones, text messages, photographs, posters and emails.

Responsibilities and Systems

We discourage bullying of any kind by

- ❖ ensuring pupils know and understand that bullying causes psychological damage and may lead to suicide.
- ❖ low-profile but frequent patrolling of areas where bullying may occur: for example lunch queues, corridors where pupils meet prior to entering classes, certain playing areas, in toilets or shower areas, and using monitors to support this.

- ❖ monitoring School computers and IT facilities: to identify any instances of cyber-bullying; 'fire-walls', ensuring the security of servers, teaching pupils to safeguard access to their computer site via use of username and confidential password are used to guard against unauthorised or improper use of computers.
- ❖ occasional screening of pupils' computer use to ensure no improper use of web-sites by individuals or groups.
- ❖ being aware of likely victims: those in class who need support and must not be isolated or humiliated; this is emphasised regularly in staff INSET and staff meetings.
- ❖ training teachers and monitors: to recognise signs and to take a complaint seriously, to include taking action to reduce the risk of bullying, and to be vigilant in areas of the School which have been previously identified as problem areas.
- ❖ highlighting the value of co-operation: so that positive peer pressure reduces the potential for bullying to occur.
- ❖ using Assemblies to promote a culture of intolerance towards bullying: to survey pupils formally and informally about bullying, and to teach them about bullying, through a variety of methods to include role play for example, and demonstrating strategies showing how bullying may be stopped.
- ❖ running a counter-bullying committee with two pupil representatives from each year to review and recommend any matters relating to counter-bullying within the School; this is chaired by the Head of PSHEE and meets at least termly, publishing minutes.
- ❖ establishing proactive year group councils, in addition to the School Council, to seek and hear pupils' views and opinions about further measures to be taken to increase vigilance and reduce the risk of bullying.
- ❖ involving year groups and tutor groups in a variety of activities, to include specifically PSHE, Drama, and English classes, as well as other curricular subjects like historical events, current affairs, drawing, stories and video clips to encourage a collaborative approach and highlight the school's counter-bullying policy and practices.
- ❖ identifying outside agencies which can make presentations to staff and pupils about bullying, good behaviour and forging better relationships.
- ❖ making 'Good Citizen' awards in end-of-term assemblies to those who promote high standards of behaviour and consideration for others.
- ❖ involving non-teaching staff, school and house monitors in the implementation of the policy and its procedures.
- ❖ running a peer support programme and ensuring all new pupils in their first year in school have a named pupil mentor.
- ❖ providing copies of the anti-bullying policy for parents of boarding pupils; boarding staff, including junior and recently appointed staff, are fully aware of its provisions.

- ❖ ensuring that there are no 'initiation ceremonies' intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation, in the boarding houses.
- ❖ providing strong and stable support for pupils who are/have been bullied together with help and guidance for those pupils who may bully/have bullied others.

Encouragement to talk to others

The victim of bullying must feel able and confident to talk directly to a teacher, or a monitor or to a friend who will alert an adult to ensure effective action is taken to stop bullying. To allow this, staff create the right climate by doing the following:

- a) being available, listening objectively, reassuring people that what they say is being taken seriously, and teaching listening skills. This will involve ensuring listeners do not ask leading questions and no promises of confidentiality are given.
- b) discussing with the pupil about what action should be taken and who should be involved in the action. The action must be recorded. A written statement must always be given to the Housemaster or Housemistress.
- c) communicating clearly the message that keeping silence only protects the pupil perpetrating the bullying.
- d) encouraging parents to communicate with the School if they suspect bullying.
- e) identifying those who can be approached inside and outside school, to include, for example the School Counsellor, nursing staff, independent listener or Childline.
- f) The Peer Support 'Listeners' are always available to those who seek such help.
- g) An Independent Listener, Mrs Margaret Forsythe, is available for all pupils and her details are published in the Boarding Houses and in the House handbooks

Legal Responsibility

Governing Bodies and Heads have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and the Independent Schools Standards Regulations (updated January 2015) and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (revised April 2015) to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils. These will:

- a) ensure all staff have an opportunity for discussing counter-bullying strategies and reviewing them,
- b) determine the strategies and procedures,
- c) discuss the development of the strategies with colleagues,
- d) ensure appropriate training is available, to include listening skills, and
- e) ensure that procedures are brought to the attention of staff pupils and parents.

The Procedures

The Headmaster will review the effectiveness of the School Counter-Bullying Policy annually with the School's Governors and consider its effectiveness.

The Second Master is responsible for the routine running of the School, including oversight of the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Assistant Head Pastoral is responsible of the day-to-day management of the policy and systems, ensuring that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to educate potential bullies.

Housemasters and Housemistresses are responsible for ensuring that the School's positive strategies are put into practice and that all tutors know the school's procedure in dealing with all incidents.

Tutors will be vigilant at all times, bearing down on any bullying and reporting incidents to House staff as soon as bullying is suspected or identified. The Headmaster will, each term, ensure all members of the School are made aware of the School's zero tolerance of bullying, and will stress the importance of good relationships, citing examples of particularly successful behaviour in this area.

Indicators of Bullying

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy, nervous, feigning illness or clinging to adults. They may show changes in their work patterns, lack concentration or may even truant from School. As people react differently, it is not always possible to tell if someone is hurt or upset.

Encouragement to tell

We create an atmosphere in the school where students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action taken will be swift and sensitive to all concerned. Not telling protects the bully or bullies and gives the message that they can continue, perhaps bullying others too.

Procedures for dealing with incidents

- ❖ if bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be investigated and dealt with initially and immediately by the teacher. Teachers must act upon and report any instances of bullying to the Housemaster / Housemistress.
- ❖ if a racial element to the bullying is suspected, the Second Master must be informed immediately and the matter will be dealt with via the School's Equal Opportunities policy as well as counter-bullying policy.
- ❖ where appropriate, the teacher will record the details, immediately or subsequently, of the incident and inform the relevant Housemaster or Housemistress who will interview all parties and make a record, and inform parents.
- ❖ every effort will be made to resolve the problem through counselling of both parties.

- ❖ teaching and other staff involved with the bullied pupil will be informed following a strategy meeting convened and chaired by the Housemaster / Housemistress.
- ❖ the tutor will determine, in consultation with the Housemaster or Housemistress, the appropriate strategy to combat the bullying.
- ❖ bullies can reasonably expect to be punished severely for their actions. Part of this will incorporate corrective behaviour action or a restorative programme. Their success here will allow them to regain their former reputation as a caring person.
- ❖ it is important to make it very clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate, and to the bully that his or her behaviour is totally unacceptable, and has caused distress to the bullied.
- ❖ parents of both the victim of bullying and the bully will be informed by the Housemaster or Housemistress.
- ❖ Support from the AH Pastoral, the Second Master and HM, as required, may be sought at any time.
- ❖ In every instance, the Housemaster or Housemistress will advise the Assistant Head Pastoral and Second Master of the incident, subsequent actions and outcomes. A note of the incident will be formally logged by the Second Master on the electronic Bullying Record updated.

If the bullying behaviour continues, and counselling has not worked, then further sanctions will follow. It is important counselling is maintained for both parties, even when sanctions have been applied.

Further measures specifically related to staff

- ❖ there will be regular INSET for staff on bullying.
- ❖ discussion by staff of any identified problems arising from implementing the counter-bullying strategy and assessment of its effectiveness
- ❖ sharing amongst staff of new strategies to reduce and eliminate bullying
- ❖ staff discussion of bullying survey results, and any trends identified in the log of incidents kept by the Assistant Head Pastoral and Second Master, at the start of each term, either informally based data collection by House or year group, or anonymous written pupil surveys, about the extent of bullying and the success of counter-bullying procedures; these will either be House or whole-staff based

Advice to students

If you are being bullied, or you know that someone else is, then tell a teacher straight away, and it will be dealt with. Not telling means the victim will continue to suffer or the bullying will carry on, probably with others too. Victims of bullying will be supported by the School during the investigation, and afterwards. We will agree with you what actions we will take

to support you. You and your friends have a responsibility to make sure that bullying does not occur in our School.

Advice to parents

If your child is being bullied, or you are told that this is a possibility, please let the Housemaster or Housemistress, Assistant Head Pastoral or the Second Master know immediately. Please reassure your child that we will deal with any matter sensitively but firmly. If we discover your son or your daughter is being bullied, or has bullied another pupil, we will contact you as soon as possible after the information is made known to us.

The School stresses the importance of maintaining a strong Home-School Partnership to minimise the risk of bullying occurring in the School.

Advice to teachers

If an instance of bullying occurs or you suspect it is happening, talk to the pupils concerned and ask them what has happened. Do not ask leading questions or promise confidentiality. Either ask them to write the details down, or do so yourself so that it can be passed on the Housemaster or Housemistress as a matter of urgency.

Particular vigilance is needed at breaks, at lunch, in Central Hall, in corridors between lessons, in the computer rooms both in class and when pupils are using computers in their own time, to include evenings and weekends, and less accessible areas to teachers like toilets and shower rooms. These are times and places where victims are less visibly supervised and bullying is not as easily seen or identified. The Assistant Head Pastoral or Second Master will keep you informed, using information collected from pupil surveys, about any specific areas or situations to focus specifically upon.

We recognise the importance of personal, social and health education within our school and its potential for influencing very positively the behaviour of all our pupils and staff, particularly as far as counter bullying is concerned. Make sure you know, from the Head of PSHEE what is covered and how you as a tutor or member of staff can make your contribution.

Remember you are a role-model as far as your own behaviour is concerned and ensure you do nothing which could be perceived as bullying behaviour towards pupils or others, or anything which could suggest you condone bullying or abuse of others.

Cyber-bullying

Whilst Barnard Castle School embraces the advantages of modern technology in terms of the educational benefits it brings, the School is mindful of the potential for bullying to occur. Central to the School's counter bullying policy is the belief that, 'all pupils have a right not to be bullied' and that 'bullying is always unacceptable'. The School also recognises that it must, 'take note of bullying perpetrated outside School which spills over into the School'.

The definition of bullying given in the document above makes explicit reference to defamatory texts or e-mails, offensive phone calls or any other offensive electronic messages or images. As a result of the pace of change in telecommunications, the School has produced a policy specifically to address cyber bullying. The success of this policy is reviewed annually by the cyber bullying working group which is chaired by the Second

Master and which has the Head of IT Resources, the senior IT technician and representative pupil 'user groups'.

Definition

By cyber bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

- ❖ bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- ❖ use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation, to include 'happy slapping' – filming violent physical attacks
- ❖ posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on web sites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- ❖ using e-mail to message others
- ❖ hijacking e-mail accounts
- ❖ making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in chat rooms, social networking sites or by any form of electronic communication.

Legal issues

Cyber bullying is generally criminal in character. The law applies to cyberspace.

- ❖ It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites
- ❖ Public Order Act 1986; section 4a states that a person is guilty of an offence if, with intent to cause a person harassment, alarm or distress, he uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour, or disorderly behaviour, or displays any writing, sign or other visible representation which is threatening, abusive or insulting, thereby causing that or another person harassment, alarm or distress.
- ❖ Malicious Communications Act 1988 states that any person who sends to another person a letter or other article which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive; a threat; or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender; or any other article which is, in whole or part, of an indecent or grossly offensive nature, is guilty of an offence if his purpose, or one of his purposes, in sending it is that it should cause distress or anxiety to the recipient or to any other person to whom he intends that it or its contents or nature should be communicated
- ❖ The Protection from Harassment Act 1997; section 1 states that a person must not pursue a course of conduct which amounts to harassment of another, and which he knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other.
- ❖ The Communications Act 2003; section 127 states that a person is guilty of an offence if he sends by means of a public electronic communications network a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character; or causes any such message or matter to be so sent. A person is guilty of an offence if, for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another, he sends by means of a public electronic communications network, a message that he knows to be false, causes such a message to be sent; or persistently makes use of a public electronic communications network.

School commitments

The School educates its pupils both in the proper use of telecommunications and about serious consequences of cyber bullying

- ❖ through PSHEE and in ICT lessons and assemblies, and via Houses, the School will continue to inform and educate its pupil body in these fast changing areas
- ❖ the School trains its staff to respond effectively to reports of cyber bullying or harassment and has systems in place to respond to it
- ❖ the School endeavours to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, anti-virus protection and filtering systems
- ❖ the School audits, where appropriate and responsible, ICT communications
- ❖ the School informs parents of its policy on procedures and offers advice about the use of computers by pupils at home

School statement

Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, the School reserves the right to take action against those who take part in cyber bullying.

- ❖ all bullying is damaging but cyber bullying and harassment can be invasive of privacy at all times. These acts may also be criminal acts.
- ❖ the School supports victims and, when necessary, will work with the Police to detect those involved in criminal acts
- ❖ the School will use, as appropriate, the full range of sanctions to correct, punish or remove pupils who bully fellow pupils or harass staff in this way, both in or out of school
- ❖ the School will use its power of confiscation where necessary to prevent pupils from committing crimes or misusing equipment
- ❖ all members of the School community are aware they must bring to the attention of senior staff any example of cyber bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

Advice to staff

If you suspect or are told about a cyber bullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below:

- ❖ **mobile phones:**
 - ❖ ask the pupil to show you the mobile phone
 - ❖ note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message, to include the date, time and names
 - ❖ make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
 - ❖ tell the pupil to save the message
 - ❖ go with the pupil and find the Housemaster or Housemistress
 - ❖ inform the Assistant Head Pastoral as a matter of course

❖ **computers**

- ❖ ask the pupil to get up on-screen the material in question
- ❖ ask the pupil to save the material
- ❖ go to the Head of IT Resources' office with the pupil and show the Head of IT resources the material
- ❖ print off the offending material straight away
- ❖ make sure you have got all pages in the right order
- ❖ inform the Housemaster or Housemistress and the Assistant Head Pastoral as a matter of course
- ❖ the normal procedures to interview pupils and to take a statements will then be followed and the Second Master and Headmaster will be informed, particularly if a child protection issue is presented.

Advice to pupils

If you believe you or someone else is the victim of cyber bullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible. This person could be a parent, your tutor, your Housemaster or Housemistress, the Assistant Head Pastoral or the Second Master.

- ❖ Do not answer abusive messages but log and report them
- ❖ Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your Housemaster or Housemistress, the Head of IT Resources, the Assistant Head Pastoral or the Second Master (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber bullying)
- ❖ do not give out personal IT details
- ❖ never reply to abusive e-mails
- ❖ never reply to someone you do not know
- ❖ stay in public areas in chat rooms

Advice to parents

It is vital that parents and the School work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber bullying.

- ❖ Parents can help by making sure their child understands the School statement, and, above all, how seriously the School takes incidents of cyber bullying
- ❖ Parents should also explain to their sons or daughters legal issues relating to cyber bullying
- ❖ If parents believe their child is the victim of cyber bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving an offensive text on their or their child's mobile 'phone), and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything
- ❖ they should contact their son's Housemaster or daughter's Housemistress

A meeting can then be arranged with the Housemaster or Housemistress, which may involve the Second Master and/or the Head of IT resources.

If the incident falls in the holidays, parents have the right to contact the parents of the other child involved. However, as stated in the Counter Bullying Policy, the School

reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the School which spills over into the School.

E safety at home

Several sites offer helpful advice to parents, particularly with respect to how they can best monitor their child's use of the computer at home. Important and useful information can be found on the following site:

<http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk/usingcomputersandtheinternet/familycode/>

ICT Code of Conduct

This is displayed in prominently in ICT classrooms and the Code of Conduct is explained and discussed with pupils in assemblies, PSHE classes and IT classes.

Support from national bodies

Advice and assistance relating to cyber bullying has been received from several national bodies including:

Val McFarlane, North East Regional Co-ordinator
Anti-bullying Alliance, CDEDC
Enterprise Way, Spennymoor, County Durham, DL16 6YP

John Quinn, Development Director
Beatbullying
Rochester House, 4 Belvedere Road, London, SE19 2AT

Andrew Mellor
'Information on cyber bullying' Paper
Anti-Bullying Network