

Yarlet School

Policy on Anti-Bullying

Aims and Objectives

Yarlet is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that **anyone** who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is actual hurtful behaviour directed by more powerful individuals or groups against those who are less powerful. It is not the same as fighting or quarrelling between people of about the same strength. It is typically repeated, often enjoyed by the bully or bullies, never justified. Yarlet School recognises that it may take many forms, both psychological and physical, direct as in name calling and hitting, and indirect as in exclusion and rumour spreading. It can also include racist, sexist, sexual, religious, cultural, homophobic and cyber bullying (see below). It can also be targeted at people with disabilities or Special Educational Needs.

Cyber Bullying

The use of technology such as mobile phones, social media and the internet to intimidate others is an increasing national trend. 'Happy slapping', bullying by text, leaving unkind messages on social media, emails or phone calls often leave no physical scars but can be highly intrusive and hurtful. The school will enforce strictly its policies with regard to the use of mobile phones and the Internet and will continue to monitor closely all e-communications used on the school site. Access to social networking sites is not allowed for pupils within the school. Each year an "Internet Safety week" is held which provides focus and teaching on how to stay safe whilst on the Internet for years 3 to 8 and includes a parents' safety information evening.

Our Commitment

Where bullying does occur, pupils, parents and staff are expected to report it. All reports will be followed up and the school undertakes to:

- operate a reporting and recording procedure;
- deal with all reports speedily, fairly and positively;
- take account of the evidence and all views;
- provide anonymity for the victim whenever possible;
- offer advice and support to the victim;
- offer advice and support to the person responsible;
- ensure that all involved are kept informed;
- operate a system of sanctions or consequences which will reflect the seriousness of the offence; (Refer to our behaviour policy.)
- Children and staff are not expected to tolerate bullying or to suffer in silence. They will be encouraged to disclose problems in an environment in which they feel safe and have confidence. Early intervention is important if behaviour is to be changed.

The Procedure to be adopted in dealing with bullying incidents:

- Before beginning the Anti-bullying procedure, a decision needs to be taken initially about the level of seriousness of the reported incident/s. In the event that an exceptionally serious allegation is made, the school may decide to temporarily or permanently exclude a pupil/pupils immediately if, upon investigation, the allegation is substantiated.

Typical Anti-bullying procedure:

- After the first known incident, both the bully and the victim should be seen by the Form Teacher and/or the Deputy Head / Head of Pre-Prep / Headmaster. The aim would be to stop the bullying at this stage.
- If the incidents continue, parents are invited into school to see the Deputy Head / Head of Pre-Prep / Headmaster and a strategy is developed to deal with the problem. The aim would be to stop the bullying at this stage.
- As a last resort, if the incidents persist, temporary and/or permanent exclusion procedures may begin.

Recording and keeping parents informed:

- Any alleged incidents of bullying must be recorded in writing.
- Discussions with both parties must take place as soon as possible after the events.
- Although an initial investigation may take place without contacting parents, the parents of both the victim and bully will be kept informed in cases where it has been established that bullying has taken place.
- Each incident must be recorded in writing and kept in the Deputy Head or Head of Pre-Prep's office.
- A follow-up meeting must take place or email or telephone call made to ensure the bullying has stopped. This will typically happen approximately two weeks after a confirmed incident of bullying.
- It will be made clear that any reoccurrences must be brought to the school's attention immediately.

Threshold for reporting bullying to an external agency

In all cases of bullying, cyber-bullying and bullying outside of school, staff must follow the school's reporting procedures and ensure the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is made aware of serious cases of bullying. In any extreme cases, the DSL will decide whether it is appropriate to take the matter further and report the incident to outside agencies such as the police or children's social care as a child protection matter. Safeguarding training for staff includes recognising the threshold criteria which, when met, matters must be reported to the DSL.

Role of Governors

- The governing body supports the Headmaster in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.

Role of Headmaster

- The Headmaster ensures that all children and staff know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headmaster draws the attention of children and staff to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headmaster may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why there have been consequences in terms of sanctions.

Role of teaching staff

- Staff are encouraged to bring this topic into discussion at any time throughout their teaching. For example, it can be included in PSHE or Religious Studies lessons or used as a focus for an assembly.
- Staff will have easy access to this Anti-bullying Policy.
- Staff will look out for signs of bullying at all times but especially in more likely situations such as playtimes, in changing rooms, etc.
- If a child seems withdrawn or is playing on their own then staff will approach them to ensure all is well.

Role of Parents

- Parents who are concerned that a child might be being bullied or who suspect that a child may be a perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher / tutor immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Deputy Head / Head of Pre-Prep / Headmaster.
- Parents and staff have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-bullying Policy, actively encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community.

Role of Pupils

- Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied or know of any bullying taking place, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.

Reducing the risk

We use many methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing about how to support each other in a school community;
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying;
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly;
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters;
- having clear policies communicated to parents, pupils and staff and creating an environment of good behaviour and respect, with helpful examples set by staff and older pupils;
- involving parents and making sure pupils are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders;
- inviting in outside agencies from time to time to speak with our pupils about bullying. For example, the NSPCC.

Signed:



Date:

January 2018

Review Date:

January 2019