

# **Talbot House Preparatory School**

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

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### Statement of Intent

At Talbot House we are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. **Everybody** has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. At Talbot House, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed, it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Peer on Peer Abuse Policy.

### Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy. This will happen in the following ways:

- The school will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PHSE [Personal, Health & Social Education] lessons, circle time etc) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

### What Is Bullying?

The school has adopted the following collaborative definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying is:

***Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves (remember STOP – it happens Several Times on Purpose). Bullying is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victims.***

### Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks,

making fun of someone

Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things

- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Homophobic because of/ or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Online/cyber setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs.

### **Bullying is not:**

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP). Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

### **Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents including cyber-bullying**

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at Talbot House. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

1. Report all bullying allegations and incidents to staff.
2. Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
3. Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
4. Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
5. The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
6. Staff will attempt to adopt a problem solving approach which will move children on from them having to justify their behaviour.
7. Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
8. Staff will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.
9. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied (see next section).
10. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
11. An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/her/their behaviour.
12. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff on the standard Incident Report Sheet. All reports will be kept in a file in the school office (Appendix 2).
13. In serious cases parents will be informed and will be invited to come into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
14. After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
15. Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at staff meetings.
16. If necessary and appropriate, the Child Protection Officer in school, Social Services or police will be consulted. When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection

concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the school staff should discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead and report their concerns to their local authority children's social care and work with them to take appropriate action. Full details can be found in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The following sanctions may be used:

The children have also discussed this question in their classes and some of the sanctions they suggested are included in the list below:

- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing
- Lose privileges
- Lose playtimes (stay with class teacher, write lines or do extra work)
- Spend playtimes and lunchtimes with an adult
- Parents will be invited in to school
- Be removed from class and work in isolation
- Report to the Headteacher or
- Be withdrawn from participation in school visit, clubs and events not essential to the curriculum.
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

### **Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying**

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

These can include:

- Involving the whole school community in writing and reviewing the policy
- Producing a 'child speak' version of the policy for the children
- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules
- Awareness raising through regular anti-bullying assemblies
- PHSE (Personal, Health & Social Education) scheme of work from Reception to Year 6 used to support this policy
- Circle time on bullying issues
- Children being read stories about bullying
- Introducing playground improvements and initiatives
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- Ensure parents and carers are aware of the school's policies and what they should do if they feel that their child is being bullied
- Encourage parents to participate in e-safety workshops
- Send updates of current/topical cyber bullying issues (e.g. 'ghost' mode, link to check appropriate nature of games/sites)
- Organising regular anti-bullying training for all staff

This policy should be read in conjunction with Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017) and Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers

## Online Bullying Policy

Where a disclosure of bullying is made, schools now have the duty to investigate and protect, even where the bullying originates outside the school.

### WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

There are many types of cyber-bullying:

1. Text messages —that are threatening or cause discomfort - also included here is "Bluejacking" (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using "Bluetooth" wireless technology)
2. Picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
3. Mobile phone calls — silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible.
4. Emails — threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name.
5. Chatroom bullying — menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in web-based Chatroom.
6. Instant messaging (IM) — unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger) or Yahoo Chat – although there are others.
7. Bullying via websites — use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal "own web space" sites such as Bebo (which works by signing on in one's school, therefore making it easy to find a victim) and Myspace – although there are others.

At Talbot House, we take this bullying as seriously as all other types of bullying and, therefore, will deal with each situation individually. An episode may result in a simple verbal warning. It might result in a parental discussion. Clearly, more serious cases will result in further sanctions.

Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Online bullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe.

Young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology, an area that can seem a closed world to adults. For example, the numerous acronyms used by young people in chat rooms and in text messages (POS - Parents Over Shoulder, TUL – Tell You Later) make it difficult for adults to recognise potential threats.

### At Talbot House, pupils are taught how to:

Understand how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them.

Know what to do if they or someone they know are being bullied.

Report any problems with bullying. If they do have a problem, they can talk to the school, parents, the police, the mobile network (for phone) or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it.

### **For pupils:**

If you're being bullied by phone or the Internet:

Remember, bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.

Don't ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line.

Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.

Don't give out your personal details online - if you're in a Chatroom, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you build up a picture about you.

Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to a parent or teacher as evidence.

If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.

### **Text/video messaging**

You can easily stop receiving text messages for a while by turning off incoming messages for a couple of days. This might stop the person texting you by making them believe you've changed your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider for help.

If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider.

Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages. Your mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.

Don't delete messages from cyber bullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.

Text harassment is a crime. If the calls are simply annoying, tell a teacher, parent or carer. If they are threatening or malicious and they persist, report them to the police, taking with you all the messages you've received.

## Phone calls

If you get an abusive or silent phone call, don't hang up immediately. Instead, put the phone down and walk away for a few minutes. Then hang up or turn your phone off.

Once they realise they can't get you rattled, callers usually get bored and stop bothering you.

1. Always tell someone else: a teacher, parent, or carer. Get them to support you and monitor what's going on.
2. Don't give out personal details such as your phone number to just anyone. And never leave your phone lying around. When you answer your phone, just say 'hello', not your name. If they ask you to confirm your phone number, ask what number they want and then tell them if they've got the right number or not. You can use your voicemail to vet your calls. A lot of mobiles display the caller's number. See if you recognise it. If you don't, let it divert to voicemail instead of answering it.
3. And don't leave your name on your voicemail greeting. You could get an adult to record your greeting. Their voice might stop the caller ringing again. Almost all calls nowadays can be traced. If the problem continues, think about changing your phone number. If you receive calls that scare or trouble you, make a note of the times and dates and report them to the police. If your mobile can record calls, take the recording too.

## Emails

Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails ('flames') — the sender wants a response, so don't give them that satisfaction.

Keep the emails as evidence. And tell an adult about them.

Ask an adult to contact the sender's Internet Service Provider (ISP) by writing `abuse@` and then the host, e.g. [abuse@hotmail.com](mailto:abuse@hotmail.com)

Never reply to someone you don't know, even if there's an option to 'unsubscribe'.

Replying simply confirms your email address as a real one.

## Web bullying

If the bullying is on a website (e.g. Bebo, facebook, moodle) tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying were face-to-face – even if you don't actually know the bully's identity.



Serious bullying should be reported to the police - for example threats of a physical or sexual nature. Your parent or teacher will help you do this.

### **Chat rooms and instant messaging**

Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online.

It's a good idea to use a nickname. And don't give out photos of yourself. Don't accept emails or open files from people you don't know.

Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room. Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.

Tell your parents or carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room.

Think carefully about what you write; don't leave yourself open to bullying. Don't ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account.

### **Three steps to stay out of harm's way**

1. Respect other people - online and off. Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords.
2. If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm – and ignore them.
3. 'Do as you would be done by.' Think how you would feel if you were bullied. You're responsible for your own behaviour – make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.