



## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

At Langley ("the School") we passionately believe in promoting emotional wellbeing and positive mental health for our whole School community and are proud of our diverse and inclusive environment. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment as we believe that all pupils/students have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment.

We expect our pupils/students to treat members of staff with courtesy, co-operation and respect so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils/students should care for and support each other, inside and outside of school. The best way to prevent bullying is to create an environment where it is safe to learn and where the whole-school community is a supportive and positive one.

Every pupil/student at the School should have equal access to education and extra-curricular activities, without the fear of hindrance from bullying or the threat of bullying.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination of pupils/students or staff will not be tolerated by the School. We treat all of our pupils/students and their parents fairly, and with consideration, and we expect them to respect the staff, the School and each other, in return. All forms of bullying are unacceptable at the School and any instances of bullying will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action.

This policy applies to all day and boarding pupils/students in the School and applies to actions undertaken both inside, and outside of the School.

Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that there are consistent expectations of behaviour both at school and at home, and that the School and parents co-operate closely together. This policy is available to parents of pupils/students and prospective pupils/students on request and is also communicated to all staff and pupils/students.

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person. It may take many forms, including physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual, verbal (including cyber-bullying via email, social media, gaming, and SMS or other instant messages, which includes the use of images and video) and emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim whether that be a physical, psychological or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator having the capacity to socially isolate the victim either physically or online.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities (SEND), or because of a child's familial circumstances, such as they are adopted, in care or that they have caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. For example, bullying can still be homophobic if directed towards a child that is perceived to be gay, whether or not this is the case.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone – pupils/students, other young people, staff and parents.

The School recognises that low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. The School will ensure that early intervention occurs in order to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and this will help negative behaviours escalating.

### Cyberbullying

Cyber-bullying can be defined as, “the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others” (*Belsey*, <http://www.cyber-bullying.org/>). It is an aggressive, intentional act often carried out repeatedly over time, and often against a victim who cannot easily defend themselves. The School acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take place inside, or outside of school and at any time of day.

Cyber-bullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- the use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear or humiliation;
- posting threatening, abusive, offensive or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites and social networking sites);
- using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner; or
- hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts.

The School acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take many different forms including: cyber-stalking, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images, encouraging derogative comments on online platforms, and sexting.

## **THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING**

### **Prevention – Pupils/students and staff**

The School's response to bullying does not start at the point in which a pupils/students has been bullied. We take the following preventative measures in order to create an environment that prevents bullying from becoming a problem at the School in the first place:

- The School promotes an ethos of good behaviour where pupils/students treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of school;
- All new pupils/students including boarders are briefed thoroughly on the School's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying and how to report it;
- We use appropriate School, Year and House assemblies to explain the School's policy on bullying and to promote the School's values;
- Our PSHE programme is structured to give pupils/students an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School. The programme is structured to enforce messages about community involvement and taking care of each other and will focus on the importance of equality, diversity, respect and the importance of avoiding prejudicial language;
- All of our pupils/students are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they are being bullied, or if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place;
- We use a merit system to reward good behaviour towards others and reward incidents of good citizenship;
- When we have new pupils/students join the School, we use 'buddies' in the same year group to help them settle and integrate with their peers;

- We have compulsory membership of the CCF for Year 9 pupils. During this time a range of team and individual skills are learned, which encourage positive behaviour and co-operation amongst pupils;
- We have a team of School Prefects all of whom are attached to a form in the lower school, they form relationships with the pupils in that group and offer advice and guidance to younger pupils;
- We have a fully dedicated medical centre where the School Nurses are fully trained in how to spot signs of bullying and are always available for the pupils/students to speak to;
- We have access to a professional counsellor who can provide advice and guidance to pupils/students who are referred to them;
- We have a dedicated *Time to Talk* service that is available for all pupils/students to use. The listeners give confidential advice to pupils/students, who can refer themselves when they have social, emotional or behavioural concerns. On occasion, a member of our pastoral team may refer them as appropriate;
- All pupils/students are informed of various external agencies that they can talk to, such as Childline;
- Upon induction, all new members of staff are given training and guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to, and record allegations of bullying at the School. The School will ensure that all school staff understand the principles of the School's policy, the School's legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent incidents of bullying from arising or escalating and also details of sources of further support;
- The School recognises that certain children may be more at risk of bullying than others and may require additional support when dealing with an incident of bullying, for example children with SEND, and LGBT+ pupils/students. The School will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand the specific needs of our pupils/students, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all pupils/students;
- Records of any incidents are kept securely on CPOMS, these are then analysed periodically by Heads of Year and the Deputy Head (Pastoral) at the Pastoral Forum in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored;
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of Tutors, Heads of Year, and House Parents who support the Pastoral Deputy Head and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and who are alert to possible signs of bullying;
- The Pastoral Forum meets once a week in order to discuss potential pupils/students issues and incidents that have occurred so that a plan can be formed to prevent issues from arising or any escalation;
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils/students are not in class. Our mini-duty staff rota places staff around the site, particularly in areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour at all times;

- The School does not tolerate peer-group ‘initiation ceremonies’ or hazing rituals designed to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation to pupils/students, and all staff remain alert to such actions.
- In the boarding houses, we have a strong team of House Parents who act *in loco parentis*. Staff are aware that boarding houses provide more opportunity for bullying and are therefore always vigilant and alert to signs of issues with or between boarders. The informal house environment is important in reinforcing a pupils/students standards and values, providing the opportunity for friendly, informal discussion of matters of concern to the individual pupil/student outside the formal classroom. A member of the boarding house staff is always on duty to supervise the pupils/students.

### **Prevention – Parents/Guardians**

The School recognises that parents/guardians also have a critical role to play in the prevention of bullying.

- A copy of this policy is made available to parents/guardians, so they are clear on the School’s approach to bullying and what to do if their child experiences bullying;
- We encourage close contact between tutors and parents/guardians, and will always make contact if we are worried about a pupils’/students’ well-being;
- If parents/guardians know or suspect that their child, or another pupil, is being bullied, they should contact the School without delay.
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures and all other aspects and results of this anti-bullying policy.

### **Prevention of cyber-bullying**

For the prevention of cyber-bullying, in addition to the measures described above, the School:

- Expects all pupils/students to adhere to the Online Safety Policy. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and the School has Senso software which monitors pupils/students’ use;
- May impose disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet;
- Issues all pupils/students with their own personal school email address. Access to social media and personal email sites is not allowed through the School’s network;
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber-bullying in PSHE lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from "friend" lists and sharing personal data;
- Issues specific information to parents, through the Welfare Matters publication;
- Ensures its pupils/students are aware that cyber-bullying can have severe and distressing consequences and that participation in cyber-bullying will not be tolerated;

- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe;
- Does not allow the use of mobile phones for Years 6-11 (Sixth Form are only allowed them in the Sixth Form centre); and
- Does not allow the use of cameras/mobile phone cameras in toilets, washing and changing areas at any time of day, or in the bedrooms of boarding houses.

## **DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING**

At the School, we always treat bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the School's social and moral principles, and potentially with its policy on equal opportunities, and will not be tolerated. When incidents of bullying do occur, they are dealt with quickly and taken seriously. The School will never dismiss bullying as banter or horseplay, and all reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy.

The School understands that bullying can be so serious that it may cause physical, emotional and psychological damage, such as eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Stopping violence and ensuring the immediate physical safety of pupils/students is the School's first priority, however, the School acknowledges that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying, and therefore staff will use their discretion when dealing with an incident of bullying within the parameters of this policy. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying; everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

Pupils/students who are victims of bullying will be supported through our Pastoral systems. Pupils/students who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving. Staff will always consider the motive behind the bullying behaviour and whether it raises any concerns for welfare of the perpetrator. If staff reasonably suspect that a pupils/students may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, they should follow the procedure's set out in the School's Safeguarding Policy and discuss concerns with the School's DSL.

Bullying which occurs on school trips or outside of the School's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on school premises. Teachers will, where appropriate, discipline pupils/students for misbehaviour outside school premises and outside school hours. Disciplinary measure will be taken in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy and will be applied in a fair, consistent and reasonable manner.

## Procedures for dealing with reported bullying

Incidents of bullying can be reported to any member of staff. That staff member should raise a 'Bullying' concern on CPOMS, detailing all the information about the incident(s). These records will be stored on the pupils/students' files. Records will also be kept on files relating to safeguarding where appropriate. A bullying log will be kept and recorded half termly. The Pastoral team will monitor incidents and record patterns of behaviour and to evaluate the effectiveness of this anti-bullying policy.

Staff will be trained in handling an allegation and will be aware they must listen to the pupil/student, not ask leading questions and then make a record of the allegation on CPOMS.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedure will be adopted:

1. The member of staff to whom the incident was reported, or who first discovers the situation will reassure and support the pupils/students involved, without promising absolute confidentiality;
2. That member of staff will inform an appropriate member of the School's Pastoral team about the bullying allegation as soon as possible, by creating an incident on CPOMS and assigning it to the relevant member of staff;
3. The victim, and the alleged perpetrator/s will each be interviewed individually on his/ her own (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and asked to write their account of events, these will then be recorded against the incident that has been created on CPOMS;
4. Where the reported bullying behaviour is considered to potentially be criminal, or considers that there may be a risk of harm to a member of the public, the member of staff will report the matter to the Police and/or Children's Services (if appropriate);
5. The Pastoral Deputy Head is responsible for logging all records of bullying and other serious disciplinary offences. If it is not practicable for a member of staff to report the incident vis CPOMS then they should report it using the '**Concerns Reporting Form**' and then passed through to the Pastoral Deputy Head;
6. The member of staff dealing with the incident will inform the tutors and Heads of Year of both the bully/bullies and the victim[s] as soon as possible. In very serious incidents, the Headmaster should be informed;
7. The victim will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the Pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator/s. They will be offered support and a strategy to help them will be devised and communicated with relevant staff and parents. It will be made clear to them why revenge or retaliation is inappropriate;

8. The alleged bully will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. The pupil/student will be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour. Appropriate sanctions will be utilised, as per the School's Behaviour Policy;
9. The parents/guardians of all parties will be informed and may be invited into School to discuss the matter, as well as being informed of the appropriate sanctions under the Behaviour Policy. The parents' support will be sought in respect of preventative measures, and any concerns of either party will be addressed;
10. A way forward, including where appropriate disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be determined, and where possible agreed with all parties. This should recognise that suitable support may be needed by the pupils/students who are being bullied, and also by the pupils/students who bully others, as well as dealing with disciplinary measures in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy;
11. As part of this process, a meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, may be convened to help develop a strategy which enables all concerned to close the episode (this will only happen in appropriate circumstances);
12. In very serious cases, and only after the Head has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police, the DSL or to Children's Services. However, in many cases it will be possible to resolve such issues internally under this policy and the School's Behaviour Policy.

### **Procedures for dealing with cyber bullying**

The School will follow the procedures set out in this policy and the Safeguarding Policy where relevant for incidents of cyber-bullying, taking such disciplinary action that is considered reasonable in the circumstances, with a view to regulating pupils/students conduct and protecting the reputation of the School, and the welfare of its pupils/students.

Although cyber-bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that may apply to communications of a harassing or threatening manner or the unauthorised publication of private images, and sexting. Where the School considers that a reported incident of cyber-bullying may amount to a criminal offence, it will inform the Police.



## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The School will record all incidents of reported bullying in accordance with this policy.

The Deputy Heads will review all incidents of reported bullying to help identify patterns of behaviour, so that the School can take appropriate steps to address bullying behaviours within the School. Records of bullying incidents will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying procedures, and to highlight any necessary amendments.

This policy is reviewed and updated at least annually, by the Leadership Team.