



ANTI-BULLYING - ADVICE FOR PARENTS	
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## **Anti-bullying – Advice for Parents**

Parents should be aware that all School policies are available to be viewed via the website, in the parents' handbook or by hard copy from school. We would ask that if parents have any concerns, they should contact the School immediately.

### **What is bullying?**

Bullying is defined as repeated negative behaviour, which is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe. It is a form of child-on-child abuse. The main types of bullying are:

- physical (hitting, kicking, theft);
- verbal (name calling, racist remarks, homophobic remarks);
- indirect/emotional (taunting or spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups, singling out because of special needs or disabilities);
- sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments (see Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Policy);
- cyberbullying where the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones (such as via social media) and the internet, deliberately upset someone else;
- prejudice-based and discriminatory- bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to perceived or actual differences. This can lead to prejudice and discriminatory language or behaviour, including racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia; and
- written – unkind notes/comments, pretending to send a note or disguising its author, graffiti.

Bullying will not be tolerated at Ballard School and all staff will be vigilant in helping keep Ballard a happy, safe, environment for all pupils. We have a zero tolerance of such abuse. It is important to respond to bullying because no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Parents should be reassured that the staff have procedures that will be followed to make every attempt to minimise bullying in Ballard School.

## **Signs and symptoms of bullying**

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as:

- becoming shy and nervous;
- feigning illness;
- taking unusual absences;
- being more clingy than usual especially towards you;
- there may be evidence of changes in work patterns;
- lacking concentration or truanting from School;
- feeling ill in the morning;
- coming home with damaged books or clothing;
- having possessions going missing;
- having unexplained cuts or bruises;
- bullying other children or siblings;
- becoming aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable; and/or
- crying themselves to sleep at night/has nightmares.

These signs and behaviours could indicate many other problems; however, bullying should be considered and therefore should parents suspect there is an issue we would urge them to contact the School immediately for a meeting. If a 'minor' issue is flagged up early on, a more serious case of bullying can often be avoided.

These are the procedures in place for the pupils.

### **Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:**

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor or member of staff of their choice i.e. a trusted adult;
- reassuring the pupil that they have done the right thing in coming forward;
- offering continuous support;
- restoring self-esteem and confidence; and
- parents will be informed.

### **Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:**

- discussing what happened;
- discovering why the pupil became involved;
- establishing the wrongdoing and need to change; and
- informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.

If necessary other pupils should be aware that there are times when as bystanders to bullying, they may be thought of as 'accessories' and this will mean that they will face consequences too.

Every effort will be made to bridge the gap between the children involved, to deal with the problem, give support and re-establish the unity within the group.

**The following disciplinary steps can be taken:**

- official warnings to cease offending;
- detention/removal from break times;
- interviews with parents;
- exclusion from certain areas of School premises;
- minor fixed-term suspension;
- major fixed-term suspension; and/or
- permanent exclusion.

Within the curriculum the School will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, form tutorial time, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour. We may also ask for intervention via our School Counsellor or other members of the Pastoral Team.

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