

Introduction

What is bullying?

Bullying is described by the Government as “behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”. It can involve;

- verbal taunts
- name calling
- physical injury
- damage to property
- rumour spreading
- shunning or ridicule
- It can be manipulative, making the person do something they should not, or deliberately engineering their discomfort or isolation
- It can be done through mobile phones, websites and email (cyber bullying)
- It can reflect prejudice, as in homophobic and racist bullying

The credibility and effectiveness of the school’s policy depend on the adults in the school community taking agreed action whenever the bullying arises. Every member of staff must be aware that bullying may occur at any time and be vigilant in recognising when it is taking place. All members of staff are equally responsible for reporting it. Since it is a pattern of behaviour over time it is important that the relationship between the students concerned is actively monitored and attended to until it is satisfactory resolved.

PHOENIXPLACE will aim to prevent bullying taking place through;

- The main school curriculum as well as by managing particular incidents
- Creating opportunities in many subject areas, such as in PSE or in Tutor Time to illustrate and discuss the use and misuse of power and the need to respect the rights of everyone
- Assemblies and class discussions, as well as conversations with individuals to educate students on how best to handle specific situations that arise
- Being constantly vigilant for occasions and specific sites around the school where bullying might be more likely to take place
- Encouraging onlookers at occasions of bullying to not give support to the bullies, to take any safe action they can to prevent it and in any case to always report it to staff
- Providing an environment where students feel safe to come forward to report bullying

There is a particular need for vigilance since students at PHOENIXPLACE have special educational needs and/or who are vulnerable. They do not always understand other people’s behaviour towards them and are often not able to respond to it or protect themselves effectively. The promotion of diversity and respect for all people is in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. We recognise the need to take a proactive approach to promoting the equal rights of young people with all forms of disability to fair and equal support and protection, and eliminating harassment or discrimination against them.

We see both bullies and their victims as having needs that require addressing. Bullies need to recognise the rights of others to live without fear of oppression and refrain from using their power and status unfairly. They need to be brought to the point where they acknowledge what they are doing, understand the distress they are causing and feel they can do something about it. Those who tend to be bullied need to learn how to assert themselves confidently, reduce where possible any behaviour that attracts bullying and take action to get help. In both cases students need to be aware of their particular styles of behaviour and to consider better alternatives.

Cyber-Bullying

Nationally, cyber-bullying is a growing source of bullying experienced by children and young people. Each incident of cyber-bullying will be thoroughly investigated.

It is vitally important for students and parents of children who are being bullied to record or print the evidence of the bullying. Virtually all cyber-bullying can be traced if the evidence is kept and given to the School.

We consider student-to-student cyber-bullying to be a very serious breach of the anti- bullying policy as we aim to provide a caring and safe environment for all our students so that they can learn in a secure atmosphere.

Anti-Bullying inc E-Safety Policy

Policy: March 2018
Policy to be reviewed: September 2019

Most cyber-bullying takes place out of the School, usually from the students own home, however, the School will still take action against this form of bullying as the bullied students general wellbeing, and their academic performance when at PHOENIXPLACE will undoubtedly be affected by the bullying.

In all cases of cyber-bullying parents/carers of both the bully and the bullied will be kept informed of investigations into allegations of bullying. Strong sanctions will be given to students found guilty of cyber-bullying, and the police may well be informed.

All students should remember that the majority of what they put onto the internet stays there forever, available for anyone to search, including potential future employers.

How does PHOENIXPLACE deal with Cyber-bullying?

PHOENIXPLACE follows the Department for Education guidance and will ensure that:

- Bullying via mobile phone or the Internet is included in our anti- bullying policy, this policy is regularly updated, and staff have knowledge of how to deal with cyber bullying in the School
- The curriculum teaches students about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely.
- All e-communications used on the School site or as part of School activities off-site are developed and monitored.
- Guidelines will be set about the use of mobile phones at the School and at other times when young people are under the School's authority.
- Internet blocking technologies.
- The School works with students and parents to make sure new communications technologies are used safely, taking account of local national guidance and good practice.
- The School is developing links with police and other partners on managing cyber bullying.
- The School ensures parents are kept informed of the School standards and policies and know about the School's rights to monitor their child's e- communications.
- Staff training

The following 2 pages of this document provide students and their parent/carer with advice on how to deal with cyber-bullying.

Tips

Below are some tips to beat cyber bullying. In the first instance, students should inform an appropriate adult. This can be a parent/carer or staff at PHOENIXPLACE.

Cyber bullying -What Can You Do About It?

- 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/carer, 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. There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyber bullying. For example, www.kidscape.org and www.wiredsafety.org have some useful tips.

Web Bullying

- If you don't know the owner of the website, refer to staff to find out how to get more information about the owner.

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.

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. To find out how to do this, visit www.wiredsafety.org.
- If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider (such as Orange, O2, Vodafone or T-Mobile).
- 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.

Emails

- Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails — 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`
- 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.

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.
- Always tell someone else: a teacher, youth worker, parent/carer. Get them to support you and monitor what's going on.
- 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. 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 you receive calls that scare or trouble you, make a note of the times and dates and report them to the police. You can also report them to the Safeguarding staff at the School. If your mobile can record calls, take the recording too.
- The law is on your side.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and Section 43 of the Telecommunications Act 1984 may be used to combat cyber-bullying. People may be fined or sent to prison for up to six months. For more information, see <http://wiredsafety.org/gb/stalking/index.html>

If you're a parent/carer

- Do not wait for something to happen before you act. Make sure your children understand how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- Make sure they know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyber bullied.
- Encourage your children to talk to you if they have any problems with cyber-bullying. If they do have a problem, contact the School, the mobile network or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it.
- Parental control software can limit who your children send emails to and who they receive them from. It can also block access to some chat rooms.
- Moderated chat rooms are supervised by trained adults. Your Internet service provider will tell you whether they provide moderated chat services.
- Visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents for more information on Internet safety.
- Remember, you can do something about it!

Staff Code of Conduct for ICT

To ensure that members of staff are fully aware of their professional responsibilities when using information systems and when communicating with students, they are asked to sign this code of conduct.

- I understand that it is a criminal offence to use a School ICT system for a purpose not permitted by its owner.
- I appreciate that ICT includes a wide range of systems, including mobile phones, PDAs, digital cameras, email, social networking and that ICT use may also include personal ICT devices when used for School business.
- I understand that School information systems may not be used for private purposes without specific permission from the Headteacher.
- I understand that my use of School information systems, Internet and email may be monitored and recorded to ensure policy compliance.
- I will respect the School's system security and I will not disclose any password or security information to anyone other than an authorised system manager.
- I will not install any software or hardware without permission.
- I will ensure that personal data is stored securely and is used appropriately, whether in School, taken off the School premises or accessed remotely.
- I will respect copyright and intellectual property rights.
- I will report any incidents of concern regarding children's safety to SLT, the Designated Child Protection Officer or Headteacher.
- I will ensure that electronic communication with students, including email and social networking are compatible with my professional role and that messages cannot be misunderstood or misinterpreted.
- I will promote e-safety with students in my care and will help them to develop a responsible attitude to system use, communications and publishing.

The School may exercise its right to monitor the use of the School's information systems and Internet access, to intercept e-mail and to delete inappropriate materials where it believes unauthorised use of the school's information system may be taking place, or the system may be being used for criminal purposes or for storing unauthorised or unlawful text, imagery or sound.

PHOENIXPLACE Internet E-Safety Use Agreement

Please read this document carefully as it describes the rules your child must follow when using the Internet throughout their School years. Both parents/carers and students must read this agreement to acknowledge the importance of your rights and responsibilities as users of the Internet in the School.

Students and parents then need to sign and return the ICT Use Agreement, this will be completed before the student starts.

- This agreement requires that students use the Internet and School network in a proper and responsible way, that you respect other users, and their rights and religions, and that you do not abuse School rules.
- The use of the Internet and Home-School access must be for education and for normal School work.
- Transmission of any material in violation of any UK laws is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to copyrighted material, threatening or obscene materials and virus infected documents.
- The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate activity will result in you not being allowed to use School computers.
- A log of all computer activity and Internet access is monitored so misuse of the system by individuals can be quickly identified and dealt with.

Network Rules - You are expected to abide by the following rules:

- A. Be polite. Never be abusive, or inappropriate, in your messages to others.
- B. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
- C. The use of external private or personal websites, social networking sites, chatrooms and messaging services are not permitted unless they are provided to all students by the School for a specific educational purpose under the direction of the teacher.
- D. Do not reveal the personal address or phone number of students or colleagues to anyone.
- E. Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not private. The School will have access to all mail. Messages relating to, or in support of, illegal activities may be reported to the police. Only use the email system provided by the School.
- F. Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users.
- G. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be property of the School.
- H. For certain Internet forums, discussion groups, user groups, servers, etc, which contain or address material that is, or could be construed to be obscene students and staff are expressly denied access to such Internet resources.
- I. iEmail, files transfers, or file access is denied to these sites. Such addresses may not be book- marked, hot-listed, or otherwise included in individual student directories.
- J. Students may not use another individual's account or login name and password.
- K. Students may not access resources for which they do not have expressed permission. If you feel you can identify an access security problem on the School network, or Internet, you must notify a member of staff. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users.
- L. Attempts to log-on to the Internet as a system administrator are specifically denied. Any such attempts will result in cancellation of users' privileges. Any user identified as a security risk may be denied access to the Internet and School computer resources.
- M. Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy any hardware or data of another user or any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
- N. Students who cause damage will be required to meet the cost of repair or replacement.
- O. The School makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing.
- P. The School will not be responsible for any damages, including the loss of data resulting from delays, non- deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or your errors or omissions.
- Q. The School specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

Homophobic Bullying

Every child in every school has the right to learn free from the fear of bullying, whatever form that bullying may take. Everyone involved in a child's education needs to work together to ensure that this is the case. Preventing and responding to homophobic bullying should be part of schools' general strategies for tackling bullying.

What is homophobic bullying?

- Homophobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people.

Who experiences homophobic bullying?

- Young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB).
- Young people who are thought to be lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- Young people who are different in some way - they may not act like the other boys or girls.
- Young people who have gay friends, or family, or their parents/carers are gay.
- Teachers, who may or may not be lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Who does the bullying?

- Anyone. Especially if they have not been told it's wrong.
- They think that lesbian and gay people should be bullied, because they believe gay people are "wrong".
- People who might be gay themselves, and are angry about that.
- People who think "boys should act like boys" and "girls should act like girls".
- People who think gay people shouldn't have the same rights as heterosexual people and use this as justification for bullying.
- People who think gay parenting is wrong and students should be treated differently because of it.

Why should schools do anything about it?

Schools have a legal duty to ensure homophobic bullying is dealt with in schools. Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, head teachers, with the advice and guidance of governors and the assistance of school staff, must identify and implement measures to promote good behaviour, respect for others, and self-discipline amongst students, and to prevent all forms of bullying. This includes the prevention of homophobic bullying.

Homophobic bullying can have a negative impact on young people:

- Bullying can also be linked to poor attendance with studies showing a high degree of absenteeism.
- Seven out of ten young lesbian and gay people say homophobic bullying affects their work.
- Low self-esteem, including the increased likelihood of self-harm and the contemplation of suicide.
- Young people who experience homophobic bullying are unlikely to fulfil the objectives of Every Child Matters and Youth Matters.

How to recognise homophobic bullying

Homophobic bullying can be hard to identify because it may be going on in secret. Sometimes, students may not want to tell anyone about it in case teachers/staff or other adults assume they are gay.

A recent study found that three in five gay students never tell anyone (either at home or school) when they are being bullied. The fact that young people are particularly reluctant to tell is a distinctive aspect of homophobic bullying.

Generally, homophobic bullying looks like other sorts of bullying, but in particular it can include:

- Verbal abuse – including spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that something or someone is inferior and so they are "gay" – for example, "you're such a gay boy!" or "those trainers are so gay!"
- Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault, and threatening behaviour.
- Cyberbullying – using on-line spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them, can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging.

How to respond to homophobic bullying

- School staff interact with students on a daily basis and are more likely to see, and be told about, incidents of homophobic bullying.

- It is important that staff responses are, in line with Ofsted guidelines, 'swift, proportionate, discreet, influential and effective'.
- Staff should feel able to respond effectively to incidents of homophobic bullying, and instil confidence in students and parents/carers that issues will be dealt with.

Responding to homophobic language:

Casual homophobic language is common in schools but, if it is not challenged, students may think that homophobic bullying is acceptable. It is therefore important to challenge homophobic language when it occurs:

- Ensure that students know that homophobic language will not be tolerated in schools. Make sure it is included in policies and procedures.
- When an incident occurs, students should be informed that homophobic language is offensive, and will not be tolerated.
- If a student continues to make homophobic remarks, explain in detail the effects that homophobic bullying has on people.
- If a student makes persistent remarks, they should be removed from the classroom and teachers and staff should talk to him or her in more detail about why their comments are unacceptable.
- If the problem persists, involve senior managers. The student should be made to understand the sanctions that will apply if they continue to use homophobic language.
- Consider inviting the parents/carers to school to discuss the attitudes of the student.

Responsibilities of Staff

Staff will;

- Foster self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate at all times the high standards of personal and social behaviour expected of students
- Discuss issues relating to bullying openly with all students e.g. through PSE lessons, tutorials and assemblies so that they learn about the damage it causes
- Encourage students to tell a member of staff if they feel they are being bullied
- Be aware of any behaviour which might indicate that bullying is happening
- Listen to any student who feels that she is being bullied, take them seriously and act to support and protect them
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying and report back promptly and fully when action has been taken
- Deal with instances of observed bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with the Management of Behaviour Policy

Responsibilities of Students

Students will;

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of making themselves unpopular
- Intervene to protect any student who is being bullied unless it would be unsafe to do so
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying as soon as they are able to do so, and to dispel any climate of secrecy, thus helping to prevent any other instances.

Anyone who finds themselves victims of bullying should never be afraid to speak out and put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

Responsibilities of Parents

We ask our parents to support their child by;

- Watching for any signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying
- Advising their children to report bullying to staff and discussing the implications of bullying being allowed to continue
- Advising their child against any violent retaliation in response to bullying
- Keeping a written record of any reported instances of bullying
- Informing PHOENIXPLACE of any suspected bullying
- Co-operating with the management of PHOENIXPLACE in trying to find out the truth if their child is accused of bullying, and supporting the management of PHOENIXPLACE in discussing the implications of bullying for both the victim and perpetrator

In accordance with the Management of Behaviour Policy;

- Any reported incident will be investigated thoroughly and a Restorative Approach will be sought
- Should an exclusion be necessary, parents will be informed, both by letter and verbally, that this needs to happen and why
- A written account will be taken from all students involved to ascertain the truth of the matter
- Appropriate sanctions will be taken in order to ensure that the perpetrator understands the seriousness of the incident/s
- Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that the victim feels that the matter has been dealt with and that they are able to go about their daily tasks without further fear of bullying

Disciplinary sanctions are applied to;

- Underline the seriousness and unacceptability of bullying behaviour
- To hold offenders to account,
- To deter them from repeating the actions and
- To signal to everyone that effective action will always be taken

However, we see this as best carried out in a spirit of help for the alleged bully and as a means of protecting other people, rather than in retribution or revenge. Therapeutic support for the bully (and the victim) will be arranged as needed.

The evidence from many studies suggests that aggressive responses, even in an understandable spirit of righteous justice on behalf of the victim, can be counter-productive. They can cause any latent feelings of shame on the part of the bully to be replaced by evasion, self-justification and pre-occupation with self-defence, and lead to counter-aggression against staff or students.

People can usually only feel concern and empathy for others if they are not under threat themselves, and it is important that empathic feelings are encouraged. To this end, it is helpful to talk to the bully not in terms of guilt and blame but in terms of the advantages to everyone of more considerate behaviour to restore and repair the harm and wrongdoing. Where appropriate, restorative approaches may be sought.

We aim, by taking this approach, for the bully to accept the eventual sanctions applied in her case as fair and helpful to everyone.

Restorative Approach – see Management of Behaviour Policy

Please also refer to the following policies

- Management of Behaviour
- Exclusion
- Anti- Radicalisation
- Safeguarding
- FBV
- SMSC