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# **Queen Elizabeth's School**

## **SCHOOL POLICY ON BULLYING**

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### **Aims of this Policy**

Our aim is to teach our boys to behave well and to foster good attitudes. We believe that a fulfilled adult life is founded on good character as much as on the best academic qualifications, and our major aim is to teach boys to be responsible for their actions.

Queen Elizabeth's is committed to providing a friendly and safe environment for all our pupils and other members of the School community. Pupils have the right to learn and develop in a supportive and secure atmosphere and thereby realise their full potential. We aim to promote thoughtfulness towards and respect for others, and to this end all members of the School community have a responsibility to help promote an atmosphere where bullying is actively discouraged and deemed unacceptable.

We strive to acknowledge and reward good behaviour and deal promptly and firmly with inappropriate behaviour towards others. The School's discipline system aims to create conditions for an orderly community in which there is mutual respect between all its members.

We also aim to generate a climate of trust where pupils are confident in reporting incidents of bullying. Pupils should understand that withholding information protects bullies and allows them to continue their behaviour. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

In accordance with the Home-School Agreement which all parents are asked to sign, the Governors expect all parents to ensure that their sons behave in a way that makes a positive contribution to a harmonious school where pupils and staff feel safe and valued.

This Policy does not stand on its own and should be read in conjunction with the Governors' policies on Discipline, Information and Communication Technology, Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities, Special Educational Needs and Disability, and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policies.

### **1. What is bullying?**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It is not restricted to an action of a pupil against another pupil and it can be perpetrated by or against anyone in the School community. This includes bullying by pupils of adults and by adults of pupils.

Bullying can take many forms and some of the ways in which it can be manifested are:

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- **Physical:** hitting, kicking or taking another's belongings;
- **Verbal:** name-calling, offensive remarks;
- **Non-verbal:** offensive gestures, or offensive remarks transmitted on paper, electronically or otherwise;
- **Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening;
- **Exclusion:** systematic exclusion or isolation of others;
- **Cyber-bullying:** See below.

There are many reasons why bullying might occur. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities, or it can be motivated by actual or perceived differences between people. Harassment and discrimination of this kind is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 and the School has a duty to ensure that all forms of prejudice-motivated bullying are dealt with firmly. Bullying on any ground will not be tolerated by the School.

Bullying does not have to occur on School premises for it to be covered by this Policy and any reported incidents of bullying which occur off the School's premises will be investigated and dealt with in exactly the same way as any incident that occurs on School premises.

### **2. Cyber bullying**

Technology is a part of our daily lives but it has also provided a new medium for bullying. Cyber-bullying can happen at any time of the day or night and there is potentially a much larger audience to the unacceptable behaviour.

Cyber-bullying can include sending offensive or threatening text messages or emails to, or about, another person. It may also include posting derogatory or offensive remarks on social networking sites or online blogs or taking and/or posting photographs online or sending them as a text message or email.

It is illegal for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication with a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, is a threat, or is information which is known or believed to be false by the sender. As such, the School cannot and will not tolerate any form of cyber-bullying.

Further information and advice about Cyber Bullying can be found on the Parents' Portal of eQE under Pastoral Care>Dress and Behaviour: Staying safe in cyber space, in the document entitled 'Cyber Bullying and E-Safety'.

### **3. Racism**

Bullying of a member of the School community on the basis of their race, religion, beliefs, colour, nationality, national origins or ethnic origins will not be tolerated, nor will any form of discrimination based on these or any other grounds.

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#### **4. Homophobic bullying**

Homophobic bullying occurs when someone is made to feel victimised, ridiculed, threatened or isolated because of their sexuality or perceived sexuality. Like all other forms of bullying, homophobic bullying can be perpetrated through verbal insults, taunting, rumour spreading, exclusion from social groups, physical assault or in cyber space. Homophobic bullying can also consist of the threat to 'out' someone to family and friends, even if the victim is not gay.

The School will take very seriously any incidences of homophobic bullying and those involved will be dealt with appropriately. Casual insults derived from homophobia (for example, the use of the word 'gay' in a pejorative sense), even when the speaker does not believe they are speaking in a homophobic context, will not be tolerated in School.

The School has been awarded Champion School Status by the campaign group Stonewall for demonstrating its commitment to celebrating diversity amongst its community, including of sexual orientation, and for working towards the eradication of bullying in all forms, particularly homophobic bullying.

#### **5. Anti-bullying rules**

The School does not tolerate bullying of any kind.

Bullying, in whatever form, can have a debilitating effect on the victim and cause them to lose confidence or feel threatened or vulnerable. No member of the School community should bully or harass any other person.

All those who work at or are taught at the School are to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

Any incidents of bullying will be treated as an extremely serious infringement of School policy and they will be met with severe disciplinary action. A serious incident of bullying may lead to those pupils involved being excluded for a fixed period or permanently.

#### **6. Prevention of bullying at the School**

The School seeks to minimise the occurrence of bullying and ensure that incidents are dealt with appropriately. The following measures have been put in place to help achieve this:

- Encouraging a culture in which pupils and staff feel comfortable sharing their concerns confidentially;

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- Assemblies and tutoring sessions to make all boys aware of the School's Policy on bullying and to reinforce both the importance of positive relationships and online safety;
- All members of the School community are expected to exercise self-discipline and behave in a courteous and respectful manner towards others;
- Play areas are segregated by age, whilst lunch and bus queues and are supervised by staff and/or prefects;
- The School liaises with primary schools to identify potentially vulnerable boys at an early stage;
- All members of staff are equipped to deal with any incidents of bullying which are reported by pupils;
- High priority is given to continuity in pastoral care throughout both the Lower and Middle School and in the Sixth Form. This enables tutors to really get to know the boys and build up a relationship of trust which in turn will help them identify early signs of bullying behaviour;
- Form tutors and members of the Senior Leadership Team meet with pupils on a regular basis for one-to-one bespoke pastoral checks. This provides teaching staff with an opportunity to get to know the boys in more depth and thereby enables them to detect any signs that bullying is occurring, whether as victim or perpetrator;
- Half-termly reports on bullying incidents generated from School records are analysed by Senior members of staff, including those from the Senior Leadership Team and those who lead the Lower school, Middle school and Sixth Form. From this, strategies are formulated to effectively combat and minimise incidences of bullying;
- Senior boys are encouraged to act as role models for those who need support. A peer mentoring system led by senior boys is in place for pupils for whom support from an older pupil is considered the most suitable input;
- All boys are encouraged to take responsibility for reporting incidents of bullying to a staff member or senior boy without fear of retribution or ridicule;
- Clear channels for parents to report concerns about alleged bullying. These are explained to parents at least once a year;
- One-to-one support is available for boys when a Year Head decides that it is appropriate and a Special Needs co-ordinator is available to facilitate this;

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- Familiarisation with the School's Bullying Policy and Information and Communication Technology Policies is part of the routine induction of all new staff members and is revisited during staff training and development;
- The Headmaster and Assistant Head (Pastoral) personally review all cases of bullying and any learning points are fed back to staff in training in a timely and confidential manner;
- This Policy is kept under regular review.

#### **7. Procedures for dealing with bullying**

- Pupils who have been bullied (or think they might be being bullied) should report this to a parent, a teacher, a senior boy or a friend;
- Parents who have any concerns about bullying should contact their son's Form Tutor or Year Head in the first instance;
- When an incident of bullying is reported or discovered it will be dealt with immediately by a senior member of staff or Year Head in conjunction with the Form Tutor. The alleged victim will be treated sympathetically at all times;
- The School will promote the safety and security of the individual pupils involved. There are various strategies that may be employed when a case of bullying is reported and these will depend on the nature and seriousness of the bullying and the particular circumstances of each instance. The parents of an alleged victim will be contacted by the Year Head and, where appropriate, a meeting arranged;
- A serious incident of bullying may lead to those involved being excluded for a fixed period or permanently. Where a pattern of bad behaviour has emerged then the exclusion may be permanent. In all cases the parents of a boy accused of bullying will be required to visit the School to discuss the matter and to undertake to support the School's strong line on bullying;
- The School will also consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether the child engaging in bullying may need additional support themselves.
- Whatever decisions are taken, the School will continue to monitor the situation and offer on-going support to the victim (and the perpetrator, if needed). The School will keep records of all meetings and decisions taken to help identify emerging patterns of behaviour and take appropriate action when necessary.
- Where appropriate, the School will consider if there is a need to report the bullying as a safeguarding or criminal law issue.

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### 8. Promoting this Policy

It is important that everyone in the School community is aware of and abides by this Policy. Therefore

- Pupils are encouraged to be supportive of each other and reminded of the School's attitude to bullying at assemblies and by their Form Tutors;
- Staff are kept informed through information on eQE, inductions for new staff and during staff training and development;
- Parents are informed on tours (where appropriate), in the School's prospectus, in our Home-School Agreement and at our annual briefing meetings;
- This Policy can easily be located on eQE.

### 9. Responsibility for this Policy

The Headmaster has overall responsibility for this Policy. The nominated Child Protection Governor is the member of the Governing Body with a special interest in preventing bullying.

If any person is concerned that the School has not effectively addressed bullying, they should contact the Assistant Head (Pastoral) or refer to the School's Complaints Procedure.

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LINKED  
POLICIES

- ❑ *Governors' Statement of Education*
  - ❑ *Equal Opportunities Policy*
  - ❑ *Home-School Agreement*
  - ❑ *Information and Communication Technology Policy: Acceptable Use; Electronic Mail; Monitoring Computer and Network Use*
  - ❑ *Mission Statement*
  - ❑ *Pupil Discipline Policy*
  - ❑ *Safeguarding Policy*
  - ❑ *Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy*
  - ❑ *Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy*
  - ❑ *Whistleblowing Policy*
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USEFUL  
RESOURCES

- **Childline**  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
0800 1111
  
- **Anti-bullying Alliance**  
[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
  
- **Bullying UK**  
[www.bullyinguk.co.uk](http://www.bullyinguk.co.uk)  
  
Helpline 0808 800 2222
  
- **Kidscape**  
[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
020 7730 3300  
Parents' Helpline 08451 205 204

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Approved by the Governing Body on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Signed .....

B.R. Martin, Chairman of the Governing Body