PARKGATE HOUSE SCHOOL

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INTRODUCTION

At Parkgate House School the girls and boys are expected to work hard to fulfil their own potential. Emphasis is on the individual so that all pupils, regardless of their strengths and weaknesses will feel treasured and able to reach their potential in a wide and varied field of study, including academics, music, drama, art and games. We have a strong personal development ethos where the girls and boys learn to live together, and emphasis is placed on kindness and consideration for others. The teacher is the key link between home and school and no problem is considered too small.

The Principal promotes an `Open Door' policy where the pupils are encouraged to talk over a problem or just have a chat.

However, it is recognised at Parkgate House School that from time-to-time children working, playing and living together will have problems. It is to this end that we have put together a workable anti-bullying policy to empower the staff, pupils and parents to deal with problems when they arise.

Support is made available to both bullies and victims, and parents are encouraged to support the work of the school. Prevention concentrates on the positive aim of improving relationships between pupils using all the resources available to the school.

Policy Aims

The school's aim is to raise the self-esteem of all the Parkgate House School pupils and create an atmosphere of mutual respect. Our school firmly believes that ALL CHILDREN HAVE A RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE. To achieve this, we aim to:

- Ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what constitutes bullying and the consequences for those involved.

- Create an atmosphere in which staff, parents and pupils are encouraged to report any incident of bullying, knowing that measures to deal with it will be employed in a supportive and sensitive way.

OUR POLICY

- Acknowledges that bullying takes place
- Clarifies what counts as bullying.
- Encourages pupils to report bullying, not join in or stand by.
- Sets out strategies for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying.
- Defines the roles and responsibilities of different groups within the school i.e. class teacher, counsellor, playground supervisor.
- Identifies how parents may be involved.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.
- States how preventative work on bullying will be addressed through the curriculum.

As a school we have a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying.

What We Define as Bullying

Bullying Behaviour Is Defined AS Follows: - DFE Guidelines

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

"A pupil is being bullied, or picked on, when another pupil or group of pupils say nasty things to him or her. It is also bullying when a pupil is hit, kicked, threatened, locked inside a room, sent nasty notes, when no-one ever talks to them and things like that.

These things can happen frequently, and it is difficult for the pupil being bullied to defend himself or herself. It is also bullying when a pupil is teased repeatedly in a nasty way.

However, if two pupils of equal power or strength have an occasional fight or quarrel, this is not bullying."

Bullying is behaviour which is meant to be deliberately hurtful to another person. Such behaviour is likely to be persistent and difficult for victims to defend themselves against. It can take the form of physical, verbal or emotional abuse but it can also involve the marginalisation and exclusion of individuals from specific groups. It can happen in the classroom, in common areas within the school and off-site, and can be carried out by an individual or group.

"Name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics, but pupils can be called nasty names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour; sexual orientation; or some form of disability."

Bullying normally has three things in common:

1. Deliberately hurtful behaviour.
2. Repeated over a period of time.
3. Difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Four main types of bullying:

1. Physical – hitting, kicking, punching, pushing or any type of physical violence.
2. Verbal – name-calling, insulting, teasing, threats, racist remarks, sarcasm.
3. Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion, hiding belongings.
4. Online- internet misuse including emails, blogs, gaming websites, chat rooms, internet messaging and social media. Misuse of mobile phones- text messages and calls, camera and video facilities.

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- bullying related to race, gender or culture
- bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability)
- bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions
- bullying related to sexual orientation (including homophonic bullying)
- bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying
- bullying via technology – 'cyberbullying'

THE EFFECTS OF BULLYING AND POSSIBLE EVIDENCE OF BULLYING

It is important to realise that the consequences of bullying can be extremely serious. Possible evidence of bullying may include the following points, and all members of staff should be aware of these:

- a pupil becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- a pupil becomes isolated, disengaged or withdrawn from the class, or is unwilling for example to participate in group work
- a pupil may frequently complain of headaches or nausea
- a pupil displays unusual patterns of non-attendance
- a pupil bears cuts, bruises, torn or dishevelled clothing
- there is noticeable damage to their books or other property

- there is an unaccountable and possibly repeated loss of bags, books, equipment or money
- a pupil may complain of missing possessions
- a deterioration in academic performance
- disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- easily distressed

These signs and behaviours could indicate problems other than bullying but, where they are observed, bullying should be considered as a possible cause.

OUR ACTIONS TO PREVENT BULLYING

- Structured P.S.H.E. lessons as part of the school's curriculum, based on guidance from The National PSHE Association.
- P.S.H.E. used as a forum to openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. This also includes different family situations such as same sex parents, looked after children, or those with caring responsibilities. The pupils are taught that any prejudice based language is unacceptable.
- Anti-Bullying awareness raised during National Anti-Bullying weeks in November in weekly assembly and through posters around the school. Pupils discuss bullying, what it is, what it looks like and what they can do if they experience bullying.
- Whole school use of the acronym 'S.T.O.P' (see appendix) for children to use to remind themselves what to do if they are ever bullied. Staff raise awareness of this with their classes.
- Virtues programme covered in Pre-Prep 1 to Prep 6. Pupils learn about a different virtue every two weeks such as respect, self-discipline, friendliness. These virtues are presented in weekly assemblies and discussed in class during PSHE lessons.
- Staff trained on the Anti- Bullying Policy and reminded of the behaviours to be looking out for which may indicate bullying during 'Policy of the Week'.
- Commitment to train all staff including- administration staff, lunch time support staff to identify signs of possible bullying.
- Staff trained via National College which has a range of safeguarding and duty of care programmes including ones specifically linked to bullying.
- Pre-Prep and Prep classes each have an 'Ask it Box' which can be used to communicate with the class teacher for pupils to tell them/ask them for support with a situation. Worries/concerns/thoughts from pupils are recorded and logged by Head of Department and followed up as appropriate.
- Details of help lines and support websites are discussed with children during lessons, assemblies and Anti-Bullying Week. These details are publicised around the school and in each Prep classroom.
- Anti-bullying questionnaire given to pupils Pre-Prep 1- Prep 6 to ask them for their views on bullying within school and act upon the information as necessary.

OUR RESPONSE TO BULLYING AND PROCEDURES

1. Accurate records are kept of all incidents involving bullying. The Bullying file is kept in the SLT office. Evidence in this file may include the following:
- daily notes from teachers
- notes from meetings/phone calls
- letters/emails from parents
- log of involvement with the school's affiliated councillor
- any physical incidents related to bullying should be logged with photographic evidence   where appropriate.

2. There is an overview of all incidents and concerns raised regarding bullying as well as more detailed notes on individual cases. This overview is analysed by the Head of Pastoral Care to look for trends and patterns. The overview is analysed and printed out to go in the bullying folder at the end of each term. The overview of incidents is also discussed and reviewed formally at the Pastoral Care review meeting.

3. All staff or supervisors should report concerns verbally or in writing to the Head of Pastoral Care, who then forwards them to all members of SLT and copies to Bullying File. Verbal comments will be noted for the file.

4. For all serious incidents, statements should be taken from the pupils involved and witnesses, parents contacted, and details kept on pupil's files, copies to Bullying File. After a period of observation and investigation into alleged bullying, the Head of Pastoral Care will contact/meet with both the parents of the 'victim' and parents of the 'bully' to explain the findings and necessary action.

5. Peer group pressure can be used to discourage bullying, and pupils can be helped to develop positive strategies. (The school's response to each case will obviously depend on the circumstances of each incident).

6. After finding out the facts about any bullying incident, the school can use a range of sanctions available from the Discipline Policy as appropriate- please see Discipline policy for more details.

7. Any concern raised by a parent, pupil or staff member will be explored and investigated by a member of SLT (Deputy Head or relevant Head of Department). The investigation may include interviewing relevant pupils and contacting staff members for their feedback and observations. Parents will be updated with the findings either by a phone call or a meeting. This will include a discussion over any necessary actions to be taken. A period of time will be agreed on to review the situation after the necessary action has taken place. Parents will receive a phone call or be asked to meet with a member of SLT again to review the situation officially. Notes from all meetings and phone calls will be kept and logged in the bullying folder and the pupils' individual central folder.

8. The school has a professionally trained counsellor available to support either the pupil themselves (victim or bully), other teachers and parents. Procedures are in place for staff and parents to record a concern regarding a child (including issues related to bullying) and for the Pastoral Care meeting to decide to involve the counsellor as part of the support.

9. Once the investigation is complete, steps will be taken to ensure the pupil/s continue to be supported. Such steps will include a follow-up meeting with the pupil and raising awareness of the pupils with members of staff during staff and departmental meetings. There will be close monitoring of the pupil/s, counselling offered if appropriate and the class teacher will seek to appoint a 'buddy' for the pupil.

10. If the measures that the school has taken are ineffective with regard to a child, then in consultation with parents, counselling will be sought from outside.

Eliminating Harassment

- All teachers are trained to comply with the school's safeguarding and e-safety policy (please reference these policies for more information)
- The Principal/Head Teacher to raise awareness amongst staff and pupils of disability related harassment (e.g. via assemblies, PSHE and class work)
- The Principal/Head Teacher to raise awareness amongst staff and pupils of homophobic related harassment (e.g. via assemblies, PSHE and class work)
- The Principal/Head Teacher to review the school's anti-bullying policy to acknowledge disability related harassment and the school's commitment to eliminate it.
- A buddy system will be set up for any disabled pupil joining the school.
- The school has a DDA policy in place (Discrimination against Disabilities Act policy). Please refer to this policy.

PARENTS

1. Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the school to achieve better relationships between pupils.
2. Parents should contact the form teacher if they are concerned about their child being unsettled or if they suspect they may be involved in bullying.
3. For all serious cases of bullying, parents will be asked to take part in discussions about what strategies should be used and to support the action taken by the school.
4. There is a presentation for parents on e-safety and the risks of cyber bullying which takes place every two years.

BULLYING OFF THE SCHOOL'S PREMISES

Bullying may occur off the school's premises. If the bully is a current pupil at the school, the procedures above apply. The situation is more difficult if the bully or bullies are not pupils at the school but one or more of the following steps can be taken to prevent reoccurrence or to help with the investigation:

- Discussion with the head of another school
- Discussion with pupils on how to avoid and handle bullying outside of school and how to protect themselves
- Discussion with parents

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Online Safety Policy
- PSHE policy and associated schemes of work
- Equal Opportunities policy
- Discipline policy
- Discrimination against Disabilities Act policy
- Complaints Policy
- Prevent Duty Policy
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy

LINKS TO LEGISLATION

There are a number of pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying. These may include:

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Independent School Standard Regulations 2010
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990
- Don't suffer in silence: an anti-bullying pack for schools Department for Education and Employment DfEE 0064/2000

USEFUL WEBSITES AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

These websites are used by staff and where appropriate they are shared and discussed with the pupils so they are aware of where and how to get support. They can also be shared with parents.

www.childline.co.uk
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
www.beatbullying.org
www.bullying.co.uk
www.parentlineplus.org.uk
www.kidscape.org.uk
www.pshe-association.org.uk
www.youngminds.org.uk
www.thinkuknow.co.uk
www.saferinternet.org.uk
www.kickitout.org
www.stophateuk.org
www.srtrc.org/educational

The school is a member of The Bullying Intervention Group and uses the resources available: http://www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/ The school is also working towards the Big Award, which recognises excellence in bullying intervention.

EQUALITY STATEMENT

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for persons with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)
Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.
Parkgate recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.
Parkgate will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with policy.

Policy Reviewer:	Deputy Head
Date of Policy Review:	28/08/24
Date of Next Policy Review:	28/08/24