

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### Arnold Aims

- 1) Arnold pupils will be responsible, articulate, courteous, compassionate young people of integrity, able and willing to contribute to, and lead in, our future society.
- 2) Each Arnold pupil will be guided and supported throughout their time in school by the highest standards of pastoral care.
- 3) The Arnold organisation will operate as a team with clear leadership and governance, where each adult and pupil recognises their individual contribution and responsibility, where successful achievements are acknowledged and rewarded, and where actions are accountable.

### Introduction

Bullying occurs when the repeated behaviour of an individual or group causes distress to another member of the School community, either on or off the school premises. This policy has regard to the DSCF Guidance- Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools.

It is important to note that:

- 1) Bullying need not be physical or intentional.
- 2) Bullying need not be perpetrated by a larger/older boy or girl against a smaller/younger one, but there is usually some imbalance of power present.
- 3) Bullying may be perpetrated by a single boy/girl or a group of boys/girls.
- 4) Actions/words which have no effect on one pupil could make the life of another miserable.
- 5) Bullying is never the fault of the bullied: a pupil may be sensitive or unassertive but this does not excuse bullying. All members of the school community must understand that bullying can cause psychological damage and even suicide.
- 6) Bullying is not a specific criminal offence, but all members of the school community should realise that there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.
- 7) We acknowledge that although bullying is by no means endemic or widespread in this school it does exist and it is not to be tolerated, ignored or excused.
- 8) Bullying can take a variety of different forms. These include:
  - Cyber – inappropriate use of the Internet, email, social networking sites and chat rooms. Cyberbullying also includes the inappropriate use of mobile telephones, texting and the misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities. (see Appendix 1)
  - Disability - inappropriate comments or behaviour focussing on an individual's disability.
  - Emotional - inappropriate comments or behaviour intended to cause emotional upset e.g. being unfriendly, excluding others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures.
  - Homophobic - inappropriate comments or behaviour focussing on an individual's perceived or stated homosexuality.

- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any similar or inappropriate use of force.
- Racist or cultural - inappropriate comments or behaviour focussing on an individual's racial, ethnic or cultural background.
- Religious - inappropriate comments or behaviour focussing on an individual's religious beliefs.
- Sexist – inappropriate comments or behaviour focussing on an individual's gender.
- Sexual - inappropriate physical contact or comments.
- Verbal - inappropriate comments intended to humiliate and upset e.g. name-calling, spreading rumours.

### **Aims and objectives**

All pupils have a right to spend their school days in a secure, tolerant environment free from bullying or fear of bullying. It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to try to create such an environment and to give pupils confidence that when incidents of bullying are disclosed, they will be taken seriously and dealt with. To achieve this, the School will:

- 1) encourage recognition that bullying in a variety of forms exists in most communities and needs to be constantly addressed;
- 2) make pupils, parents and staff aware of the School's anti-bullying strategy;
- 3) raise awareness of staff through training and briefings
- 4) regularly make clear to pupils the proper expectations of their behaviour towards each other;
- 5) encourage activities which involve co-operation, group work and team work;
- 6) use PSHE lessons to explore the nature of bullying and the reasons it occurs, and to suggest strategies for coping with it;
- 7) encourage pupils to bring incidents of bullying to the School's attention, stressing that tacit condoning of it amounts to approval;
- 8) recognise that pupils who indulge in bullying need themselves to be made aware of the effects of their behaviour and what is and is not acceptable treatment of others;
- 9) recognise that the bully's behaviour may be due to pressures and difficulties in his/her life and that help and counselling for the bully may be an appropriate response;
- 10) reassure parents that their concerns about bullying will always be taken seriously and investigated. The School will involve them in discussions at an early stage if their son/daughter is involved in such incidents.

### **Possible signs of bullying:**

- 1) Items of clothing, School property etc. damaged or lost more often than one would consider normal.
- 2) Frequent injuries to pupils.
- 3) A pupil becomes withdrawn and is reluctant to say why.
- 4) Patterned absenteeism, unaccustomed excuses.
- 5) Falling off in work, effort and performance.

Taken individually none of the above may be due to bullying but a combination of some of these signs could be a reason to suspect it.

**Anti-bullying strategy:**

- 1) Pastoral Tutors and Form Teachers (AJS) will see that pupils in all years are informed about the importance of community values and the principles outlined above.
- 2) The school supports the annual national anti-bullying campaign and the issue is addressed in sectional and full assemblies.
- 3) The anti-bullying strategy is also an element of the Junior School's approach to Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) and Social and Emotional Aspects of Development (SEAD) for Kindergarten EYFS.
- 4) Pastoral Tutors and Form Teachers (AJS) are encouraged to speak informally to individuals and to their forms on a whole range of issues concerning bullying and other anti-social behaviour.
- 5) All staff should include activities in their lessons that promote social inclusion (e.g. pair work, group work, appropriate seating arrangements).
- 6) All staff and prefects on duty at breaks, lunchtime, activity times and after school proactively monitor the places where bullying is most likely to take place. These include public areas, the school fields, locker areas and toilet/changing areas.
- 7) Pastoral Tutors and Form Teachers (AJS) and others need to be aware of the potential problem and investigate the situation when possible signs of bullying exist. Our reactions need to be consistent.
- 8) Pastoral Tutors and Form Teachers (AJS) should make it clear that they are available for a discussion with pupils in their form about bullying or indeed on any matter of concern. It is made clear to pupils that all members of the teaching community are available to discuss any bullying issues.
- 9) If an issue of bullying is raised in this way it should be referred to an appropriate member of staff (Pastoral Tutor/Form Teacher or Head of Section/Head of Key Stage). There may be a genuine problem which desperately needs sorting out; it may be that the problem is largely imaginary but nonetheless distressing; it may even be some form of attention seeking. Confidential information needs to be handled sensitively.
- 10) Once bullying has been potentially identified the appropriate staff will fully investigate the matter. If it does seem to be a case of bullying the following actions are taken:

**Generally:**

- 1) restrict the opportunities the bully has for bullying,

- 2) break up troublesome groups,
- 3) police public areas where the bully may be frequenting.

### **Specifically:**

- 1) See all the pupils involved (and possibly the parents, depending on the situation) and make it clear to the person being bullied that he/she is not to blame for the situation and that he/she has our support.
- 2) Each pupil involved must confirm what has allegedly occurred or is allegedly occurring.
- 3) Tell the bully that even if he/she is not acting intentionally what he/she is doing is a form of bullying and we will not tolerate it.
- 4) Keep a record of bullying incidents and place notes on files of all pupils involved.
- 5) All the staff who teach the pupil being bullied need to be informed of the situation and asked to be vigilant so that we can check what is going on.
- 6) Encourage pupils who were experiencing problems to keep a diary of their time at school. This could highlight positive aspects of their school life as well as any difficulties that they were facing. It may also be appropriate to support the victims of bullying with a 'buddy system'.
- 7) Staff intervention will be designed to bring any bullying to an end without damaging pupils' peer group relationships. The Deputy Head or Headmaster AJS must be kept informed of the action taken and this must be in line with the school's disciplinary procedures. A record of the action must be placed on the pupil's file.
- 8) As a last resort it may be necessary to exclude the bully from School permanently.

### **Appendix 1 -Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is such a widespread phenomenon that the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF) has a Cyberbullying Taskforce. The DCSF offers the following definition of cyberbullying:

"The use of Information & Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile 'phones and the Internet, deliberately to upset someone else".

Examples reported by schools include:

- 1) pupils who set up website pages and invite others to post derogatory comments about a pupil;
- 2) pupils who film fights or assaults (so-called "happy slapping") and circulate them via mobile 'phones;
- 3) pupils sending insulting and vicious text messages;
- 4) pupils posting fake and obscene photographs of the victim on a social networking site;

- 5) pupils hacking into social networking sites and removing and circulating material which may be embarrassing or personal.

Cyberbullying can have far greater impact than other forms of bullying because:

- 1) it involves the invasion of personal space;
- 2) it gives anonymity (at least initially) to the bully;
- 3) it gives the bully the ability to broadcast upsetting messages and images rapidly to a potentially huge audience and to continue to do so repeatedly over a long period of time.

Another unusual factor is the way that other pupils who would not normally take part in bullying behaviour may be drawn in as accessories. This can happen, for example, when an image is circulated on a mobile 'phone by a bully and recipients extend the circulation further by passing it on to a wider circle.

### **Prevention of Cyberbullying**

Arnold has developed proactive strategies to prevent cyberbullying and will fully investigate incidents when they happen. The School aims to create a culture where cyberbullying is widely regarded as unacceptable. All pupils must realise that:

- 1) the school reserves the right to monitor pupils' use of the internet on a routine basis and to examine mobile phones where there is reason to suspect abuse;
- 2) misuse of technology is subject to the school's disciplinary regime;
- 3) pupils will be held personally responsible for all material they have placed on a web site and for all material that appears on a web site of which they are the account holder;
- 4) misconduct of this kind outside school will be amenable to school discipline if the welfare of other pupils or the culture or reputation of the school are placed at risk; and
- 5) sanctions may include confiscation of mobile phones or restrictions on the use of the internet.

The School's position on cyberbullying will be reinforced within school assemblies, sectional assemblies, ICT and PHSE lessons, and forms an integral part of the school's anti-bullying policy.

### **Responding to Incidents**

The school will investigate all allegations of cyberbullying as in the school's main anti-bullying strategy. The victims of cyberbullying should:

- 1) receive reassurance (with cyberbullying, this can include advice on self-protection measures such as blocking messages from a particular source or cleaning up "buddy lists");
- 2) be encouraged to preserve evidence in the form of text messages, images and other material;

It is important to note, however, that responding to incidents of cyberbullying creates some unique challenges. These include the potential difficulty of identifying a perpetrator who may

be using an internet pseudonym or has appropriated another person's mobile phone for the purposes of sending abusive messages. In many cases, conventional methods of investigation by the school, such as observation by staff or statements from witnesses, may be successful in identifying perpetrators.

However, serious cases may need to be referred to the police for investigation. Pupils should be aware that a number of criminal offences can be committed in the course of cyberbullying, including:

- 1) harassment
- 2) publishing obscene material
- 3) taking, storing and circulating indecent images of children
- 4) using threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour
- 5) aiding and abetting crimes of violence.

The decision to refer an issue to the Police is a matter of judgement for the school. Schools are strongly advised to make a referral if any of the following factors are present:

- 1) there is evidence that a serious criminal offence has been, or is about to be, committed;
- 2) the victim has suffered significant harm or is at risk of significant harm (including self-harm);
- 3) there is evidence or suspicion of adult involvement - schools need to be aware of the possibility that abuse and manipulation of children via the internet may involve adults posing as children, even as other pupils;
- 4) there is evidence or suspicion of concerted action by a group of pupils, particularly if more than one school is involved;
- 5) any of the children involved are on the Child Protection Register.

The Police will have more resources at their disposal for investigation, but only the most serious cases are likely to be given priority.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy document will be monitored by the Deputy Head (SS) and Head (AJS), who will report to the Headmaster on its implementation on a regular basis. This policy is reviewed in the summer term each year or at other times, as appropriate. The policy is made available to parents, staff and other relevant parties in accordance with the school's Provision of Information Policy.