

2015

School Discipline – Bullying Policy

Blackwood Comprehensive School
Ysgol Gyfun Y Coed Duon

This document contains the specific policy and associated information relating to School Discipline – bullying at Blackwood Comprehensive School



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BULLYING

Bullying exists in **all** schools. Blackwood Comprehensive is **not** an exception to the norm. As such, the staff of the school, through careful monitoring and supervising of pupils, must be alert to all potential incidents perceived as aggressive, anti-social and bullying behaviour. Where such behaviour does occur staff should act immediately to support the victim and correct the bully.

All pupils have the right to attend school in safety, without fear of hurt or threats from others. Where any individual or group threatens this right then it has to be seen as bullying.

Types of bullying

Staff and pupils have to be aware of:

- (a) **Physical bullying** - hitting someone or using physical violence.
- (b) **Verbal bullying** - teasing, taunting or vicious name calling.
- (c) **Gesture bullying** - threatening to use physical violence.
- (d) **Exclusion bullying** - deliberately ignoring or leaving out someone.
- (e) **Extortion bullying** - demanding money.
- (f) **Cyber bullying** – through text messages, chat rooms or e-mails.

As is the case in all schools, where there are large gatherings of pupils, there will inevitably be one-off incidents sparked by differences of opinion. Where such incidents occur, these would **not** normally be thought of as bullying.

The School's Approach to Bullying

Blackwood Comprehensive School does not tolerate bullying. It is well publicised through Assembly time and PHSE programmes that the school is a "**Telling School**".

Pupils are encouraged to share their problems with members of staff. If the members of staff are not informed, then we will remain ignorant of the problem and the position will worsen. All pupils have to be frequently reminded of this.

Telling about bullying is not "telling tales" or "grassing". Pupils have to be told that they have the right to be safe from attacks and harassment and they should not be silent when they are being tormented or hurt. Through the School's Code of Behaviour, pupils are expected to act responsibly and to respect the rights of others. **Anyone** can tell of incidents involving bullying. This way bullying can be beaten.

Advice to Staff

Watch for early signs of distress in pupils - deterioration of work, sudden illnesses, isolation, and erratic attendance, the desire to remain with adults. Whilst this behaviour may be symptomatic of other problems, it may be the early signs of bullying.

It is important that all accessible areas of the school are patrolled at break, lunchtime, between lessons and at the end of the day.

Tackling a bullying incident

- 1 Remain calm - you are in charge.
- 2 Take the incident seriously, listen carefully and record details.
- 3 Refer to form tutor/Progress Manager/Assistant Head Pupil Welfare.
(Taking prompt action will be seen as immediate support to the victim).
- 4 An investigation of incident will require interview of victim, bully and possible witnesses.
- 5 Re-assure the victim by offering concrete help, advice, and support. (Don't make them look foolish or inadequate).
- 6 Make it plain to the bully that you disapprove.
- 7 Encourage the bully to see victim's point of view.
- 8 Punish the bully if you have to, but avoid re-acting aggressively.
- 9 Explain the punishment so that the bully understands why it is being given.

Involving Others

- 1 Inform colleagues if vigilance is needed.
- 2 Inform both sets of parents calmly, clearly and concisely - re-assure both sets of parents that the incident will not linger on or be held against anyone.

Final Steps

- 1 Make sure the incident doesn't live on - check with both victim and bully from time to time.
- 2 Should this fail, exclusion of the bully would be automatic and the LEA notified.

Advice to Pupils

Children can be bullied at any time, at any place. It is therefore important to remind them at least once a term that Blackwood Comprehensive School is a "Telling School". This has to be emphasised publicly through year group Assemblies.

Pupils should be:

- (i) encouraged to tell of bullying incidents (bullies depend upon secrecy).
- (ii) assured of confidentiality
- (iii) able to see that immediate action is being taken.

Through studying a PHSE programme, in every year group, pupils should be able to develop ways and means in tackling situations and problems linked with bullying. Pupils should, to protect themselves, take such guidance with the same degree of seriousness as they would with academic lessons. All pupils need to understand that bullying in any form is unacceptable.

A victim of bullying

A victim of bullying will remain so, if silence is maintained. Therefore, a victim must **tell** an adult. It doesn't matter if it's a parent, a form teacher, a dinner lady, the headmaster or a favourite subject teacher, as long as someone is told. A plan can be drawn up to stop the bully.

A victim will receive immediate support and re-assurance. There should be no need for the victim to feel that matters will become worse. In 99% of cases, bullying will stop once it has been reported. Where bullying doesn't stop, further action will be taken whereby the bully would be removed from the school.

Most bullies, once they have been identified and spoken to by a senior member of staff, will stop their unacceptable actions. Parental involvement and/or exclusion from school has a sobering effect on their behaviour.

Remember:

- Don't suffer in silence.
- Don't stay away from school.
- Don't be frightened.
- Don't avoid the problem.
- TELL SOMEONE - ANYONE.
- Bullying can be stopped.

All pupils should help themselves and others by not tolerating bullies in their friendship group. They should only accept people who do not bully others. This way, bullies will soon stop if they are socially excluded.

Advice to Parents

All these are **possible** results of bullying. The word "possible" has to be stressed because there could be other reasons that also need to be explored.

If parents think their child is being bullied at school then the school should be informed immediately. Contact should be made with the relevant progress manager or with the Assistant Head pupil welfare. An investigation based on the details given by parents will take place and appropriate action taken.

If a bullying problem occurs outside school (and many of them do) parents should either inform the police or contact a solicitor. In so doing, they should ask for a letter to be sent to the bully's parents, who have an important part to play in protecting their child from bullying. What they should be looking for initially is any sign of distress.

For example:

- an unwillingness to attend school
- a pattern of headaches or stomach aches
- equipment that has gone missing
- equipment, clothing that has been damaged
- request for extra pocket money
- come home starving
- bruises and cuts
- becomes withdrawn
- becomes badly behaved and begins bullying others
- change their route to school
- demands to be driven to school
- refuse to say what's wrong
- parents, informing them of the legal consequences of a recurrence of such behaviour.

Taking the law into your own hands and encouraging a child to hit back often makes matters worse. More positively, encouraging children to recruit friends is more likely to reduce the threat of bullying.

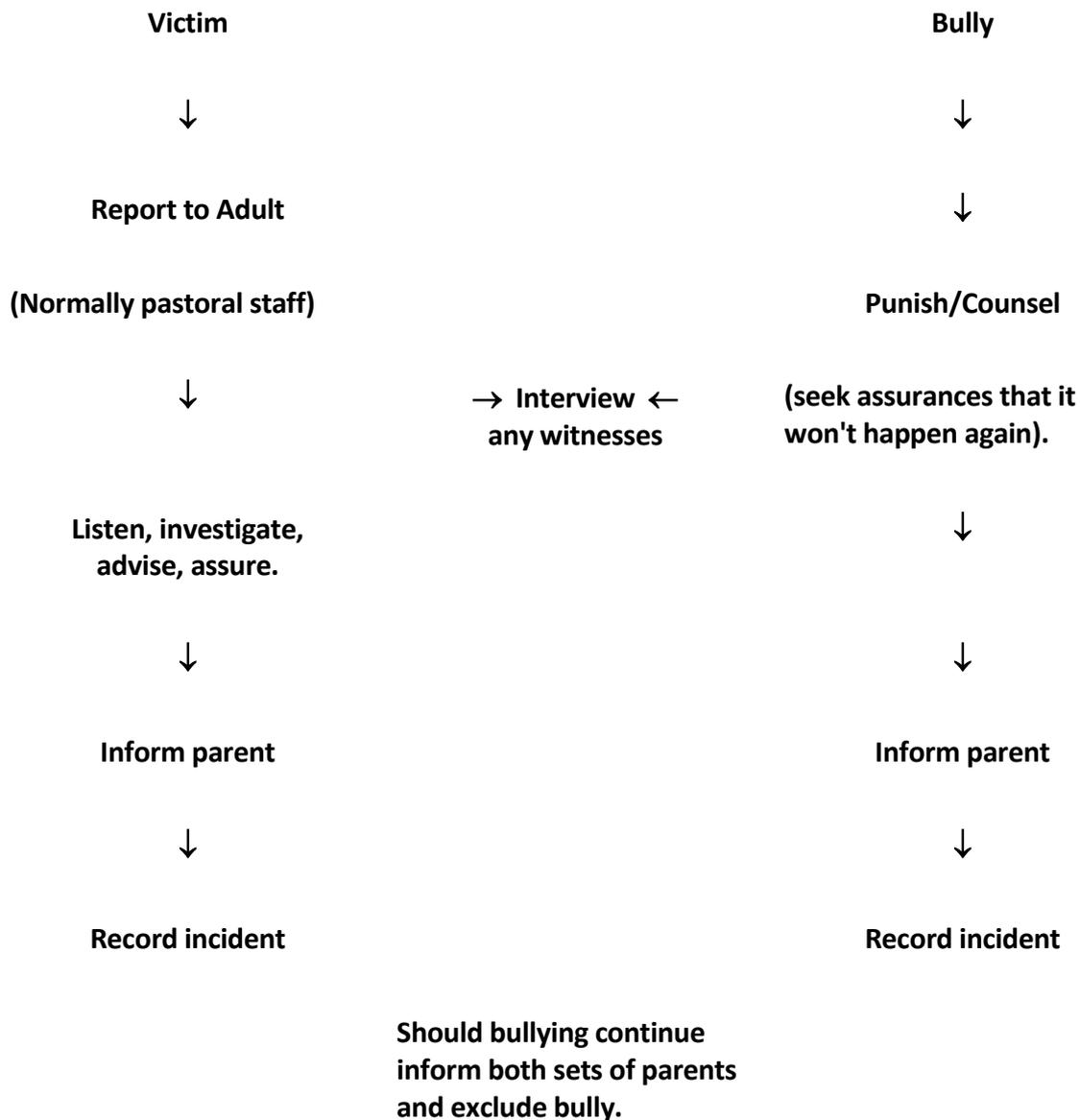
Parents, by nature, are protective of their children but they must be aware that a child who gives a "one-sided" and biased account of what has taken place could manipulate them.

Examples of this could be "name-calling" - often it is six of one and half-dozen of the other. Boisterous play, messing about, innocent horseplay can backfire and be made to appear as if one side has become aggressive and bully-like.

Parents are able to help their children avoid being bullied by ensuring that they have the skills to cope with everyday situations. Everyone suffers setbacks and take knocks in life. Overcoming the setbacks is important. Overprotection or "molly-coddling" a child is doing no favours in dealing with situations that develop in everyday life. Children should be encouraged to deal with problems and develop strategies to overcome the problems rather than totally rely on parental protection.

Summary

BULLYING INCIDENT



Preventative strategies used include:

- PSHE Citizenship – bullying questionnaire.
- Raising awareness of the anti-bullying.
- Booklet for parents.
- Buddy system.
- School Council.
- Posters around school at various times of the year.
- Theatre Companies.

Supporting strategies used include:

- Buddy system.
- Peer mentoring.
- Form Tutors.
- School nurse.
- Nurture room.
- Regular monitoring.
- Information sharing with parents.
- Lunchtime/breaktime supervision.