



## **POLICY FOR THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING**

*Rooted in Christ and Catholic tradition and under the guidance of its patron, St Edmund's aims to realise the God-given potential, in body, mind and spirit, of all members of its community through service and leadership.*

*Avita Pro Fide!*

*St Edmund's is committed to ensuring the welfare and protection of children in their care and this commitment is a fundamental part of the role of every employee.*

The aim of the policy is to ensure that St Edmund's is able to provide a caring and supportive Christian community for all its members and to ensure that bullying will not be tolerated as it may cause psychological damage and could even lead to suicide; at the very least, it prevents students from making the most of their time at St Edmund's.

St Edmund's views bullying as persistent acts of unkindness by one or more students against another individual or group of students and as deliberately hurtful behaviour involving unequal power relationships, repeated over a period of time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups and it can be difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying may be on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability or because a child is adopted or a carer. It can take many forms, but includes harassment, physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. name calling, teasing, racist remarks, homophobic language), indirect (e.g. spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups) or cyber bullying (e.g. use of internet sites, internet messaging, sending of photographs, email or text). St Edmund's has a separate Prevention of Cyberbullying Policy.

It is the policy of St Edmund's to actively discourage bullying as well as to take positive measures through the pastoral programme to educate all students to understand why action deemed to be bullying is wrong.

It is the job of all members of St Edmund's to challenge bullying wherever and whenever it occurs and it is the responsibility of every member of staff to deal sensitively but effectively with any incidents that are reported to them. Staff must also be careful that their own actions are not perceived as bullying and to this end they should carefully read the staff Code of Conduct.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF PREVENTION OF BULLYING POLICY**

If bullying is suspected or reported:

- the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who suspects bullying is taking place or who has been approached;
- a clear account of the incident will be recorded in writing and given to the Head of House or Head of Year who will interview those concerned and suggest

action. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will be informed and the incident and outcome(s) logged.

- the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will record the incident and decide (in consultation with the Head of House) on action to be taken. If necessary, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will take a decision as to whether Child Protection procedures are to be implemented, usually in discussion with the Head. If so, the matter will also be recorded in the Child Protection log and dealt with accordingly, including referral to Children's Social Care if appropriate.
- House Tutors and teachers will be kept informed as appropriate and will monitor the situation both during and following the process.
- Parents will be kept informed.

In line with the School's Behaviour Policy, the following sanctions may be taken against offenders:

- 1) Official warnings to cease offending.
- 2) College detention.
- 3) Thursday after school detention.
- 4) Saturday morning Headmaster's detention.
- 5) Suspension from St Edmund's for serious or repeated offences.
- 6) Permanent Exclusion from St Edmund's for serious or repeated offences.

## **Signs of Bullying**

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour for example becoming shy or nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes to work patterns, a lack of concentration or truancy. This is not an exhaustive list and students, staff and parents should be alert to any signs that might indicate that bullying is taking place.

## **Guidelines and support for Students**

Students who are being bullied or believe that someone else is, must report the matter straight away. The report can be made to any member of staff, teaching or non-teaching, but in particular, Tutor, Head of House, Head of Year or to the Chaplaincy Coordinator. Where possible the school will always aim to reconcile the bully and the bullied, but in more severe cases this is not always possible in the short term. Regular review of the situation is therefore of paramount importance and support measures are put in place to support both the victim and the bully. This can range from a regular talk with the tutor, Head of House or Deputy Head (Pastoral) through to counselling sessions with the School Counsellor. The School Chaplain is also a useful member of the anti-bullying 'team'.

Particular care is given in the boarding areas that all staff, however recently appointed, are fully aware of the anti-bullying policy. St Edmund's has a 'zero tolerance' attitude towards any kind of 'initiation ceremonies' that might, intentionally or otherwise, cause distress, pain or humiliation. Students in boarding are regularly asked if they perceive bullying to be a problem.

***Keeping silent protects bullies and gives them the message that they can continue.***

## **Guidelines for Parents**

Parents whose son or daughter reports a case of bullying, or who suspect their son or daughter is being bullied, should inform St Edmund's immediately. The report can be made to any teacher, Tutor, Head of House, Head of Year or to the Chaplaincy Coordinator.

## **Guidelines to all Staff**

All staff need to be alert to signs of bullying and must act promptly and firmly against it. Failure to respond to incidents may be interpreted as condoning the behaviour.

Staff must be particularly vigilant at breaks, in the corridors, in the toilets, in the grounds and in the classroom. They should be aware that bullying might take place during fixtures or educational visits or on the bus to or from St Edmund's. Staff should also be aware of cyber bullying in all its forms. Staff must be aware of the potential for bullying in the Boarding situation and be proactive to prevent it.

If a member of staff thinks that bullying is taking place, the students concerned should be spoken to and a written report passed on to their Tutor, Head of House or Head of Year.

There will be INSET on preventing and dealing with bullying as part of St Edmund's programme of training. Staff are also directed to 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)' published by the DFE

The PSHE programme will enhance the policy, by dealing with the topic of bullying – exploring why it happens and giving alternative and acceptable ways of behaviour. St Edmund's will work through PSHE and its pastoral system to promote the positive attitudes that can make bullying unacceptable in the Community. The anti-bullying message will be reinforced through assemblies, house meetings, school council and tutor group work.

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The Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Assistant Head (Pastoral) will keep records of any bullying to enable patterns to be identified and report to the Headmaster termly on bullying. The Headmaster will report to the Governors' Academic Sub-Committee on the amount of bullying and the success of the policy, once per year.

This policy will be reviewed each year by the academic sub-committee of the Governors or earlier if appropriate.

Frequency of review: Annual  
Policy last reviewed: Michaelmas 2018  
Next review date: Michaelmas 2019