Anti-Bullying Policy

Agreed by Management Committee

Chair of Management Committee

Mrs Patricia Harrison

Signature:

Date: 6th December 2017

Ashley College Anti-Bullying Policy

Aim

Our aim at Ashley College is for every member of the school community to feel safe, happy and secure.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally. It may be motivated by prejudice against particular groups and involve an imbalance of power – physical, psychological, intellectual, or through access to a group or capacity to socially isolate. It can result in intimidation through the threat of violence or by isolating students physically or online. Different forms of bullying include:

- bullying related to the race, religion or cultural background of a student
- bullying with sexist language
- sexual bullying including 'sexting'
- homophobic bullying
- bullying of students with special educational needs or disability
- cyber-bullying
- bullying by stealing
- bullying with physical force

Our approach

Our students may already have experienced bullying or bullied others at other schools and so we assume all students are vulnerable and offer full support from the start. We are sensitive to the fact that inappropriate, aggressive or intimidating behaviour can quickly change the atmosphere of a school and so encourage all students to recognise the importance of tolerance, manners and mutual respect. All our staff are expected to lead by example.

We foster empathy as each student has experienced to some extent physical, emotional or mental health problems and it is important that all students are sensitive to others' vulnerabilities as well as to their own. We well understand that any behaviour which can be interpreted as bullying must be dealt with as quickly as possible in the interest of the victim, the perpetrator and entire school community.

Preventing bullying

We foster a culture of inclusion and tolerance and a positive cheerful learning environment. We encourage communication and consultation throughout the school to prevent friction, conflict and any form of bullying.

Students are aware that they can alert any member of staff should any incident occur that causes upset. All teaching staff are approachable so students feel free to report any incident immediately. Teaching staff will quickly defuse an incident or ensure that students involved are seen by an appropriate member of staff, SLT or counsellor as soon as practicable – normally the same day.

A private area is made available to a student reporting a bullying incident (or any distress).

Each student is assigned a Link Tutor who checks in daily, during link tutor time, on progress in wellbeing and any concerns, including bullying or intimidating behaviour. Link Tutors encourage students to air concerns.

A self-elected fortnightly Student Council provides an important forum for students to remain vigilant for bullying among their peers. The Council (with discrete adult guidance) encourages strong and active peer relations, a collaborative and lively atmosphere and a spirit of mutual concern for wellbeing and enjoyment at school. Most of our students are quickly disturbed by behaviour that might be interpreted as bullying and report the incident themselves before waiting for staff to discover it.

Anti-bullying curriculum

A strong PSHE curriculum addresses key bullying issues and each year's programme is planned to reflect actual and anticipated needs and concerns of our students as well as important social issues.

Early on in the year we consult students about the content of the PSHE programme. This collaboration enables us to address the recognition and prevention of bullying in many guises. Subjects chosen for the PSHE curriculum by students themselves include:

- Bullying
- Stigma and discrimination
- Building resilience and good mental health practice
- Assertiveness and self-image
- Dealing with teenage pressures
- Identity (cultural, sexual) and respect

We arrange visiting speakers and workshops through various outside agencies eg Brent MIND, CAMHS, Young Minds. Our programme is flexible and we change or adapt sessions where pressing issues arise for students. Individual circumstances and sensitivities are considered on the day of delivery and if a bullying incident has arisen we tailor the session to help resolve it and reinforce the ethos of respect and tolerance.

We work closely with Brent's PSHE consultant and staff and students attend Anti-Bullying workshops. These have led to School Council initiatives for ~Drop-Boxes to report incidents or issues of concern anonymously. We participate in Brent Anti-Bullying Week conferences/workshops and carry this theme through to school for the anti-bullying week.

Outside agencies also deliver programmes covering knife crime, domestic violence, street safe, internet safety and drug and gang related issues as part of our PSHE curriculum.

Weekly assemblies also provide an arena for exploring ideas of inclusion, understanding and tolerance through themes, historical events, movements and social issues. Our multi-faith, multi- cultural, cross generational community at Ashley College provides a rich pool of personal, cultural and social experience for sharing and learning.

Response to bullying – our disciplinary procedures

Our Behaviour Policy and Procedures sets out the full range of procedures we use for unacceptable conduct such as bullying. Our 'report card' system provides for sanctions proportionate to the seriousness of the misconduct.

		Sanctions	Procedure
Minor bullying	White card	• reminder that incident is recorded • incident Report form to Link Tutor • telephone call plus letter to home • student may be removed from class • privileges may be withdrawn	• incident report form sent to Link Tutor • parent/carers informed • recorded on termly report
Continuing or bullying	Yellow card	• reminder that incident is recorded • removal from class • SLT intervention • meeting with parent/carer • telephone call plus letter to home • privileges may be withdrawn	• racist, homophobic, sexist behaviour recorded on incident report form • parent/carers informed • recorded on termly report
Persistent bullying	Red card	• immediate involvement of SLT • immediate telephone call plus letter home • possibility of being sent home • meeting with parent/carer • possible fixed term exclusion • student may be removed from class • privileges may be withdrawn	• possible referral to other agencies • parent/carers informed • recorded on termly report
Dangerous behaviour, violence, threatening language or behaviour		• immediate involvement of SLT • possible permanent exclusion • immediate telephone call plus exclusion letter • meeting with parent/carer	• unacceptable behaviour recorded on incident report form to Link Tutor and Head teacher • Administrator logs exclusion • Possible involvement of outside agencies, including police.

Off school premises

If an incident of bullying outside the school premises is reported, we will investigate and take action on school premises when the pupil is under school control. Further information is available from Department for Education – see Links below.

Links and further information

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools, Department for Education, January 2016

Getting the Simple Things Right – Charlie Taylor, Department for Education

Childnet – Cyberbullying Guidance

Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Department for Education, July 2017 – includes list

of national and other agencies which can advise on good practice