

Crypt School - ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Aims

The aim of Crypt School anti-bullying policy is to promote the moral, mental and physical well-being and development of all pupils by providing a healthy and safe social and learning environment. The school aims to create a happy and purposeful atmosphere in which all pupils are enabled to develop personally, socially and academically - as such, the school rejects all forms of bullying and cruelty.

Introduction:

This whole school policy is an attempt to set out the aims of the school in relation to bullying behaviour and provide a set of procedures and possible strategies to be followed. It attempts to indicate how these procedures relate to the organisation and structures within the school and to provide a framework within which any actions against bullying can be implemented and their effectiveness reviewed

Bullying - some definitions:

"A wilful conscious desire to hurt or threaten or frighten someone else, by a pupil who has some sort of power (i.e. greater physical strength or greater numbers) over the victim" (Tattum and Lane 1989).

"A pupil is being bullied, or picked on, when another 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 or when no-one talks to them" (Definition used by Sheffield project based on Olweus 1991)

Extent of Bullying

Surveys in Sheffield schools carried out in 1990 amongst 2,623 primary pupils and 4,135 secondary pupils revealed that at least 10% of secondary pupils experienced being bullied at some time during their school career and 6% admitted that they had bullied other pupils. Similar studies conducted in Norway showed that at least 15% of pupils were involved either as bullies or as victims.

Nature of Bullying.

Name calling is the most common direct cause of bullying. Also frequent are being physically hit or threatened. Being isolated or deliberately left out of a group of classmates and made the subject of malicious rumours, are frequent indirect ways of being bullied. Having possessions taken, hidden or destroyed, being subject to extortion or locked in a room or cupboard are other forms of bullying behaviour. Pupils may also be called nasty names or experience anti-social behaviour because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour.

It is important to differentiate between boisterous play and bullying - usually 'boisterous play' is not premeditated whereas bullying usually is premeditated. If two pupils of equal power or strength have a fight or quarrel, this might not necessarily be bullying.

Attitudes to Bullying.

It has been accepted that bullying exists with-in school and that it takes place in many forms. In the Sheffield survey about 75-80% of pupils said that they would not join in bullying behaviour, or would help a bullied child or both. However, about 20% of pupils said that they could understand why bullying happened, and might join in. Parents and teachers have made excuses for bullying with comments such as:

- 'boys will be boys'
- 'it helps to toughen them up'
- 'it teaches them to look after themselves'
- 'we've always told our children to stand up for themselves'

The Bullied.

Any child can be bullied. However, there are certain risk factors which can make the experience more likely. These include:

- lack of close friends in school
- being shy
- coming from an over-protective family environment
- being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority
- being different in some obvious respect (such as pupils who are gifted academically or those who excel at either sport or music)
- having special educational needs
- being a 'provocative victim' - a child who behaves inappropriately with others such as barging in on games or being a nuisance

None of these characteristics can excuse allowing a child to be bullied.

The Bullies.

Bullies have usually been bullied themselves, and have learned that it is a means of achieving domination. Research suggests that of children identified as bullies at the age of seven, 20% become hardened criminals by the age of 30.

When and where does bullying occur?

It is not surprising that the vulnerable areas for such behaviour include the following, usually unsupervised, parts of the school :

- On the way to and from school
- Buses and bus queues
- Changing Rooms
- Toilets
- Classrooms before the teacher arrives
- Classrooms where the class is left alone during a lesson
- Corridors and Stairways
- Dinner queue
- Tennis Courts and Bicycle Shed area
- Breaks and lunchtime.

There are a number of important reasons for challenging bullying behaviour in schools

- The safety and happiness of pupils - when pupils are bullied their lives are made miserable, they may suffer injury and will certainly lose self-confidence and self esteem. In extreme cases they may even contemplate suicide.
- Educational achievement - unhappy or distracted pupils will not perform at their best and may even avoid coming to school.
- It is important that school provides a model for helpful and supportive behaviour. Pupils who see bullying behaviour going on unchallenged may learn that bullying is a quick and effective way of getting what they want.
- Parental expectations. All schools want to claim a reputation for being effective and caring. As every school has some degree of bullying, however infrequent, parents will want reassurances that the school can demonstrate, through its policies and actions, that it is responding positively and effectively to incidents of bullying.

In view of such evidence, the Crypt School is determined to adopt policies which will challenge and modify anti-social behaviour of this nature.

Procedures for dealing with bullying

Action for all School Staff (Teaching and Non-Teaching):

All staff need to be vigilant as they move around the school and when on duty. This means actively looking for any forms of anti-social or bullying behaviour and taking prompt action when they are observed.

LISTEN !	BELIEVE !	ACT !
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- Watch for early signs of distress in pupils.
- Listen carefully to pupils' concerns and reports of bullying.
- Offer the victim immediate support by referring the incident to the Form Tutor.

Action by the Form Tutor and/or Head of Year.

The Form Tutor is the 'front line' of the pastoral care system and is responsible for creating a good relationship with individual pupils so that they can discuss personal issues including bullying with them. Tutors need to be vigilant in assessing the well-being of pupils, especially if they are particularly vulnerable for any reason.

Generally, **minor** incidents of bullying will be dealt with by the **Form Tutor** (as set out below) but in certain cases the Form Tutor may well have to bring in the **Head of Year** i.e.

- Where there has been a repeated pattern of bullying by a pupil or group of pupils
- Where concern has been instigated by a parent
- Where an outside agency is involved (police etc.)
- Where the bullying has been of a particularly vicious or serious nature.

Both the Form Tutor and the Head of Year should keep a record of all investigated incidents of bullying - these must be placed in the pupil's file.

Procedures: The following steps are to be taken according to the severity of the incident as judged by the Form Tutor. In many cases where there has been an appropriate response, it may not be necessary to go beyond step one - likewise in extreme cases it may well be necessary to go straight to step four.

1. Both the bully and the victim will be **interviewed by the Form Tutor** who will make clear to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable, is causing distress and must stop. The victim should also be reassured that there will be no more threats made towards them. Some sanction, such as a detention, may be given if appropriate.

Note

In most cases a “no-blame” approach can be adopted as the best way of confronting the bully with the consequences of their actions and in making them take voluntary steps to modify their own behaviour. Likewise the bullied pupil might also be able to take more effective steps to avoid being a victim.

2. If a mutual resolution is not forthcoming or the bullying behaviour continues, both the victim and the bully will be asked to produce a **written record of events**. The **Head of Year** will interview both parties, record their discussions and place them in the pupils’ files. The bully will be given an appropriate sanction and will be warned that their behaviour will be closely monitored.
3. If bullying continues, **the parents/guardians of the pupils involved will be sent copies of all reports**. The parents/guardians will be informed that such behaviour is unacceptable and that action has been taken. The parents/guardians will be asked to respond either in writing or by interview. Assurances will be sought from the parents/guardians that the bullying will stop.
4. In extreme cases pupils and their parents will be interviewed by the Headmaster. This may well be accompanied by an immediate **suspension from school** for the bully.

Notes on the above guidelines. In emergencies it may be necessary to withdraw pupil(s) from classes. Pupils who are withdrawn may either be the bullies or the bullied. Action such as this will allow time for the situation to be investigated and assessed.

Responsibilities of the Head and the SMT:

The Head Teacher is the ultimate 'line manager' for the pastoral care system in the school. He will take the following steps to reduce the incidence of bullying:

- Ensure that all 'vulnerable' areas of the school are patrolled at break, lunch-time, between lessons and before/after school.
- Use all pupils (e.g. prefects) as a positive resource in countering bullying.
- Provide opportunities within the curriculum (i.e. PSE, Drama, English, PE, History etc.) for pupils to discuss and recognise bullying behaviour and how to deal with it.
- Meet regularly with the Pastoral Team to review any behavioural problems, including bullying
- Monitor and review the school's anti-bullying policy
- Ensure that INSET for staff development includes bullying related issues.

Supplement A: Pupils' notes.

**BULLYING.....WHO NEEDS IT?
How to stop bullying - comments by pupils of Crypt School
Crypt School should be a Bully-Free Zone**

As pupils we believe that any pupil who is made to feel uncomfortable because of the action of another pupil or pupils is being bullied.:

Bullying can take many forms, including:

hitting - name-calling - threatening behaviour - stealing - hiding personal property - saying nasty things about the pupil or pupil's family

Bullying can take place anywhere:

in the classroom - the corridors - the changing rooms - the toilets - the dinner queue - the playground - on the journey to and from school

If YOU are being bullied you MUST tell someone. This can be:

your parents - tutor - year head - any teacher you get on well with - your friends

If you see someone being bullied or suspect that this may be happening you MUST tell a teacher all that you know. The teacher will investigate without giving your name away.

As a friend you should try and support the pupil who has been bullied.

If you are the victim of bullying try and follow these rules:

- report the incident
- keep away from the bully
- try and share your unhappiness with your friends

IF YOU ARE A BULLY YOU MUST STOP

You should treat other pupils as you would like to be treated. How would you feel if someone bullied you?

If you are a bully you will be punished:

- your parents will be told
- you may be excluded from School.

If you know that you are a bully you can ask your Tutor or Year Head for help.

***REMEMBER.....Keep Crypt School free from bullies at all times and in all places.
We are a happy School and we want every pupil to feel safe and respected.***

Supplement B: Resources and contacts

CONTACTS

- Citizen's Advice Bureau (local directory)
- Children's Legal Centre 081 - 359 - 6251

TELEPHONE HELPLINES

- Careline 12 Romney Place, Maidstone, Kent. Tel 0622 756677
- Childline Tel 0800 1111
- Parentline, Westbury House, 57 Hart Road, Thundersley, Essex Tel 0268 757077
- Samaritans (local directory)
- OPUS (Organisation for Parents Under Stress) 081 645 0469
- Family Network : South of England 01582 422751
- Education Otherwise 081 - 904 7155 (Advice on home education)

BOOKS

- 'Bullying - don't suffer in silence' DEF publication for schools 1994
- 'The Willow Street Kids', Michele Elliott, Pan/Piccolo- Yr. 7.
- 'Growing Pains and How to Avoid Them', Claire Rayner, Heinemann (Teens).
- 'Too Close Encounters and What To Do About Them' Rosemary Stones, Picadilly (Teens).
- 'Keeping Safe, A Practical Guide to Talking With Children',
- Michele Elliot, Hodder & Stoughton (Parents/Teachers).

VIDEOS FOR TEENS

- 'A Time To Live' , Samaritans. Deals with subjects from bullying to suicide. Contact your local Samaritan branch for details.