

- All schools aim to be supportive and caring. However, parents and pupils will want reassurances that the Crypt can demonstrate, through its policies and actions, that it is responding positively and effectively to incidents of bullying.

Extent of Bullying

Bullying exists in all schools – over 10% of pupils nationally have reported experiencing some form of bullying in their school careers. However, bullying does not exist in schools alone – it is part of and indeed in some ways a symptom of wider problems in society. However, schools can provide an opportunity and a location for bullying behaviour. Likewise, schools have an almost unique opportunity to identify, challenge and modify bullying behaviour.

Nature of Bullying.

Name calling or being teased directly or about other family members is one of the most common direct expressions of bullying. Another common example is being physically hit or threatened. Being isolated or deliberately left out of a group and made the subject of malicious rumours, are other indirect ways of being bullied. Having possessions taken, hidden or damaged and subject to extortion are also forms of bullying behaviour. Pupils may also experience bullying because of their ethnic origin, appearance, nationality, sexuality, race or colour. More recently pupils have experienced bullying through texts on mobile phones and via the internet.

It is important to differentiate between boisterous play and bullying. If two pupils of equal power or strength have a fight or quarrel, this might not necessarily be bullying. Bullying is best described where the victim is an unwilling participant and the bully is abusing their greater power and influence over the victim to cause deliberate harm or hurt.

Attitudes to Bullying.

Although most people state they would never be bullies, bullying can go unchecked if pupils, parents and staff make 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'

It is important that these views are examined and challenged and are not allowed to give rise to bullying behaviour – for example the use of the word “gay” use in a negative or pejorative context.

The Bullied

Any child can become a victim of bullying. 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 or who are “looked after”
- being a ‘provocative victim’ - a child who behaves inappropriately with others such as barging in on games or being a nuisance
- pupils who flaunt expensive accessories such as mobile phones

Whilst none of these excuse bullying behaviour in any form, they do help staff, parents and pupils identify those individuals who may be in need of support. They may also help victims help themselves avoid being targeted by bullies. Often these victims may not understand why they are being bullied and may behave passively or submissively towards the bully. As such they may benefit from some assertiveness training

The Bullies.

Very few people recognise themselves as bullies as such. Quite often bullies have usually been bullied themselves, and have learned that it is a means of achieving status or domination. Bullies as well as victims need support and intervention. 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?

Bullying can occur anywhere but certain areas are more vulnerable:

- On the way to and from school
- Buses and bus queues
- Changing Rooms and Toilets
- Classrooms before the teacher arrives or where the class is left alone during a lesson
- Corridors and Stairways
- Dinner queue
- The Playground, Tennis Courts and Bicycle Shed area during breaks and lunchtime.
- The Internet and social networking sites

As such staff, pupils and parents need to be particularly vigilant in these areas and provision needs to be made for their supervision whenever possible

Bullying flourishes in a culture of silence and passive acceptance of these behaviours

Bullying is most effectively challenged when:

- Its existence is recognised
- Pupils can talk freely about their experiences
- There are clear policies to deal with all reported incidents
- The school's ethos is based on a clear anti-bullying stance and this is supported by all parents and pupils
- Where all adults (Staff and Parents alike) model tolerance and acceptance in their dealings with one another.

Procedures for dealing with bullying

Action for all School Staff (Teaching and Support Staff):

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.

- 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 involve the **Head of Year** i.e.

- Where there has been a repeated pattern of bullying by a pupil or group of pupils
- 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 must keep a record of all investigated incidents of bullying (usually through the blue form) - these must be placed in the pupil's file.

Responsibilities of the Governors, 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 other pupils (e.g. prefects/Peer Mentors) as a positive resource in countering bullying.
- Provide opportunities within the curriculum (i.e. Assemblies, 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.

Pupil Support

In addition to the above procedures Crypt is proactive in preventing and dealing with bullying incidents in the following ways.

- Pupils have access to Peer Mentors who have been trained in ways to support their fellow students
- Pupils have access to a School Counsellor and can speak with full confidentiality to her.
- Pupils can use an anonymous email helpline to report bullying in school
- Pupils have daily contact with their tutors and can raise issues causing them concern
- Pupils elect their representatives to the Student Council which regularly discusses and gives a "student voice" to anti-bullying issues.
- Pupils are given guidance as to how to use the Internet and other forms of social interaction in a responsible manner to how to take steps to protect themselves from harm

Procedures: The following steps are to be taken according to the severity of the incident as judged by the Form Tutor. In the majority of cases where there has been an appropriate response, it may not be necessary to go beyond step 1 - likewise in extreme cases it may well be necessary to go straight to step 4.

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.

1. The **Form Tutor will interview both parties** and will make clear to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable, is causing distress and must stop. The victim will be reassured that there will be no more threats made towards them. At this stage a direct sanction may be avoided but it may be appropriate for the bully to make some form of restoration (e.g. replace damaged item). *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/carers of the pupils will be informed and made aware** that such behaviour is unacceptable and that action has been taken. The parents/carers will be invited to school and assurances will be sought from them that the bullying will stop. *In certain cases a “restorative justice” interview may be called - at present there are two members of staff (AHC and JS) trained to chair such meetings.*
4. In extreme cases pupils and their parents/carers will be interviewed by the Headmaster. This may lead to an immediate **exclusion from school** for the bully.

Supplement A: Advice for Parents/Carers

Guidance for parents: If your child tells you that they are being bullied at school we suggest the following:

- Try and stay calm and objective when you discuss with your child what has happened and collect as much detail as you can (where, when, who, witnesses and why?)
- Ask your child to report all further incidents to their tutor – suggest they write these down in a log which is kept discretely by the pupil
- Make an appointment to see your child’s tutor – face to face is better than a phone call or email
- Remember that the tutor may be hearing about these incidents for the first time or may be aware of conflicting accounts
- Be as specific as possible when reporting the incident – ask also how you can support the school in the action they propose to take
- Give the school time to deal with the issue but stay in contact after the incident and remember to let us know if things are improving as well as if they are not.

- Remember that finding a permanent and effective solution to a bullying issue may well involve not just sanctioning the bully but also supporting them.

Supplement B: Resources and contacts

Bullying ‘Don’t suffer in silence – anti-bullying pack for schools’ – DfEE 0064/2000

Gloucestershire County Council Healthy Schools Anti Bullying Guidelines can be downloaded at http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/utilities/action/act_download.cfm?mediaid=10426

TELEPHONE HELPLINES

- Careline 12 Romney Place, Maidstone, Kent. Tel 0622 756677
- Childline Freephone Tel 0800 1111 or 0207 239 1000
- Parentline Plus, 520 Highgate Studios 53-79 Highgate Road Kentish Town, London Tel 0808 800 2222 or details of local classes available through school office
- Samaritans (local directory)
- OPUS (Organisation for Parents Under Stress) 081 645 0469
- Family Network : South of England 01582 422751

Supplement C: Pupils’ responses and views on bullying

BULLYING, WHO NEEDS IT? - 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.

1. 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 – sending text or writing unpleasant things on the internet

2. 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

3. 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

4. **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.
5. **As a friend you should try and support the pupil who has been bullied.** Most pupils say that they do not want to be bullies and that they do not like bullying behaviour but we all need to do more than just not join in if we see bullying taking place
6. **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
7. **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?
8. **If you are a bully and you keep bullying others you will be punished:**
 - your parents will be told
 - you may be excluded from School.
 - if you know that you are a bully and want to stop 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.

Summary: Pupils' guidance to pupils

- Talk to staff and report bullying incidents – don't suffer in silence
- Keep a written record of such incidents (when, where, who, witnesses, why?)
- Avoid vulnerable areas if possible – try and keep with your friends
- Avoid deliberately provocative behaviour
- Try and be assertive and say "no" to things that hurt or upset you

Approved by Governors : 4th April, 2011