ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Approved by	Local Governing Committee
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1. Policy Statement

We want all our students to be everything they can be and everything they are meant to be – to be able to live life in all its fullness (John 10.10).

At Brian Clarke we are committed to providing a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour. Persistent bullying can severely inhibit a child's ability to learn effectively. The negative effects of bullying can have an impact on a person for their entire life. Therefore, this policy promotes practices within the school to reinforce our vision.

Bullying in all its forms will not be tolerated. Every member of the school will treat others with kindness and respect. Everyone will be vigilant and will act promptly to intervene if there are any signs or reports of bullying. We will actively support all victims of bullying and take appropriate action with the perpetrators. This work will be pursued through the pastoral and academic curriculum, as well as through the reporting and disciplinary procedures created to deal with all such incidents.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- Equality policy.
- Behaviour policy.

2. Objectives of the Policy

- To ensure that every member of the school community feels comfortable, safe, secure, equally valued and respected.
- To ensure that every member of the school community is able to grow and change, free from prejudice, stereotyping, harassment and negative discrimination.
- To ensure that all members of the school community understand what bullying is.
- To promote positive relationships and make absolutely clear our policy that the harassment and bullying of others is never acceptable.
- To ensure we are a 'telling school' where students and parents report bullying that they suffer or witness.
- To act promptly and effectively at the first sign of bullying.
- To protect and reassure any victims of bullying.
- To have effective sanctions to deter bullying and to have successful strategies to reform bullies.

3. What is Bullying?

Bullying occurs when an individual or a group uses strength or power to hurt, either physically or emotionally, by intimidating or demeaning others.

Bullying can be emotional, physical, racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, verbal or cyber. It is usually persistent and is often covert, and is a conscious attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone.

Students who are being bullied, may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- Physical bullying which can include kicking, hitting, pushing and taking away belongings.
- Verbal bullying which includes name calling, mocking and making offensive comments.
- Emotional bullying which includes isolating an individual or spreading rumours about them.
- Cyber-bullying where technology is used to hurt an individual – for instance text messaging or posting messages/images on the internet or any form of social media.
- Racist bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by racial, ethnic or cultural prejudice.

- Sexual bullying is where someone makes unwanted physical contact or makes sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic and biphobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people.
- Transphobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against people who identify as trans.
- Disablist bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against people with any form of disability.
- Sexist bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against someone because of their gender.
- We also consider 'banter' to be bullying. If students are repeatedly 'joking' with an individual, who is not included in the joke, it is bullying. Our school does not tolerate the 'banter' excuse.

3.1. Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

All staff and parents/carers must remain vigilant. Every incident, however minor it may seem, is crucial for the student involved. Non-intervention condones the bullying. Staff must never ignore so called 'banter' between groups. There are a number of possible signs and symptoms that might indicate a student is being bullied:

- Being frightened of travelling to and from school.
- Unwillingness to come to school.
- Being withdrawn.
- Travelling an unusual route to school.
- Becomes easily upset.
- Afraid to use their mobile phone/the internet.
- Losing/missing possessions.
- Truanting school/certain lessons.
- More frequent illness.
- Attempts to self-harm.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Stealing/asking for money.
- School work deteriorating/inability to concentrate in lessons.
- Becoming aggressive.
- Bullying other students.
- Refusal to talk.
- Damaged belongings.
- Refusal/ appearing uncomfortable when asked to work with certain students.

4. Systems for Preventing and Tackling Bullying

4.1 Preventing Bullying

Our school ethos aims to create an environment that prevents bullying. An ethos of tolerance, kindness and respect is the golden thread which runs throughout everything we do. All aspects of school life, including transition, the curriculum, extra-curricular activity, pastoral care and worship:

- Promote positive relationships and emphasise that the harassment and bullying of others is never acceptable.
- Promote respect for the differences between people and celebrate the richness that diversity brings to modern British society.

In addition

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- We will ensure that all students in school understand our bullying policy and understand the role they play in reporting any bullying that is taking place.
- We will communicate our policy and approach to all parents, both during induction and during the annual parents' information meetings for each year group.
- All year groups have written and agreed a set of principles regarding their conduct both off and online. They are discussed during Wellbeing lessons and displayed in year group areas.
- The school has appointed Anti Bullying ambassadors in all year groups who students can go to report any concerns. These trained ambassadors then inform members of the pastoral team.

4.2 Preventing Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying can happen at all times of the day with a potentially bigger audience because of the nature of on-line communication.

All students will receive clear guidance and support about online communications through Wellbeing; ICT lessons and whole school worship. This will ensure students are:

- Safe online.
- Kind and mature in the digital contributions that they make.
- Mindful of the digital footprint that they leave.
- Aware of the negative effects of cyber bullying.

It is the most common form of bullying that schools now face. We believe that any act of intimidation that occurs between members of our school community is our business, and we will deal with it with the support of families.

5. Tackling Bullying

5.1 Reporting, Intelligence and Investigation

- We are a 'telling school'. We foster an ethos where students let us know if they experience or witness bullying. Students must report concerns to any member of staff e.g. form tutor, teacher, learning mentor, TA or a member of pastoral support.
- Students are made aware of places where they feel safe and can go to during non-teaching time to find a member of staff to speak to.
- Anti-Bullying Ambassadors are appointed, and sign posted for each year group to support victims of bullying to come forward.
- All school staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between students which might provoke conflict and put strategies in place to prevent bullying beginning or escalating.
- When students come to reporting bullying, we offer them immediate kindness and protection. We ask all students to give us their written perspective.
- Investigating pastoral staff then seek the perspectives of the alleged perpetrators and witnesses.
- In cases of alleged cyber-bullying it will sometimes be necessary for teachers to view, search and if necessary, delete inappropriate images or files from electronic devices, including mobile phones. This is done in line with the 2011 Education Act. If we discover, or suspect, pornographic material or the sharing of images of children, we will immediately hand the device to the police.

5.2 Working with Victims and Students who Bully

- Where appropriate we will use restorative practice to resolve bullying.
- Restorative conversations are used to work with both alleged bullies and victims. Our aim is to encourage reflection and foster reconciliation.
- Students who bully will be sanctioned in accordance with the behaviour policy of the school and will be offered support in forming positive relationships with others.
- Students who have been victims of bullying will be offered ongoing support from either their Form Tutor or Learning Mentor.

5.3. Working with Parents

- Parents/carers should always call school and ask to speak to their child's Form Tutor if they have any concerns in relation to their child (either as a perpetrator or victim of bullying).
- Pastoral staff will call all relevant parents/carers and keep them updated in relation to investigations and outcomes.
- Close contact will be kept with the victim's parents/carers to ensure that the victim adjusts positively back into school life as quickly as possible.
- As parents/carers we ask that you work with us in partnership to support this policy.

6. Recording Bullying

- All serious incidents of behaviour are recorded on the school's MIS.
- Concerns about students can be recorded by any member of staff to notify the Head of Year/Senior Pastoral Officer.
- Concerns are shared with other staff members as deemed appropriate
- Half termly reports for incidences of bullying are analysed at Year Group Review by Pastoral Year teams and the Assistant Headteacher to measure the success of our polices in dealing with incidences of bullying and poor behaviour.