Kingsgate School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Owner: Tim Rogers

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Linked with Policies:
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection

This policy has been compiled with due regard to the guidance given in 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying – October 2014'.

Anti-Bullying Policy

We will not tolerate bullying or acts of violence against staff or students and, if it happens, we will do all we can to support the victim and deal with the perpetrator.

Aims and Objectives
a. The principal aim of this policy is to reduce the occurrence of bullying at Kingsgate School to a minimum in all its forms thus creating a safe and calm environment free from disruption for students to learn.
b. To create awareness of bullying and its impact.
c. To outline the Anti-bullying procedures in place within Kingsgate School for students and staff.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined as:

"the repeated use of aggression with the intention of hurting other people"

This includes:

- Verbal aggression like name calling, being sarcastic and spreading hurtful rumours;
- Physical aggression such as pushing, kicking, punching, hitting;
- Threats & intimidation;
- Spitting;
- Incitement of others to harass and bully;
- Destruction or 'borrowing' property without permission;
- Emotional aggression like tormenting and excluding people;
- Racial taunts, graffiti and gestures;
- Sexual aggression like unwanted physical contact or comments;
- Cyber bullying.

Kingsgate School Strategies

1. Raising the profile of Anti-bullying
2. Establishing coping strategies
3. Creating a safe environment
4. Dealing with incidents and sanction
5. Continuous Training

1. **Raising the profile of Anti-bullying**

All staff are to be vigilant in their observations of student behaviour and to recognise and take appropriate actions where incidents of bullying occur (see 'Definition of bullying' above).

Kingsgate School's Anti-Bullying Code will be discussed with all students at the start of the school year as well as being taught within subject teaching (for example, PSHE & Citizenship and R.E).

The school will work hard to ensure all students have a concrete understanding of bullying in its varying forms (see 'Definition of bullying' above) and to understand the difference between bullying and simply 'falling out'.

All staff in school are to ensure that the students are educated about the potential dangers of Cyberbullying.

1a. Staff Bullying
Staff at all levels need to be aware that staff can bully young people or indeed other staff. This may be subtle. Staff should be alert to any behaviour of young people which indicates that they are unhappy or distressed when particular members of staff are around and take steps to investigate why this might be (the Anti Bullying Leaflet supports this procedure).

2. **Establishing Coping Strategies**

The reluctance of students to bring bullying problems into the open is understandable, however they should be encouraged to report all instances of bullying whether this is witnessed or being the victim.

Appropriate action such as walking away, not retaliating and in particular, telling staff with whom to share the problem, should be introduced into any discussions with students on the subject of bullying.

3. **Creating a safe environment**

3a. Referrals and Admissions
We are prepared to give consideration to the placement of children who have a history of bullying or violence but we will treat such referrals with caution and, if there is any evidence or concern that staff or residents will be placed at risk of harm, we may either refuse to accommodate them or require certain conditions are built into the placement agreement.

3b. Staff selection
We will not employ staff who have a history of violence or are known to bully others. To help us ensure this, we will not allow anyone to work at Kingsgate School until they have been carefully vetted and backgrounds have been checked. Also, we will provide training for all new staff about how to deal with bullying and violence.

3c. Working together
We are all expected to live and work effectively together to prevent or reduce, to a minimum, acts of bullying or violence.
On a day-to-day basis, we recognise we can do a lot to prevent or reduce bullying or acts of violence. For example we must:

- keep each other informed about concerns we have;
- help & support each other;
- keep an eye out for each other;
- speak up for and listen to each other;
- take immediate action if we think someone if being bullied or hurt.

In particular, when we suspect any form of bullying or violence we will inform a colleague or manager as quickly as possible so that it can be dealt with.

Also, we will ensure that colleagues are provided with support during or after any violent incident.

3d. Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

Through the wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011, staff now have stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

We treat cyber-bullying as seriously as we would bullying within school and closely monitor all access to technology including online games.

No social networking is permitted for student use during school hours.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils, and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

Kingsgate School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

Kingsgate School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our anti-bullying policy.

4. Dealing with incidents and sanctions

Our preference would be to "see it coming" and work together to minimise the risk of bullying. We accept however, that this may not always be possible. If we see bullying or violent incidents occurring we will not ignore it. When this happens staff will always be expected to stop and, if necessary control the situation.
In the first place, we will do all we can to keep situations calm and reduce the risk of violence.
However, we will not abdicate our overall responsibilities to protect children and others from harm and we understand that this will sometimes mean physically restraining children where no other reasonable action will prevent it. We will control incidents as they happen by using restraint if necessary.

If we suspect or it is reported that a young person is being bullied we will:

◊ Talk about it openly with the victim, 'bully' and 'audience'
◊ Take the person seriously;
◊ Find out what is going on;
◊ Comfort and reassure the person that we will sort things out;
◊ Challenge & reprimand the bully or violent person and anyone who has supported them;
◊ Obtain a genuine apology;
◊ Sanction the bully if appropriate;
◊ Ensure other young people are aware that the act is wrong and has been dealt with;
◊ Ensure other young people are aware that if they have done nothing to prevent it they share responsibility
◊ Insist that anything which was taken or damaged is replaced;
◊ Provide support for the victim, both emotionally and practically
◊ Give help to the bully to change his/her behaviour and attitudes;
◊ Record the incident and outcome.
◊ We will talk to and seek advice from others including social workers and external consultants where deemed appropriate.

4a. Recording

All events, disclosures, discussions or matters of concern/interest must be raised with the Form Tutor and Head teacher (also social worker if significant) and recorded in the young person's file. It may be appropriate to complete an *Incident or other Report.* Please seek advice from the Head teacher.

If the social worker is contacted also complete the *Contact Sheets*.

4b. Persistence

If the bullying or violence persists we will call a planning meeting to discuss what can be done. We may inform or consult the Police, Child Protection Team or County Inspectorate. If it seems appropriate we will ask an external consultant to attend this meeting and give us advice.

If the bullying persists, or is serious, we will:
◊ Contact the Social Services Department or Police
◊ Separate the bully and victim
◊ Call a meeting to discuss what can be done;
◊ Consider asking the bully to leave Kingsgate School.

4c. Child abuse

If someone is the subject of persistent or serious bullying we will deal with it by way of informing or consulting external agencies:

- **EXTERNAL HELP**: If the victim is a Looked after Child we will always talk to the Social Worker and we may seek other external help if we are unable to reduce or control incidents of bullying or violence within the group.
- **CHILD ABUSE**: If there is any suspicion of Abuse, we will always consult the Local Safeguarding Team and/or the Police (See separate procedures)

5. Training & education

We are open to the need for education and training for all.

For this reason we will talk openly about bullying and violence informally and formally with students. For example, we will discuss the issue and offer support and we will incorporate the issue into our educational programme. The purpose will be to:

- ensure everyone understands that bullying, harassment, oppression or any anti-social behaviour is not acceptable and will not be tolerated;
- provide opportunities to discuss issues of inequality, discrimination and oppressive behaviour;
- provide opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and strategies to challenge behaviour.

We will also provide training for staff to include:

- Understanding of relevant legislation
- Understanding of fear, bullying & violence
- Understanding our own behaviour under stress
- Prevention and management techniques
- Controlling and Restraining children
- Child Protection Procedures
- Reporting Incidents