

The Clere School

Anti-Bullying Policy



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Policy Responsible: Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral)

Introduction

The Clere School is committed to ensuring that all students are able to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Bullying is an antisocial behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at the school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should know who to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Principle

All students have an absolute right to be educated in a safe and secure environment and to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade or abuse them.

There is no justification whatsoever for bullying behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form. Differences including race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and ability are absolutely repudiated as reasons for bullying.

Bullying behaviour is a problem for both the victim and the bully and should be addressed in positive and constructive ways which provide opportunities for growth and development for the individuals involved.

Effective management of bullying is a shared responsibility and strategies should involve school staff and students, parents/carers and other professionals.

It is important to invest time and resources in the prevention and management of bullying. Staff and students require advice, training and support to manage it with confidence.

Aims and Objectives

- To achieve a school ethos in which each student is safe and able to realise their full potential within an environment in which bullying is seen as inappropriate and unacceptable.
- To demonstrate to parents/carers that the school takes their children's welfare seriously, by having zero tolerance towards bullying behaviour.
- To have clear and consistent procedures for responding to incidents of bullying.

Strategies

In order to meet our aims we intend to:

- Be pro-active in the prevention of bullying.
- Raise awareness among staff, parents/carers and students about the issue of bullying and our school's attitude towards it

- Accurately record all incidents of bullying and to monitor the effectiveness of strategies for bringing it under control.
- Make students, parents/carers and staff aware of what steps to take when an incident of bullying has occurred.
- Reassure victims that action will be taken to keep them safe.
- Demonstrate to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable and address their problematic behaviour in a fair and firm manner, and provide them with support to enable them to change.

Definition

Bullying is any interaction between an individual or group of people with a more powerful individual or group which is **perceived** or **intended** to cause hurt, pain, suffering, humiliation or degradation over a period of time.

Bullying behaviour may be direct or indirect. Direct forms include physical violence and threats; verbal assaults and taunts; the destruction of property; extortion; unwanted sexual interest or contact. Examples of indirect forms of bullying include ignoring and the withdrawal of friendship; excluding; malicious gossip and spreading rumour; abusive or oppressive graffiti or electronic messaging/websites.

We take all forms of bullying seriously and are particularly concerned to take action in relation to any incidents which involve racist, sexist or homophobic elements. Incidents of bullying with racist content or motivation are recorded in line with the “Guidelines and Procedures for Dealing with Racist Incidents” as are those that are defined as ‘Peer on Peer Abuse’

Scope

This policy applies only to incidents of bullying which take place on school premises or travelling to and from school. The school is not legally responsible for bullying which takes place elsewhere. However, the school is always interested in the welfare and conduct of its students and will respond positively to any information it receives about bullying outside school if it impacts on student well-being.

If there are concerns about a student’s safety outside school then parents/carers would be advised to contact the local police. If concerns arise in relation to school transport then the school will raise the issue with the appropriate transport company and its help will be sought in dealing with the problem.

If students are being bullied by students of another school the Head of that school will be informed and we will work together to resolve the matter.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. We at The Clere School have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Types of Bullying

There are various types of bullying, but most have three things in common :

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour
- It is repeated over time

- There is an imbalance of power, which makes it difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can take different forms and can be :

- a) Physical: e.g. hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- b) Verbal: e.g. name calling, insulting and hurtful remarks
- c) Indirect: e.g. spreading malicious rumours, excluding individuals from social groups, family feuds brought into school.
- d) Peer on Peer Abuse

In addition the issue of bullying will be raised with students at a number of levels including:

- At whole school level – through assemblies when children will be informed of the school’s zero-tolerance policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place.
- At classroom level – during tutor time. Outside agencies/groups may be used to reinforce the message.
- At individual level – students who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who have suffered from bullying in the past) will be offered additional support and guidance. Students who have bullied others will be given advice and support and taught strategies to enable them to bring their unacceptable behaviour under control and to prevent further incidents.

The school recognises that there are particular times and places when students may be more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. Arrangements ensure that there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents.

Students will be encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying which they experience or of which they may be aware. In these circumstances staff will respond positively, take the expression of concern seriously and ensure that the matter is fully investigated.

Parental involvement

We are firmly committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and believe that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs. We recognise the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as victim or a perpetrator.

Parents who believe their child / children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated. Similarly if parents believe their child is bullying others, this information should be shared with school so that the problem can be addressed and a plan agreed to prevent further incidents and the bullying child helped to change their behaviour.

Implementation

The school is committed to creating a bully-free environment and will ensure that its zero-tolerance policy is applied. All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of students will take responsibility for addressing incidents and will ensure that the victim receives the

required support. The bully will be informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record will be made of the incident.

All students are made aware that staff must be informed of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when bullying is reported.

Dealing with Bullying

- The school takes a proactive stance to raise awareness about bullying.

This is done through a range of strategies including, assemblies, tutor lessons and high staff presence and visibility during lesson change over, break, lunchtime and afterschool.

- Minor incidents or disagreements should be addressed by the form tutors or subject teachers; however, any suspicion of bullying must always be reported to the Progress Leader as soon as possible
- All allegations of bullying by students must be referred to the tutor and Head of Year immediately, and recorded on SiMs
- The Head of Year will oversee the investigation into the concern or allegation where the objective will be: to clarify the facts through a thorough investigation, taking statements from the alleged bully, victims and witnesses. We will then give careful consideration of all circumstances, before any sanctions or consequences are decided. This will in the vast majority of cases involve parents/ carers of both the alleged bully and victim being informed at the earliest opportunity.
- A range of approaches will be used to support the victim and help them build resilience
 - a) The adult could offer coaching and problem solving strategies to enable the victim to tackle what has happened; this helps build their resilience and confidence. This approach is suitable for lower level issues and where the victim wants to regain some control.
 - b) The adult may work alongside the victim to resolve the problems actively through a restorative justice model; this will involve problem solving meetings facilitated by the adult.
- Students have the responsibility to ensure that victims of bullying are not isolated and to intervene when someone is being bullied and making it clear to the bully that their actions are disapproved of. Students should inform a member of staff if they suspect bullying is taking place.

All staff involved in the education and/or supervision of students will be made aware of the issue of bullying and the need to apply the schools policy of zero-tolerance consistently when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported. Staff will constantly reinforce the message to students that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

Monitoring and evaluating

Each incident of bullying including peer on peer abuse will be recorded by the school. Any incidents with a racist, sexist or homophobic element will be identified.

An annual report will be made to the Governing Body indicating any trends which may emerge.

Senior staff and Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any current concerns. These will be shared with staff, parents/carers and students.