

Bullying Policy

Name of School: **Queen Elizabeth Grammar School Penrith**



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Introduction

About 1.5 million children in British schools are believed to be victims of bullying and Childline reports that this is the most frequent reason for calls to their helpline. Bullying behaviour can occur in many different settings in all walks of life.

Aims

We strive to empower our pupils by offering them strategies for coping, and by encouraging them to develop strength of character, self-respect and respect for others.

We aim to create a caring community where no pupil need fear intimidation, by promoting an open listening ethos and encouraging pupils to support each other by reporting all instances of bullying.

We aim to sort out problems quickly and effectively.

Contract against antisocial behaviour

The starting point for discussions about bullying was the contract against antisocial behaviour. This was drawn up in 1996 by the school community after discussions between pupils and staff, and is still very useful today:

- 1. Learn to look at life from the viewpoint of others, as well as from your own.**
- 2. Think before you speak or act.**
- 3. Respect other people's right to do their own thing within the school rules.**
- 4. Encourage others to behave in an acceptable way.**
- 5. Always treat people according to the quality of their true character, not by what they appear to be.**
- 6. If you see antisocial behaviour, be strong enough to tell somebody who should know.**
- 7. Treat others as you would wish to be treated.**
- 8. Behave in a way that makes you feel proud of yourself.**

Bullying behaviour

Bullying can take many forms. It can be physical or verbal and includes unkind actions or remarks, verbal teasing, taunting and tormenting, and exclusion from groups. It does not have to be face to face and can include bullying via social network sites, direct messaging, email and text messages.

Prevention of bullying

We work hard to prevent the occurrence of bullying behaviour in the following ways:

1. A 'zero tolerance' approach to bullying is adopted by all staff at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School. Pupils are reassured that the school cannot condone any form of bullying and that staff will take firm action should this behaviour occur.
2. We raise the issue of bullying with Year 5/6 pupils as part of the induction programme. The Assistant Head (Student Welfare) or Head of Year 7 visit all catchment area primary schools and meets Year 5/6 pupils. They are encouraged to discuss concerns about the transfer process, and participate in discussions about bullying and friendship.

The Head of Year 7 and the Year 7 tutor team work with pupils on the Year 6 Discovery Day, and explain procedures for dealing with difficult situations. Our primary school programme is now facilitating contact for pupils from year 3 upwards with QEGS staff. This will enable Year 6 pupils to feel comfortable about the transfer process and to establish friendships with senior pupils.

The Assistant Head (Student Welfare) leads a Year 7 assembly in their first few days of school to reassure them and to sign post them to all the different sources of support in school.

Each Year 7 tutor group has sixth form buddies attached to it, so that the younger pupils have additional support and can confide in a buddy if they are too shy to tell a teacher.

3. Each form room has a copy of the safeguarding leaflet which gives details of key staff and ways for students to access help. Spare copies are always on display at reception for students to take and it is also on the school website.
4. The topics of friendship and bullying are an integral part of our Key Stage 3 Citizenship programme. A range of good materials is provided by the Citizenship Co-ordinator. All tutor groups have the opportunity to discuss sensitive issues with their tutor.
5. All pupils and parents subscribe to the home-school agreement in the student planner, which promotes considerate and responsible behaviour.

6. SLT and Year Heads raise bullying and friendship issues at regular intervals through the assembly programme. Visiting speakers often focus on kindness, tolerance, self-respect and empathy.
7. Tutors, Year Heads and the Assistant Head (Student Welfare) are quick to communicate difficulties as they arise, and maintain good contact with parents and support services.
8. The Assistant Head (Student Welfare) has attended online safety training by the South West Grid for Learning and the Safer Internet Centre, which included online bullying. All pupils have the opportunity to view CEOP films in assembly or in citizenship lessons.
9. The Deputy Head has completed a 'train the trainer' course by Stonewall to understand homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and deliver practical strategies to prevent bullying of this type and to support victims.
10. Support and advice resource materials are available for all Year Heads and tutors to use, if they need to address difficult or challenging behaviour, and to promote inclusion.

Dealing with bullying behaviour: Advice for teachers

- It is essential that incidents are dealt with quickly, and that pupils see that they are receiving support.
- Pupils involved in bullying incidents should be interviewed by a member of staff and a written record should be made of each pupil's statement. The statement should be signed and dated by the pupil and the teacher. A record of the interview should be given to the tutor, Year Head and Assistant Head (Student Welfare). Suggested interview questions are provided within this policy. The questions are based on a format developed by the police as part of a restorative justice programme. They are designed to elicit clear information without inviting children to judge each other.
- The appropriate Year Head and Assistant Head will log bullying incidents.
- It is wise to interview pupils separately at first. In some cases a pupil will be very worried or upset, and it can be helpful for him/her to talk to a member of staff with whom he/she feels particularly comfortable.
- Insist that you will find the truth. As soon as the truth is established then everyone can move forward.
- Always respect a confidence (unless there are child protection issues – see Safeguarding policy). You do not have to tell the parents of offenders the source of your information.
- Where possible, keep witnesses apart, especially those you suspect of wrongdoing.
- Do not be rushed into action before you are satisfied you know exactly what happened and each pupil's part in it.
- Insist on language that has clear meaning. Use direct questions. Avoid metaphorical language.
- It is better to find out what has happened than to insist that a child tells you why it has happened, as he or she may not really understand why.
- Keep parents informed of what is happening and explain any course of action you decide to take.
- Investigate the incident thoroughly and use the system of punishments set out in the Behaviour Policy, if necessary.
- Follow up any pupil who has been bullied to ensure that there has been no continuation of the problem.

- Arrange to meet the children concerned on a regular basis to follow up any further difficulties. This could be individually or as a group, depending on the sensitivities of the pupils concerned. Make it clear to all concerned that the follow-up visits will happen regularly so that any further difficulties can be reported immediately. This gives continuous protection and security to the victim.
- Consideration will be given as to the appropriateness of follow-up work with a tutor group or year group, using appropriate, specialist resources.
- Consideration will be given to the opportunity for a group of children to work towards a group reward for improved behaviour and mutual respect.
- Consideration will be given to the appropriateness of a referral to the, the Attendance and Support Officer, the SENDCo or outside agencies.

You may find the following links helpful. You will find advice for young people, for parents and for teachers. :

www.childline.org.uk

www.bullying.co.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

<http://ceop.police.uk/>

www.kidpower.org

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