QUEENS' SCHOOL
Dare to be Great

Anti-bullying Policy

1.   Introduction

This policy has been written in light of the Department for Education's publications "Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019)", "Preventing and tackling bullying (2017)", Cyber bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff (2014)" as well as current guidance from Kidscape and the Anti-Bullying Alliance. It should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy, our Child Protection Policy, our E-Safety Policy and our Equality Policy.

We recognise that we have a legal responsibility for preventing and tackling bullying as laid out in the Education Act 2002, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Equalities Act 2010.

At Queens' School we believe that bullying is not acceptable under any circumstances and that it is best prevented through the development of a school ethos based on mutual respect, fairness and equality. These qualities are underpinned by our STAR values, particularly Altruism and Respect. We recognise the need to ensure quality incident follow up that resolves issues for all parties and provides appropriate support for the person on the receiving end of hurtful behaviour as well as the person who has been hurtful.

2.   Principles

- All members of the school community have the right to feel safe in school
- All members of the school community have the right not to experience prejudice and hurtful behaviour at school, whether or not it is directed at them
- There is no justification whatsoever for bullying behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form
- All reported and witnessed bullying incidents should be treated seriously and responded to consistently
- Intervention should support and empower people who have experienced bullying rather than encouraging a view of them as victim
- Bullying behaviour is a problem for both the recipient and the instigator and should be addressed in positive and constructive ways which provide opportunities for growth and development for the individuals involved

3.   Aims and Objectives

- To safeguard all members of the school community and to promote wellbeing
- To ensure equality between different groups and encourage community cohesion

- To demonstrate to all stakeholders that the school takes wellbeing seriously by having zero tolerance towards bullying behaviour
- To have clear and consistent procedures for responding to incidents of bullying
- To ensure young people, parents/carers and staff are confident to respond to bullying and that they have confidence in school systems

4.   Strategies

In order to meet our aims we intend to:

- Be pro-active in the prevention of bullying and to raise awareness of all aspects of bullying through the curriculum (particularly Lifelong Learning), curriculum enrichment activities, form time activities and assemblies
- Educate students about cyberbullying and keep up to date with the internet technologies being used
- Make students, parents/carers and staff aware of what steps to take when an incident of bullying has occurred and to communicate effectively with them regarding the incident
- Reassure those on the receiving end of bullying behaviour that support will be provided and action will be taken to keep them safe
- Demonstrate to those causing hurt to others that their behaviour is unacceptable and address their behaviour in a fair and firm manner, and provide them with support to enable them to change
- Accurately record all incidents of bullying and to monitor the effectiveness of strategies for dealing with it

5.   Definition

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Bullying impacts negatively on others because it is either intended to cause distress or results in significant distress and it is repeated or results in multiple impacts on the target. (DFE 2017)

Cyber bullying is bullying that takes place online. 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. (DFE 2017)

Bullying can include:

- name-calling, taunting, mocking and making offensive comments
- offensive graffiti
- excluding people from groups
- gossiping and spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours
- kicking, hitting, pushing
- taking belongings

- cyberbullying – including sending inappropriate, offensive or degrading text messages, emails, instant messages or photographs via social media or setting up websites or groups on social media sites that are made to embarrass or upset individuals

People are bullied for a variety of reasons including:

- ethnic background, religion or culture
- disability, special educational needs or a particular ability or talent
- gender or sexual orientation
- size, appearance or health conditions
- social or economic status (poverty, class)
- age/maturity
- home circumstances

Queens' School takes all forms of bullying seriously and is particularly concerned to take action in relation to any incidents which involve racist, sexist or homophobic elements.

6.   Scope

This policy applies to incidents of bullying which take place on school premises, on school trips, when travelling to and from school. However, the school is always concerned about the wellbeing and conduct of its students and staff and will respond appropriately to any information it receives about bullying outside school if it impacts on well-being. We have a responsibility to tackle cyberbullying incidents even if they are outside school hours or off the premises.

If there are concerns about a student's safety outside school then parents/carers are advised to contact the 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. Students may be banned from school transport if they bully others during journeys to or from school.

If information is received that a student is being bullied by a sibling outside school this will initially be discussed with the parents. If concerns persist then the matter will be referred to Hertfordshire Children's Services.

If students are being bullied by students of another school the relevant senior member of staff at that school will be informed and we will work together to resolve the matter.

7.   Prevention

All members of the school community must apply the school's policy of zero-tolerance consistently when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported. We will constantly reinforce the message to that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and tackle it.

All prejudice-based hurtful incidents are identified and prevented from escalating. For example, casual use of homophobic, transphobic, sexist or racist language should not go unchecked whether or not it is targeted at an individual.

We recognise that not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all reported hurtful behaviour is taken seriously and resolved at the earliest opportunity to avoid escalation into bullying.

We also recognise that there are particular times when and places where people 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.

Parents/carers who believe their 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. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated. Similarly if parents/carers believe their child is bullying others, this information should be shared with school so that the issue can be addressed.

8.   Post Incident Responses

Our approaches are varied depending upon the particular circumstance of each bullying incident. Those who suffer as a result of bullying are encouraged to develop assertiveness and coping skills. Others aim to help those who bully to become more aware of the impact of their actions.

a) For the target of bullying

When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a person may have been the target of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated. The school will offer a reassuring and supportive response. The nature of the response will be determined by the situation and the individual's needs but prompt action will be taken to stop the incident and secure the safety of those involved. Where appropriate parents/carers will be informed and involved. Other responses may include:

- Adult mediation between those involved (provided this does not increase their vulnerability)
- Restorative justice (RJ) facilitated by a trained student support manager or senior leader
- Referral to an outside agency such as a Connexions Personal Advisor, Chessbrook Outreach Worker or counsellor who may be able to provide assertiveness training and/or ongoing support
- Support from a peer mentor or 6th Form Buddy
- Creation of a support group such as a 'Circle of Friends'
- Offer of a change of form tutor group if appropriate

b) For those accused of bullying behaviour

We adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable those who show bullying behaviour how to behave in a more acceptable way. We will respond to incidents in a proportionate way – the more serious the concern, the more serious the response.

Adult mediation, restorative justice, referral to outside agencies for support and the creation of a Circle of Friends are all strategies used to help bullies as well as their targets.

When sanctions are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. We accept that punishment is not always helpful in managing this problem but it may be necessary in situations where other responses have failed.

Actions may include:

- Loss of lunch/break-time privileges
- Detention
- Internal Exclusion
- Fixed Term Exclusion
- Removal from class/group
- Withholding participation in a trip, sports event/team or other out of school activity
- Permanent Exclusion (in extreme cases)
- Agreed behaviour contract / positive conduct agreement
- Return or compensation of damaged property
- Opportunities for the person to put right the harm caused, e.g. an apology from the bully

We look for opportunities to provide positive reinforcement for students previously involved in bullying in order to promote change.

9.   Roles and Responsibilities

Form Tutors, subject teachers, the Student Support Team and the Senior Leadership Team are all responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy. Safeguarding all members of the school community is a collective responsibility.

The Deputy Head responsible for Student Support has a specific responsibility to ensure the policy is upheld and that procedures are followed.

Incidents are recorded by the members of the Student Support Team and monitored by the Deputy Head. Any incidents with a racist, sexist or homophobic element will be specifically identified.

Support for those affected by bullying is co-ordinated by the Deputy Head and the Student Support Team.

Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school in imposing sanctions if their child is responsible for bullying.

10.   Monitoring and evaluating

All bullying incidents will be logged on CPOMS and the safeguarding register by SSMs and/or senior leaders.

The Deputy Head will present a termly report to the Governing Body indicating any trends which may be apparent.

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.

11. Linked Policies

- Behaviour for Learning Policy

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Review date: March 2003

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