

CAPITAL SCHOOL



Prevention of Bullying Policy

Capital School Policies & Procedures

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STATEMENT

The Capital School is completely opposed to bullying. Bullying is wrong and damages children and young people. It causes fear and distress for the victim, may distract him or her from learning and contribute to their making limited progress. It often affects other children who witness the bullying. It may damage the atmosphere of a class and the climate of a school.

It is recognized that all schools are likely to have a problem with bullying at some time. The School regards bullying as particularly serious. Firm action will always be taken against it. This policy is provided to parents/carers and is available and known to all connected with the School, including all staff and pupils.

AIMS

The aims of this Policy are to provide pupils with a safe and secure environment and to produce a consistent response by the School to any bullying incidents that may occur.

POLICY

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual, or a group of individuals that intentionally sets out to hurt or harm another individual, or group of individuals. The hurtful behaviour may be repeated over a period of time and, if allowed to continue in the social context of a school, can become an established and accepted form of behaviour. Thus making it extremely difficult for victims to defend themselves. It can take various forms:

- Physical- for example fighting, damaging or hiding someone's clothes or belongings;
- Psychological- for example, excluding someone from a group, activity or place; aggressive name-calling; cyber-bullying (ie. via social networking websites, telephone calls, text messages, photographs or emails), or unpleasant remarks or actions related to any of the following:
 - Race, religion or culture;
 - Inappropriate social behaviour (talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way)
 - Gender
 - Disability
 - Intellectual or other abilities.

Any behaviour that a reasonable bystander would consider as calculated or intended to hurt or upset the victim is wrong and may well constitute bullying. It cannot be justified if the bully says or believes that the victim is not upset or hurt by his/her actions or words. Sanctions of any kind against a pupil are the responsibility of staff alone (in conjunction with parents), and no other pupils.

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

Anyone may be at risk of being bullied, even an adult, but younger children are particularly at risk. The school recognizes that bullying often takes place out of school, but the fear generated has a significant effect on the right of each young person to feel safe at school.

Equally, we recognise that pupils seldom admit to being the victims of bullying, as they are afraid of reprisals or being accused of being an informer.

Preventing Bullying: A Whole School Approach

The School will promote positive values of mutual respect and concern in a wide range of contexts, from assembly and tutorial time to informal discussions. Teachers will cover the topic of bullying in the Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) strand of the curriculum. They will also remind students at the start of each term of their responsibility to ensure that bullying does not occur and to talk to a member of staff if they witness, suspect or experience bullying.

As a community, we recognise that bullying can become endemic unless a proactivestance is taken. We therefore undertake to:

- Supply all pupils with age-appropriate guidelines on bullying which will help them identify whether they are being bullied, recommend coping strategies and offer a framework for support and advice;
- Address the topic at an early stage within the framework of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic education programme and by the development of generic coping strategies, to better equip young people to deal with the issues around bullying and become confident to seek help if they suspect bullying;
- Ensure that adults in school are aware of any potential issues and fully understand the systems for dealing with cases reported to them;
- Take every accusation of bullying seriously;
- Always inform the parents of all parties about any incidents; this may be telephone, letter or inviting parents for discussions to agree remediation of the situation;
- Deal with allegations and issues of bullying at a senior level, maintaining scrupulous records of incidents and action taken;
- Remain flexible in responding to situations, as each will be individual and unique;
- Remember that punishment does not necessarily cure a bully;
- Operate on the guiding principle that each young person has the right to feel safe and secure;
- Regularly consult pupils and staff to gain an accurate picture of the degree of bullying within the School;
- Identify 'vulnerable' children and pupils as early as possible in their school careers, and provide support in raising their self-esteem and confidence.

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All members of the School are expected to help to create an atmosphere in which bullying will be spoken of openly, taken seriously and responded to with appropriate action. Any pupil who is being bullied should tell his or her parents, and preferably his or her class teacher or another member of staff. It is important that any cases of bullying are reported to someone whom the victim feels confident to talk to.

Staff awareness will be raised through discussion in staff meetings, and action is taken to reduce the risk of bullying at times of the day and in places where it is likely to occur.

Liaising with Parents/Carers

The School will keep parents/carers informed if and when it may be dealing with a significant bullying situation. Parents/carers are asked to let the School (normally the class teacher) know directly if they have cause for concern, either on behalf of their own children or because of rumours about others.

Investigating Incidents of Bullying

In the event of an instance of bullying being observed or reported, School staff will ascertain the facts from the victim, alleged perpetrator and witness(es).

A record will be made of who was involved, what happened, when and where, and this will be passed to the relevant class teacher, who will liaise with a senior member of staff. The person who makes the initial record is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate member of the senior management team receives a record of the incident promptly. They will record incidents of bullying in a file kept in the Principal's office.

The senior leadership team will monitor this file at least monthly to identify patterns of any incidents, both in relation to individual pupils and across the School as a whole. Relevant information will be entered into the school's management information system.

Resolving the Incident after an Investigation

Once investigated, the School will make every effort to resolve the problem by seeing all pupils involved. The School will seek to support the victim and change the behaviour of the bully or bullies. Pupils who are being bullied will be supported and pupils who may bully others will also be given suitable help and guidance.

Sanctions

For all incidents of bullying, disciplinary sanctions will normally be applied, and this may extend to suspension, required removal or, in the gravest cases of severe or persistent bullying, expulsion.

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Application of the Policy

This Policy applies in respect of all dealings between members of the School, which in the opinion of the School impact, or may impact, upon their conduct at the School or upon its reputation. The Policy is carried out in conjunction with the School's Behaviour Management Policy.

Policy approved by
Signature
Position
Date
Next revision date