

King Edward VI High School for Girls Anti-Bullying Policy

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**King Edward VI High School for Girls
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

This policy has been written in compliance with the non-statutory DfE advice Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017). It is made available to parents on the school website and a paper copy is available in the school office upon request.

AIMS and OBJECTIVES - STATEMENT OF INTENT

At KEHS, our community is based upon respect, good manners and care for others. As stated in 'Our Expectations of Students at KEHS', everyone has the right to be safe and happy in school and all students have an obligation not to discriminate against, harass or be unkind to others, so that every one of our girls can develop her full potential. Bullying, in whatever manifestation, is directly contrary to KEHS's ethos and is not tolerated. We expect our pupils to treat each other and members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere.

We recognise the seriousness of bullying and its ability to cause psychological damage and even suicide. If bullying does occur, the victim should feel confident about asking for help within the school community. Pupils should understand that withholding information protects the bully and allows them to continue the practice. Bullies only prosper where there is silence and fear. We aim for KEHS to be a "speaking out" school. We want people to tell us if they are bullied and we want them to tell us if they witness or hear of any bullying taking place. We encourage everyone to make it known to bullies that they disapprove of their actions.

We aim to deal with all incidents sensitively, consistently and efficiently. Our prime concerns are firstly to prevent any continuation of the bullying, and secondly to improve the behaviour of the person doing the bullying.

Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and home have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together. Parents should feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child. They should always report any suspected case of bullying to the Form Tutor, Head of Year, Head of Lower School or Vice Principal (Pastoral). Acceptance of this policy and our Behaviour and Discipline Policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions. This policy should also be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Discipline Policy and Exclusion, Removal and Review Policy and applies to all pupils whether or not they are in the care of the School when the bullying behaviour occurs. Strong sanctions as outlined in these policies, including exclusion, may be deemed necessary in cases of severe or persistent bullying.

The school understands that relationships break down for all sorts of reasons and it is not possible to make everyone like everyone else. Accusations of bullying often, on investigation, turn out to be very complex and sometimes there is fault on both sides.

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm', a bullying incident is addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, school staff must report it to the DSL who will take advice from BSCB, in accordance with the procedures set out in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

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. It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying may occur directly or through cyber-technology (called cyberbullying) such as social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs or email. (See separate statement below about cyberbullying.)

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups or by actual or perceived differences between people. For example, bullying may involve actions or comments that:

- are aimed at a person's race, religion, belief or culture;
- are homophobic, sexist or sexual;
- focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape) learning difficulties or special educational needs
- are aimed at the individual because of their situation, for example because she is adopted or is a young carer.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. We always treat it very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoiled by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to Matron with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We take the following preventative measures:

- We use appropriate Assemblies and form time to explain the school's view on anti-social, hurtful behaviour and bullying, including the responsibilities of bystanders. Our Personal Decision Making programme (PDM) is structured to give girls an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other.
- Other lessons, particularly RS, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills.
- All girls are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place.
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated promptly. A record is kept and monitored by the Vice Principal (Pastoral) so that it can be seen where a pattern is being established. We always monitor reported incidents.
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of Form Tutors and Heads of Year who support the Head of Lower School and the Vice-Principal (Pastoral); they are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
- Information about friendship patterns, particular incidents and any known conflict between pupils is shared with staff so that strategies can be developed to prevent bullying.

- Our pastoral team gives training, support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies.
- All staff are aware that they must be vigilant for any signs of bullying and that it is every member of staff's responsibility to report any perceived cases.
- We take action to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely: Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Our pupil diaries display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and web sites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline, Kidscape and Samaritans.
- We advise our Form Prefects of the importance of offering support and assistance to younger girls and to those who may be vulnerable.
- All girls in the Thirds (Year 7) have a buddy who is in the Lower Fourth (Year 8).
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, and on school visits and trips, involving girls from KEHS.
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

CYBERBULLYING – DEFINITION

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. The term 'cyberbullying' refers to the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.

Cyberbullying can involve social websites, emails, telephone calls, text messages and photographs. It is a form of bullying that can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

CYBERBULLYING – PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

In addition to the preventative measures described above, we:

- Expect all girls to adhere to the Pupils' Use of ICT, Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices Policy for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and girls' use of the internet is monitored.
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.

- Issue all pupils with their own personal school email address. Access to sites such as “hotmail” is not allowed.
- Offer guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying.
- Offer guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- Do not allow the use of cameras in school without prior staff permission.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING BULLYING

To encourage people to SPEAK OUT with confidence and to make the reporting of incidents as easy as possible, we provide as many initial contacts as possible for pupils to report incidents with confidence within the school. It has to be the pupil’s choice as to whom they reveal the problem. The following list is for reference only; the order is of no significance:

- Form Tutor
- Head of Year
- Head of Lower School
- Vice Principal (Pastoral)
- Any Teacher
- Form Prefect
- School Counsellor
- Matron
- School Doctor
- Office Staff
- Childline

The person to whom the pupil has revealed the problem will inform the appropriate Head of Year, Head of Lower School or Vice Principal (Pastoral). We will always deal with incidents that have occurred inside and outside of school if they have been reported to us and affect the health and happiness of a KEHS girl.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the girls involved.
- He/she will inform the appropriate Head of Year, Head of Lower School or Vice Principal (Pastoral) as soon as possible.
- The victim will be interviewed on her own and asked to write an account of events.

- The alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events.
- The member of staff will calmly explain the range of disciplinary measures that are potentially involved.
- The incident will be recorded together with the action taken.
- All relevant staff will be informed of the incident.
- In very serious incidents, the Principal will be informed and a decision will be made as to any further action that is required in accordance with the Range of Action set out below. The parents of the victim and the alleged bully will be notified and informed of the action being taken.

RANGE OF ACTION

Where a complaint of bullying behaviour is upheld, the range of responses may include one or more of the following non-exhaustive list:

- The victim will be interviewed by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator. It will be made clear to her why revenge is inappropriate. She will be offered support to develop a strategy to help herself, including support from external services where appropriate.
- The alleged bully will be interviewed by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim. Her views will be taken seriously and it will be made clear why her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. She will be offered guidance on modifying her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and given the opportunity to discuss the matter with a member of the pastoral team. Their support should be sought.
- A way forward, which may include disciplinary sanctions and counselling, will be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others.
- The motivation behind the bullying behaviour will be considered and whether external services should be used to tackle any underlying issues of the bully which contributed to the bullying behaviour. If these considerations lead to any concerns that the bully may be at risk of harm, the School's safeguarding procedures will be followed.
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.
- If a girl who has reported bullying is found to have wilfully wrongly accused another, disciplinary sanctions in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy and counselling may be appropriate.

- Where a child's behaviour, or the harm caused to another child by that behaviour, is deemed to be or could be a form of abuse and warrants a response under child protection as well as, or instead of, anti-bullying procedures, this must be reported to the DSL. The DSL will take advice from BSCB and it is likely that all pupils involved, including the pupil or pupils accused of abuse, will be treated as being "at risk". Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the DSL will make a referral to BSCB. See the Safeguarding Policy for further detail.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually to assess its effectiveness and update it as necessary.

COMPLAINTS

We hope that parents and pupils will not have any complaints about the operation of our anti bullying policy; nevertheless, copies of the School's complaints procedure can be sent to parents on request and can be found on our website.

LOG OF CONCERNS

A central file of 'bullying cases' is kept by the Vice Principal (Pastoral). This is continually updated in discussion with Heads of Year whenever a new 'case' is reported.

Reviewed September 2017 (to be reviewed in September 2018)

The Vice Principal (Pastoral) is responsible for the monitoring and review of the Anti-Bullying Policy and reports to the Principal.

The school's Anti-Bullying policy and all curriculum issues are presented to and reviewed by the Risk & Compliance Committee of the ISGB