



The Ursuline Academy Ilford

Anti-Bullying Policy 2019

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1. School Mission Statement

We are a Catholic community of faith, love and service rooted in the spirit of St Angela. Through Christ and the Gospel and in our diverse community we strive to provide an environment for young women to flourish, spiritually, academically and socially. Together we are The Ursuline Academy Ilford.

In pursuit of this mission Governors and Staff of The Ursuline Academy Ilford commit themselves to the following:

- recognising the value and uniqueness of every student we teach;
- ensuring that the school is a safe place to be and one where the interests of justice are served;
- creating a community which is inclusive, one whose basis is mutual respect and equality;
- maintaining the long tradition of trust, cooperation and courtesy;
- generating good order and discipline based on sound relationships between staff, pupils and parents;
- nurturing the religious and intellectual lives of our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities;
- inviting parents to play an active role in their daughter's development, academically, spiritually and emotionally.

Our Mission statement makes clear the entitlement of all in the school to be equally valued and respected and the responsibility of all to show understanding and respect for others. In the light of this, bullying in any form has no place in Ursuline and will not be tolerated.

We are a zero tolerance school - all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. **Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell staff.**

2. What Is Bullying?

It is very important to be clear about what is, and is not, bullying. There are many definitions and perceptions of bullying, but all recognise that bullying is sustained and takes place where there is an imbalance of power.

Useful and comprehensive definitions are:

‘Bully’ is a person who habitually seeks to harm or intimidate those whom they perceive as vulnerable.

‘Bullying’ is the repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or emotional abuse, or through attacks on the property of another. It may include, but not be limited to actions such as verbal taunts, exclusion from a group, name-calling and put-downs, including ethnically-based or gender-based verbal put-downs and extortion of money or possessions’

3. Responsibilities

Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Headteachers’ the power to regulate students’ conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff.

This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on public transport, outside the local shops, in the community or online.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers’ stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. As a school we have made the decision to ban such devices from years 7-11, therefore it is vital that parents monitor their children’s use of such devices. Please refer to our mobile device policy for further details.

Keeping Children Safe in Education states that severe cases of bullying (including cyberbullying) can be classed as emotional abuse. Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is ‘reasonable cause to suspect that a child is ‘suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm’. Where this is the case, the school staff will follow the procedure as set out in the Child Protection Policy and inform the Designated Lead Child protection officer (Keran Reilly) or other safeguarding leads in the event of Ms Reilly being unavailable (Gary Challis and Caroline Wood).

4. Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender. Where we feel an offence has been committed we will consult our school Police Liaison officer for support. It is important to remember that in the eyes of the law the age of criminal responsibility is just 10 years old.

5. The Aims and Objectives of The Ursuline Academy In Relation To Bullying Are:

5.1 For the whole school community:

- The whole school community is clear about the anti-bullying stance the school takes;
- Students, as well as staff and other members of the school, are fully engaged in developing and reviewing anti-bullying work in the school (PHSE, and the Catholic ethos of our school in line with our mission statement);
- Every chance is taken to celebrate the success of anti-bullying work;
- All students are clear about the roles they can take in preventing bullying, including the role of bystanders and lookers-on;
- There is a clear strategy of communication between teachers, students and parents to ensure all incidence of 'perceived' bullying can be communicated and **investigated** at the earliest opportunity.

5.2 For the Governing Body:

- We develop whole school policies which met the law and school inspection requirements;
- We promote a school climate where bullying and violence are not tolerated and cannot flourish;
- We continually seek to develop best practice based on knowledge of what works;
- We review the school's anti-bullying policy every two years, and update where necessary;
- Curriculum opportunities are used to address bullying so all students have access to the information around the issues relating to bullying;
- Student support systems are in place to prevent and respond to bullying;
- All staff take part in relevant professional development and are clear about their roles and responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying;
- All staff are aware of the importance of modelling positive relationships;
- We work in partnership with parents, teachers and others in the community to promote safety and feeling secure.

5.3 For those students who may be experiencing bullying (including homophobic bullying and cyber-bullying)

- You will be heard – do not be afraid to tell someone. It is not something you should be ashamed of but it will continue if not reported;
- You know how to report bullying and get help - let any teacher know or ask someone at home to contact the school;
- You are confident in the school's ability to deal with bullying;
- Steps are taken to help you feel safe again - we will let you know what we will do and when;
- You understand that we will take things at a pace that you are comfortable with;
- You are helped to regain confidence and resilience;
- You know that you can get support from others - peers, teachers, support staff, school counsellor etc.

5.4 For students who engage in bullying behaviour:

- You are brought to account for your behaviour;
- You are helped to face up to the harm that you have caused;
- You will have sanctions imposed upon you;
- You will learn to behave in ways which do not cause harm in future, because you have developed your emotional skills and knowledge;
- You will be expected to take steps to help repair the harm you have caused.

5.5 For parents:

- You are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying;
- You are aware of procedures to use if you are concerned your child is being bullied or does not feel safe to learn;
- You are confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate/resolve as necessary and that the school will deal with bullying in a way which protects your child;
- You are clear about ways in which you can support the school in making sure its anti-bullying policy or procedures are effective.

When and if you have a concern that your child is being bullied you should contact your daughter's Head of Year in the first instance. If unavailable you should contact Dr Nguyen (Deputy Head) or Mr Challis, Assistant Headteacher to raise your concern. Having done so the school will investigate the matter, take action (if necessary) and report back to the parent who raised the concern.

You must give the school adequate time to investigate and take action.

Under no circumstances should parents/carers take action against other students of the school.

If unhappy with the actions of the school, you may raise a complaint as set out in the School's Complaint Policy which is available on the school website.

5.6 In dealing with bullying we aim to:

- Eliminate the bullying itself;
- Support and empower the victim by resolving the problem and by building up her/his self-esteem and where appropriate developing strategies to avoid bullying;
- Bring the perpetrator to reflect and realise the unacceptability of her/ his behaviour and the consequences should it continue;
- Investigate the cause of the bullying behaviour and where appropriate work with her/ him to modify her/ his behaviour;
- Reconcile the perpetrator and the victim, at the appropriate time for BOTH parties.

5.7 The school's response to bullying is achieved in various ways:

Research indicates that the top three strategies for preventing bullying are (in order of priority):

1. Clear rules about bullying and what will happen if you bully;
2. An adult you can talk to if you're worried about bullying;
3. An anti-bullying policy that makes it clear what bullying is and how it will be stopped.

Followed by:

4. Parents and carers knowing how to stop bullying;
5. Another student you can talk to if you're worried about bullying;
6. Classroom lessons about bullying.

6. Recognising The Signs and Symptoms

- Seeking out members of staff at break times, rather than mixing with other girls. Loners thus become easy targets;
- A decline in standard of work;
- Reluctance to go to a particular lesson;
- Reluctance to attend school;
- Fear of walking to or from school;
- Frequent visits to school office reporting headaches/stomach aches;
- Loss of or damage to books/equipment/uniform;
- Change of personality – unusually withdrawn/distressed;
- Showing signs of unusual tiredness;
- Frequent loss or/unusual requests for money;
- Bruises/scratches.

It is important that staff are aware that it is generally a combination of several of these elements that could indicate bullying. One sign does not necessarily mean that a girl is being bullied.

7. Procedures and Good Practice Guidelines

- Staff should recognise signs of bullying and deal effectively with bullies and victims once identified;
- Anti-Bullying strategies will be a regular agenda item at meetings of the School Council;
- Induction of new pupils to the school, particularly on entry into Year 7 will include time devoted to explaining school policy on anti-bullying behaviour;
- Pupils should be encouraged to support one another by 'Telling' of bullying incidents;
- Year 7 pupils will be allocated a 6th Form Mentor who will actively promote a 'telling' culture in the school;
- All pupils in KS3 will be allocated a 6th Form Prefect who will actively promote a 'telling' culture in the school;
- All reported bullying will be investigated by the Head of Year within 24 hours of the complaint and details checked where possible by questioning witnesses. Written records will be kept on file of investigations;
- Throughout the investigation, the victim must feel supported and must feel that she was right to report the incident. The 'bully' will also need support;
- The girl being bullied and the 'bully/bullies' should be interviewed again at set intervals to ensure that the bullying has stopped. These interviews should be recorded in writing;
- Teaching practices and the curriculum will support anti-bullying ethos of the school community;
- Pastoral Programme will raise awareness, challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, and promote strategies for supporting the school's anti-bullying policy;
- Persistent offenders will be dealt with firmly. Temporary and even permanent exclusion must be perceived by all members of the school community as a possible outcome for persistent bullies;
- Pupils will be encouraged to contribute to the regular review of the anti-bullying policy. This is to be done via discussion in tutor periods and the School Council
- Parents of bullies and victims will be informed and encouraged to work in partnership with the school in promoting anti-bullying ethos
- Engage in anti-bullying week every year.

**All instances of unkindness towards others will be
considered a serious breach of the school's mission as a
Catholic School**