



Parklands Anti-bullying Policy

From time to time all children experience difficulties of one kind or another and sometimes you may be concerned about changes in your child. These may be because of a bullying issue but could be due to other things such as moving house or a change of teacher.

What is bullying behaviour?

Let's be clear about bullying behaviour. According to the Government (www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/bullying-a-definition), there is no legal definition of bullying. However, it is usually defined as behaviour that is repeated and behaviour that is:

- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally;
- often aimed at certain groups, eg because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

There are different types of bullying. These are:

- verbal (threats, name calling and racism);
- physical (punching and kicking);
- cyber (abusive text messages, internet messages);
- psychological (being excluded from groups and spreading rumours).

At Parklands we define bullying as not:

- hurting someone accidentally;
- a one-off fight between equals;
- a 'falling-out' between friends;
- borrowing things and forgetting to return them.

What do we do at school?

The issue of bullying will be included in lessons and class work. For instance, bullying issues are regularly covered in Drama and English. Bullying will be addressed in form time, assemblies and Respect days and the SECURE programme. Staff supervise the main areas for students during break and lunchtime. The Student Leaders often discuss new ways to prevent bullying. Vertical tutor groups and the House system promote a cohesive community which reduces the likelihood of bullying, as students know and work with students from other age groups. The Senior Student Leadership Team and prefects also take an active role in countering bullying.

How is bullying reported?

We have a number of ways in which to encourage the reporting of bullying issues and to make it easy for students to do so. We have a full time pastoral team, known in Parklands as the Achievement Team. This consists of five dedicated full time House Achievement Leaders, an Intervention Manager and Intervention support worker. They are available every day and do not have a teaching commitment, which means they are available to students when they need to see them, giving a quick response to any concerns raised. Our staff includes qualified social workers and counsellors.

In addition to the 'drop-in' opportunity that students have, there is a range of other ways to report bullying:

- 'Bullying@parklandsacademy.co.uk' –anonymous email reporting system;
- speak to a trusted member of staff;
- report to a trusted student including form captain and support pathway students.

What will happen if bullying is reported?

We take any reports of bullying very seriously; our House Achievement Leaders will investigate the report and take appropriate action.

- The victims will be interviewed along with other witnesses;
- The accused “bully” will be interviewed in order to get their version of events; it is therefore essential that a victim supplies names or descriptions of the bullies. It is impossible to solve any bullying issue if we are unable to address the victim’s concerns directly with the alleged bully;
- Everything said will be kept confidential, wherever possible;
- Other staff, students and parents will be involved, when needed;
- Where possible, we will use a restorative justice approach to solve the issue;
- Parents/carers will be kept fully informed;
- A record will be placed in all the involved students’ files;
- All students will be made aware that bullying behaviour will not be tolerated;
- Bullies will receive sanctions according to Parklands’ behaviour policy - see below;
- Serious incidents may result in the school informing the police and also being supportive of a prosecution.

Sanctions

These depend on the individual circumstances and whether it is possible to prove that bullying has taken place. It is impossible to apply sanctions based solely on hearsay or one person’s account without any evidence. A victim and their family may find this distressing, but we cannot apply a sanction without proof of guilt; this does not happen in wider society, hence it cannot happen in a school.

Possible sanctions for the bully are (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Loss of social time (breaks, lunches);
- Class/band change;
- Internal isolation;
- Restorative justice;
- External exclusion;
- Referral to the police;
- Managed move to another high school;
- Permanent exclusion.

In the rare circumstance that the victim alleges the bullying has continued but the alleged bully denies this allegation, it may be necessary for the parents of both the victim and alleged bully to meet in school to discuss the situation. The school needs the support of all parents concerned to come to a satisfactory conclusion, however difficult a meeting in school may be.

Links

The websites listed below offer direct links to other sources of information for parents and young people.

Advice for parents: www.familylives.org.uk National family support charity providing help and support in all aspects of family life.

Email and mobile bullying: www.chatdanger.com A site about the potential dangers on interactive services online.

Advisory Centre for Education: www.ace-ed.org.uk Registered charity independent of central or local government giving free advice and support to parents of children in state schools.

Anti-Bullying Network: www.antibullying.net Established by the Scottish Executive. Useful links and reviews for teachers, parents and pupils on bullying and related issues.

BBC Schools: www.bbc.co.uk/education/schools Includes information about bullying.

Bully OnLine: www.bullyonline.org Information on bullying for teachers, children and schools which details the legal procedures available. This site also lists support groups for teachers.

Bullying Online: www.bullying.co.uk Useful information and links on bullying and related issues for parents, children and teachers.

Childline: www.childline.org.uk Primarily a helpline for children but has useful information and links on bullying. **Chips** (Childline in Partnership with Schools) encourages schools to support pupils in setting up anti-bullying projects.

The Children's Society: www.the-childrens-society.org.uk 'Bullying! Information for parents on how to help your child' – leaflet giving information and practical guidance.