Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

Leighton Park School is completely opposed to all forms of bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely contrary to the Quaker values and principles by which we work and live. All members of the School have a right to work in a secure and caring environment, free from bullying behaviour. All members of the school also have a responsibility to contribute to protecting and maintaining such an environment.

Aims and Objectives

Leighton Park School aims to create an environment that is free of bullying and in which there is zero tolerance of bullying, harassment and child-on-child abuse in all their forms.

All staff – teaching and support – and all volunteers and governors should be alert to bullying behaviour and follow the school's anti-bullying policy, together with our Safeguarding and Behaviour Policies, whose objectives support the above aim.

All staff are given training to ensure they deal with any instances of bullying or alleged bullying effectively and appropriately.

The Quaker values are at the heart of the school and everything it does, especially the testimonies of respect, truth and integrity.

What is Bullying behaviour?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, often but not necessarily repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically, emotionally or in some other way. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, learning difficulty or disability, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Some forms of bullying constitute a criminal offence and/or a child protection matter and will be treated as such: see the school's safeguarding policy.

Bullying may be:

- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching or any use of violence. This includes rituals or hazing as part of initiations into any part of the School or initiations designed to embarrass or humiliate

- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, teasing, insulting, making threats, spreading rumours, making comments which are racist, sexist, homophobic or

transphobic in nature or which focus on disabilities or religious or cultural differences

- Emotional - excluding others, tormenting (e.g. hiding books or belongings including money), being unfriendly, graffiti, gestures, 'put downs', pressure to carry out initiation tasks

- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or comments of a sexual nature including upskirting, talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way

- Homophobic or Transphobic - direct or indirect remarks and/or actions because of or focussing on the issue of sexuality including all LGBTQ+ issues

- Cyber - all areas of internet, Wi-Fi and social media misuse (See below)

- Sexist: related to a person's sex, gender reassignment or gender identity

- Racist: relating to someone's religion, belief or culture

- Related to a person's home circumstances

- Related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning difficulty, health or appearance

- Related to protected characteristics, particularly sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, race and religion in a school environment

- Related to pregnancy and maternity

Bullying can occur between students or between members of staff and may also be carried out by students towards staff or vice versa.

Encouraging other people to engage in bullying behaviour is also bullying.

Bullying may be child-on-child abuse and/or a child protection issue: see the school's safeguarding policy.

Whilst bullying behaviour is repeated over time Leighton Park is aware that single incidents may be part of a pattern that does not immediately reveal itself. As such, the School uses MyConcern to log single incidents and then use the sanctions process to respond accordingly. As a result, the School can quickly spot patterns of behaviour that may well constitute bullying.

Even apparently low-level misconduct such as name-calling or making jokes at the expense of another is bullying behaviour and must be challenged and recorded on MyConcern.

It is unacceptable to justify or excuse bullying by saying that it is only 'banter' or 'just part of growing up'.

Initiations of any kind are not tolerated at Leighton Park School.

What is Cyberbullying?

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, as people forward on content at a click. Leighton Park School is committed to working to achieve a school that is free of cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is bullying of any of the above types which makes use, or misuse, of electronic forms of communication. This is a particularly powerful and invasive form of bullying and includes:

- Email and Internet chat room misuse

- Mobiles phone threats, intimidation and unkind messages and calls

- Using social media such as Facebook, SnapChat and Instagram (as three examples) to cause upset and / or provoke another person

- Misuse of associated technology e.g. camera and video facilities and by using the internet and phones to upset or threaten people, to post cruel messages, to send unpleasant photographs, to publish intimate or private details or images or to spread rumours

- Using cameras or video facilities inappropriately in order to intentionally harm, humiliate, embarrass or otherwise upset a person

- Youth produced sexual imagery (YPSI) is a form of child-on-child abuse as well as sometimes involving bullying behaviour: it is a child protection matter and must be reported as such.

What is not bullying?

It is important to realise that not all inequality in relationships will constitute bullying, nor will all disagreements, differences or conflicts between members of the community. It can be harmful to use the term 'bully' particularly if the evidence of bullying is inconclusive.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of behaviours which are not, in isolation, bullying behaviours:

- Not liking someone or not being liked by someone

- Being excluded from play or activities where there is no intention to humiliate or emotionally harm the person being excluded

- Accidentally bumping into someone

- Assertiveness

- A single act of telling a joke about someone although the difference between having a sense of humour and making fun of someone is very fine and people can misjudge this use of humour with negative consequences: however, a single joke at the expense of someone else in the context of children's conversations is at the very least on the edge of bullying; if in any doubt such incidents must be reported because others may have witnessed similar incidents.

- Arguments: arguments are heated disagreements between two (or more) people (or groups). Conflict is a natural part of human behaviour. Peaceful resolution of conflict is a healthy and essential part of community, of society and of a world where there are differences

- Expression of negative thoughts or feelings regarding others. This is to be discouraged but does not necessarily constitute bullying as such, unless it is done repeatedly and encourages others to follow suit; again, if in any doubt such incidents must be reported because others may have witnessed similar incidents

- Isolated acts of harassment, aggressive behaviour, intimidation or meanness are not necessarily bullying. They can become so if intended to hurt or harm another or if repeated over time. Even so, any act of harassment involving protected characteristics such as sex, race, religion, disability, or gender reassignment must be reported immediately through MyConcern.

Criminal Law

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in UK law, there are criminal and civil laws that apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

Some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. The age of criminal responsibility in the UK starts at 10.

In extreme cases Leighton Park will involve the relevant authorities if it suspects a criminal offence has been committed.

Guideline for Bullying as a Child Protection Issue

Ensure that students who report bullying just as with any other form of abuse or harassment are reassured that they will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe. In all cases the School will refer to the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the latest version of KCSIE.

The threshold for any instance of bullying, cyber-bullying harassment or child-on-child abuse to be regarded as a child protection matter is whether or not there is actual significant harm or the risk of significant harm.

If unsure, guidance must be sought from the DSL or a DDSL: follow the golden rule: if in any doubt, report.

Where there is any uncertainty about whether an incident reaches the threshold of harm as a child protection matter, guidance will be sought from the local children's services.

The effects of bullying on mental health and wellbeing

All bullying is damaging to those who experience it and those who perpetrate it. The consequences of bullying can last for many years, can undermine a person's confidence for life and can lead to lasting psychological damage and even suicide. There are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour and the school will involve outside agencies should it be necessary to do so.

These symptoms below are not exhaustive and may or may not be caused by bullying but when displayed the question of whether bullying is or has taken place should always be investigated. Consider the possibility of bullying when a child:

- Is frightened of walking to and from school
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking confidence
- Starts stammering

- Suffering from low mood, poor mental health and wellbeing
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Regularly feels ill in the morning
- Underperforms at school
- Comes home from school with clothes or property damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing' regularly
- Ask for or starts stealing money, or drinking alcohol or smoking, taking drugs
- Continually 'loses' money
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Exhibits any form of self-harm
- Exhibits signs of an eating disorder
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Is evasive or frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous or jumpy when a cyber message is received.

Advice for Students

1. **What to do if you feel you are being bullied**

- As a member of the school we expect you not to have to put up with any form of bullying behaviour. We can and will help you put a stop to it.
- Do not keep quiet about it.
- Speak to your parents or guardian, or another adult such as your matron, Housemaster/mistress or one of the graduate residents or the School Counsellor.
- Peer Mentors can also be approached.
- Do not put up with bullying behaviour. Bullies often stop what they are doing if their friends make it clear that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- The school will seek to provide you with the appropriate support.

2. **What to do if you see or are aware someone is being bullied**

- If you are not yourself a victim but know or suspect that it is happening to others, you have a duty to report it to a teacher or another adult.
- Support the person being bullied as far as possible, both during an incident and afterwards.
- Standing by and letting the bullying continue is almost as bad as taking an active part in it.

If you are guilty of bullying and realise that what you have been doing is wrong, you should speak to a teacher or another adult and ask them to help you deal with the situation. You will only make the situation worse if you let things continue and eventually get caught.

Advice for Parents

- If you know or suspect that your son/daughter may be a victim of bullying, please report the matter to the school as soon as possible, in the first instance to the tutor or Housemaster.

- Encourage your child to talk about the issue but be patient. It is quite natural for them to not to want to discuss the matter and not want you to do anything about it.

- Listen and try not to interrupt.

- Reassure them you are sympathetic and that it is a problem that can be solved.

- Try to keep the situation in perspective and remain good humoured. If your child sees that you are distressed (which you may well be) this may make them even more worried and anxious.

- If you know or suspect that another student known to your son/daughter may be a victim of bullying, please report the matter to the school in the same way as above.

- If you know or suspect that your son/daughter is involved in bullying, please report the matter to the school. It will be in their best interests to try to bring the matter to a speedy conclusion by having it dealt with where it is happening.

Staff Procedures:

When bullying is identified or reported action must be taken immediately so that the victim feels supported and reassured.

- The relevant Head of Section and Tutors should be notified, and the Housemaster/ Housemistress if a boarder and the Designated Safeguarding Team should be informed.

- A lead person will be identified to coordinate an investigation and gather evidence. This will usually include other key members of staff as appropriate.

- The victim should be reassured, any injury addressed and kept safe.

- Written accounts of the reported incident should be made by all involved: the victim of an incident, anyone accused of bullying behaviour and any witnesses to the incident. These accounts should be written under supervision and as soon as an incident is reported, preferably before those involved are able to communicate with one another. These will then be uploaded to MyConcern.

- Any electronic evidence may also be gathered, and screenshots taken to show where cyberbullying has taken place.

- However, staff must not view any images which may involve inappropriate sexual images: the DSL and her team must be alerted immediately.

- Each should then be interviewed by aDeputy Head , Housemaster or Head of Section ; another member of staff will be asked to be present, depending on availability. A written record will be kept of the interviews.

- Should the evidence show that any form of bullying has taken place, parents/ guardians may be asked to come into school to meet with the Senior Deputy Head.

- Those who are found to have been bullying will be sanctioned appropriately in the presence of their Head of Section and/ or Housemaster/ Housemistress and parents, by the Senior Deputy Head. The warning will remind the student of the school's policy on bullying and that another offence may result in exclusion from school. The formality of the warning and the seriousness with which bullying behaviour is dealt with is usually sufficient to prevent a recurrence of such behaviour.

- Parents' involvement is crucial to the process for both the victim of the bullying and any student found to have been bullying others.

- Sanctions against those who bully will include appropriate restorative justice as well as other measures such as gating and detentions. The aim should be for relationships to be mended. Cases will, however, be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and if necessary, exclusion may be the appropriate sanction.

- Students who bully will be given advice and support to help them manage their behaviour, but extreme or persistent bullying is likely to result in a period of suspension from school or even permanent exclusion.

- Notes of all action taken must be recorded and placed on student files. Copies should be given to Housemasters for House files (if a boarder) and Heads of Section (if a day student) and the Senior Deputy Head will keep a record in the Serious Incident File.

- Bullying can become a Child Protection Issue and, in this circumstance, cross-reference should be made with the school's policy on Child Protection and Safeguarding.

- Serious bullying incidents are always reported to the Senior Deputy Head to enable problems to be identified.

- The logs for bullying, sanctions and child protection include appropriate cross-references to ensure that patterns and tends may be more easily identified.

- All instances of bullying will remain on file and those involved will be monitored and supported for as long as may be necessary.

Outcomes

After an incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeat behaviour does not occur. Both the perpetrator of the bullying and their target will be offered relevant support to help them in the future.

Serious sanctions can be applied for bullying behaviour. The following action may be taken:

- Official warning to cease bullying behaviour
- School Detention

- Internal suspension
- Suspension from school
- Permanent exclusion

Prevention of Bullying

The school has an overriding duty of care towards its students and appropriate action must be taken to protect them.

We seek to prevent bullying by:

- Promoting an atmosphere in which 'telling' is safe and acceptable, including the use of a reporting tool
- Being vigilant in our supervision of all areas of the school, being on duty, in our classrooms and in the Houses in good time
- Reminding students frequently about the behaviour that is expected of them, stressing that they should be friendly and respectful towards each other. Student's need to understand that their actions can affect the mental health and wellbeing of others.
- Using information gathered from reported incidents as pointers to improvements that can be made to our approach
- Conscious teaching of social skills through role-play, drama, literature etc
- Using role play and discussion to help students to develop strategies for dealing with bullying and to understand those who bully to appreciate the feelings of the victim
- Building the confidence of students by valuing them and their work as individuals
- Using Collect, Philosophy, Religion and Values (PRV) and PHSCE ("Your Life") lessons to promote values, differences, beliefs, moral issues
- Teachers providing positive role models to students
- Ensuring clear communication between all members of staff regarding the behaviour of students
- Recording all incidents concisely and consistently to effectively monitor the behaviour of students and to evaluate the methods adopted to combat bullying
- Supportive procedures for dealing effectively with individual concerns raised by parents
- Clear communication with parents, especially when trying to work together to improve behaviour
- Being vigilant to signs of unhappiness, distress or change of character in students
- Providing Inset training which allows staff to understand and identify bullying, appreciate its consequences and follow the school's anti-bullying policy
- Providing appropriate training for senior students so that they may respond appropriately when they discover bullying behaviour.

- The school has a staff duty rota to cover times and places where bullying may occur.

Prevention of cyber-bullying

For the prevention of cyber-bullying, **in addition** to the measures described above, the School:

- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber-bullying in PSHE lessons, through tutorial work and additional pastoral talks;
- Expects all students to adhere to its IT and Digital Services Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). Students in Years 7 to 11 sign the Chromebook Acceptable Use Policy and all students are expected to follow the Online Safety Policy.
- Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department and DSL Team monitors students' use daily;
- May impose disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet in accordance with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy;
- Issues all students with their own personal Leighton Park email address;
- Ensures its students are aware of the various forms in which cyber-bullying can take place, that it can have severe and distressing consequences, and that participation in cyber-bullying will not be tolerated;
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details private and secure; Asks students in Years 7 to 11 to leave their mobile phone in a lockable space at school and use their school issued device for their learning during the school day, as explained in the Gold Book.

In relation to a specific incident of cyber-bullying, the school will follow the processes set out in the school behaviour policy. When illegal, inappropriate, or harmful material has been spread among students, the school will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the incident is contained. The DSL will report the incident and provide the relevant material to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable, if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that possessing that material is illegal. They will also work with external services if it is deemed necessary to do so.

Further explanation is provided in the Online Safety Policy.

This Anti Bullying Policy has been drawn up having regard to Part G of the latest version of the boarding National Minimum Standards and the latest version of KCSIE.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Behaviour and Expectations Policy and with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed at least every two years by the Senior Senior Deputy Head to assess its effectiveness and will be updated as necessary. In undertaking the review, the Senior Senior Deputy Head will consider the results of the evaluation of the methods adopted to combat bullying as well as any changes in legislation and/or statutory guidance and other relevant information gathered.**Useful resources for parents and staff**

Kidscape

http://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-parents-and-carers/ provides an excellent overview of issues concerning bullying in easy-to-follow sections

Bullying

UK http://www.bullying.co.uk/advice-for-parents/how-to-spot-the-signs-of-bullying/ contains many helpful documents and strategies for all aspects of managing the consequences of bullying

Vodafone http://www.vodafone.com/content/parents.html provides a link to various parent guides to cyber bullying

Childnet International Think You Know

http://www.childnet-int.org/kia/parents/ This is one of the best sites and contains accessible and informative information for all interested in IT safety. http://www.childnet.com/resources/supporting-young-people-online is a useful point of call to help support students in their use of technology online.

Childnet – sorted

http://www.childnet-int.org/sorted/ guides internet users on privacy online and reducing risks of sharing information unwittingly with those who can use it for bullying and other purposes

Kidsmart

http://www.kidsmart.org.uk/parents/ - for parents of younger children

BBC Stay Safe

http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/topics/stay-safe contain some useful and brief guides

Google family tips

http://www.google.co.uk/goodtoknow/familysafety/tips/ gives access to help on a variety of online and other issues facing children today.

EACH

www.each.education

National LGBT+ Helpline

08081000143

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Sign off: Luke Walters, Head
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Document Significant Change History

Date of Change	Detail of **Significant** Changes
08/09/20	Update to include bullying re protected characteristics to reflect seriousness – p2. Reference included to single incidents being taken seriously and logged, so patterns can be identified – p2
15/02/21	Updated to reflect latest guidance form DfE
31/08/21	Updated to include KCSIE 2021 guidance
01/09/22	Updated to include reference to KCSIE 2022 and new NMS 2022 References to mental health included
16/10/23	New section included on how the school goes above and beyond to prevent cyberbullying. Document updated to refer to latest versions of KCSIE and boarding NMS