

## STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

<b>RESPONSIBILITY:</b>	<b>LEARNING &amp; ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE</b>
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<b>PROPOSED BY:</b>	<b>VICKIE RUSTON</b>
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<b>TYPE OF POLICY:</b>	<b>STATUTORY</b>
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<b>ON WEBSITE:</b>	<b>YES</b>
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<b>DATE AGREED BY LEARNING &amp; ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>28 JUNE 2018</b>
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<b>FREQUENCY OF REVIEW:</b>	<b>3 YEARLY</b>
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<b>NEXT REVIEW:</b>	<b>JUNE 2021</b>
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<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	<b>FULL GOVERNING BODY</b>
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<b>DATE APPROVED AND ISSUED:</b>	<b>16 JULY 2018</b>
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<b>SIGNATURE:</b>		<b>CHAIR OF GOVERNORS</b>
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**In reviewing this policy, the Learning & Achievement Committee has taken into account the provisions of the Equality Policy 2016**



## Policy Statement

At Vandyke Upper School:

- we will not tolerate any form of verbal, physical or psychological bullying or “cyber” bullying
- all staff will do their best to prevent bullying and will share responsibility for action if bullying does occur
- all incidents will be investigated in a firm and fair manner
- parents/carers, governors and outside agencies may be involved in any course of action

## Defining Bullying

The school has adopted the DfE definition of bullying. Bullying is defined as "*behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally*".

Anyone has the potential to be a target or perpetrator of bullying.

The four main types of bullying are:

- Physical – such as hitting, kicking, shoving, theft
- Verbal – such as threats, name calling, shouts of abuse or insults, using threatening language
- Emotional – such as spreading rumours, being excluded from groups, intimidation
- Cyber-bullying – such as nasty text messages, emails, phone calls, via social media and the wider use of technology.

Bullying can be fuelled by prejudice based on any of the following:

- Race (racist bullying)
- Religion or belief
- Culture or class
- Gender (sexist bullying)
- Sexual orientation (homophobic or biphobia bullying)
- Gender identity (transphobic bullying)
- Special educational needs or disability (SEND)
- Appearance or health conditions
- Related to another vulnerable group of people

Bullying is **not** when two people have a disagreement or fall out over something; it is ‘the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Such abuses of power, if left unchallenged, can lead to more serious forms of abuse, such as domestic violence, racial attacks, sexual offences and self-harm or suicide.

## Principles

At Vandyke we believe that “Everyone Matters”. Bullying will not be tolerated. All students and staff have the right to enjoy and achieve within a safe and positive school environment. The school adopts the two underlying principles of the ‘Protective Behaviours’ ethos and approach:

- Everyone has the right to feel safe all of the time
- There is nothing too terrible that you cannot talk to someone about it

It is these principles that underpin Vandyke’s approach to bullying.

## Introduction

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

***We are determined to challenge all forms of bullying. All incidents will be investigated in a firm and fair manner. We will do all we can to support any student who is targeted by any form of bullying.***

All schools suffer from bullying and Vandyke does not claim to be an exception. We are determined to vigorously challenge all forms of bullying. All incidents are investigated in a firm and fair manner. We will support any student who has been subjected to any form of bullying and will work with perpetrators to ensure they address and take full responsibility for the impact of their behaviour.

The Governing Body has endorsed the work that staff have been doing with students regarding combating bullying.

Through assemblies and tutor time activities, we encourage students to:

- talk openly about bullying
- recognise its many forms
- realise its consequences
- always report bullying incidents
- discuss ways of responding to bullying

Above all, we ensure that all students know that any form of bullying will be dealt with swiftly and discreetly. Students and parents/carers can be assured that giving information about bullying will not make matters worse. We are very experienced in ensuring that the “victim” is protected.

We ask parents/carers to listen sympathetically to worries about bullying and support their son/daughter with reporting any concerns. **We will listen, respond and always take in to account the young person’s wishes and feelings.**

Verbal bullying must be reported. Cruel words can be highly damaging to a young person’s self-esteem and wellbeing. Traditional views about bullying have underplayed its verbal aspects, preferring to think of it mainly as physical violence. Our message is simple:

***“Whatever the form of bullying, it must be reported to ensure that we are able to deal with it quickly and effectively.”***

## Anti-Bullying Procedures and Responsibilities

All staff have a duty and responsibility to stop and report any incident of bullying they encounter, however minor, to the relevant year group office.

All students are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying by speaking in confidence to their Head of Year, Head of Student Support, Tutor, or a member of the Leadership Group. Once reported, appropriate action will then be taken, which will at all times place the welfare and safety of the ‘victim’ at the forefront of the school’s response.

Heads of Year will coordinate all bullying investigations in conjunction, where necessary, with an appropriate member of the Leadership Group, usually the Director of Year or Head of Student Support. Parent(s)/carer(s) of the bully and victim(s) will be involved as appropriate and will always be informed.

## **Sanctions**

'Restorative justice' approaches to resolving bullying incidents will be employed wherever possible and appropriate.

Where appropriate, sanctions such as internal exclusion and fixed-term exclusions will be used.

In extreme cases, the school reserves the right to permanently exclude students involved in serious cases of bullying.

The Head of Student Support will monitor incidents of bullying and advise the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher of trends and actions. All incidents of bullying are reported to the Headteacher.

## **Feeling Safe, Standing Strong**

This course is a six-session course offered to students who lack self-confidence, self-esteem and assertiveness. The course is designed to develop the social and personal skills necessary for students to feel safe in school and to develop strategies for dealing with conflict and bullying. Students are identified by year group staff or the Achievement & Inclusion (A&I) Department. Parent(s)/carer(s) are always consulted before a student is recommended for this course.

## **Managing My Emotions**

This course is a six-session course offered to students who have difficulties in managing their anger, or who engage in persistent bullying of other students. The course is designed to develop the emotional intelligence and the social and personal skills necessary for students to avoid conflict and bullying behaviour.

Parent(s)/carer(s) of students will always be consulted before a student is recommended for this course.

## **Staff Training**

All new staff, including support staff, receive training and induction on anti-bullying. All are made aware of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures. Staff are regularly updated on anti-bullying work and whole staff training takes place annually.

## **Anti-Bullying in the Curriculum**

The Life Skills' programme includes specific courses on anti-bullying, conflict resolution and personal development. These are reviewed regularly by the Life Skills' team. Assemblies and Tutor Time provide a further opportunity for students to engage in anti-bullying activity. Many subjects, including English, Humanities and Drama, explore issues related to bullying.

## **Publicising Vandyke's Anti-Bullying Policy and Work**

This is achieved through a variety of publications and activities including:

- information sent to all parent(s)/carer(s)
- Staff Handbook
- Staff Training
- Assemblies
- Life Skills programme
- School Prospectus
- School Website
- Parent/carer/student information leaflet

## **Advice for Parent(s)/Carer(s)**

1. Be vigilant. Look for signs of distress and any changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming withdrawn, mood swings, not wanting to come to school.
2. If you think your son/daughter is being bullied, remain calm and contact the school.
3. Encourage your son/daughter to talk to their tutor, Head of Year, or another trusted adult in school.
4. Talk to your son/daughter and reassure them. 'Talk them up'. Build their self-confidence.
5. Do not advise him/her to retaliate, or attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child, or by speaking to their parents. Avoid becoming over-emotional. Your son/daughter needs you to be composed, strong and reassuring.
6. Work closely with the school to resolve any bullying issues.
7. Refer to the internet safety document issued to parents/ carers.

## **Review of Policy and Procedures**

Every three years through the Governors' Learning and Achievement Committee.