



St. Paul's School

MANIBUS POTENTIA STUDIUM ANIMIS

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

*Reviewed June 2015, updated November 2015*

*"Bullying poisons the educational environment and affects the learning of every child"*

Dan Olweus, Professor of Psychology, University of Bergen, Norway

### **School ethos**

We believe that every pupil has the right to learn, develop and grow in a productive, safe and friendly school environment. Our ethos is one of inclusion and equality; bullying of any kind is regarded as a serious breach of our behaviour policy and will not be tolerated.

When writing this policy the school made reference to the following guidance documents [Preventing and tackling bullying](#) (2014) published by the UK Government's Department for Education and anti-bullying legislation for city of São Paulo ([14.957, de 16 de Julho de 2009](#)).

### **Raising awareness of bullying**

We work hard using educational elements, such as personal, social and health education (PSHE), drama, assemblies, literature and tutorials to ensure that all pupils and teachers recognise that bullying is unacceptable and try to create an environment where pupils feel comfortable to report instances of bullying. Newly appointed staff discuss this policy as part of their induction programme.

Pupils are taught that they should not accept bullying inside their social group (through role-play and tutorial interactions and discussions).

Pupils are encouraged to tell and teachers will listen.

We work hard to ensure that pupils and parents are aware of the school's anti-bullying policy and to prevent bullying from happening.

### **Definition of bullying**

Bullying is any behaviour, repeated over time, which is the wilful, deliberate desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else.

We believe that people *demonstrate* bullying or unacceptable behaviour, rather than *are*

*bullies*. As such, we work to help raise the self-esteem of the person demonstrating such behaviour, (low self-esteem has been linked very closely to bullying behaviour), and help them to find strategies to cope, without resorting to humiliating others or hurting them.

### **The main types of bullying are:**

1. **Physical** - hitting, kicking, pushing, and damaging another's belongings.
2. **Verbal intimidation**- name calling, teasing, threats, extortion, talking about another person, criticising their character or values or spreading rumours about them, with the desire to make them feel bad or unhappy.
3. **Electronic or cyber bullying** - sending hurtful or spiteful electronic messages, posting unpleasant comments and/or pictures on social media or making anonymous phone calls.
4. **Exclusion** – the victim suffers silent treatment, with no one talking to, supporting them, or sitting with them at lunch or walking near them.
5. **Racist** – taunting with racist remarks or gestures.
6. **Homophobic** – nasty comments about being gay, lesbian or bisexual.
7. **Religious/cultural** – with so many children from different cultures it means that some children can resort to using inappropriate comments due to their ignorance of certain cultures.
8. **Sexual/sexist** – comments or intimidation of a sexual nature or derogatory nature.
9. **Special educational needs and disability** – being teased for having learning difficulties or a physical disability.

### **Psychological impact of being bullied**

When someone is being bullied, it takes over their lives. The pupil can no longer focus on their learning or the other good things in their lives. The impact on a child's confidence is well documented and the anxiety issues can have a serious impact on the child's social development.

### **What should a pupil do if they are being bullied**

Advice for a pupil who is being bullied:

- Do not accept bullying in silence. Bullying (either inside or outside of school), is totally unacceptable.
- Speak out as soon as possible; do not let too much time go past - it is easier to be clear about the facts nearer to the incident.
- Talk to your parents or to your class teacher/tutor in school.

Teachers will work to ensure that children who have experienced/are experiencing bullying feel safe and help them to find strategies to deal positively with the bullies. They will ensure that pupils who have suffered bullying have a support group of other pupils who will prevent them being isolated.

They will also monitor the pupils who have been involved in any incidents, closely, until

they are sure the problem has been resolved.

### **Steps taken when instances of bullying occur**

We believe that the response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. We believe a more sophisticated approach is needed in which staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils that might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.

We believe an ethos of good behaviour where pupils follow the Golden Rules/Code of Honour and treat each other with respect because they know this is the right way to behave is a sure way to tackle bullying.

Below is an outline of what happens in the three different sections of the school. All incidents of bullying are logged. This log is also used to identify any patterns that may appear. Teachers will always listen to pupils who need to report an incident of unacceptable behaviour. Teachers will also make every effort to supervise pupils carefully, especially the ones who were involved in bullying incidents in the past or are new to school. Finally, teachers will work with those involved in bullying, to try to find strategies for them to use until the conflict is resolved

### **Steps taken in the Pre-Prep School**

In the Pre-Prep, bullying incidents are rare and usually a child may exhibit bullying behaviour without the intent of causing continuous distress to another child.

- Cases of bullying are brought to the attention of the class teacher or Head of Pre-Prep (Dr Baldisseri) through either observations or when a child shares their concern with their parents who then report the incident.
- If there are signs of bullying, the class teacher together with the Head of Pre-Prep will speak to all those involved and establish if bullying has occurred.
- The class teacher and Head of Pre-Prep will help the pupils who have demonstrated bullying behaviour to acknowledge the full impact of their actions and encourage them to change their behaviour.
- Parents of all involved will be informed of the procedures the school has taken to resolve the situation.
- The incident will be recorded in the bullying log held by the Head of Pre-Prep.

The following strategies may be implemented for pupils who demonstrate bullying behaviour:

- use a reward chart for making good choices linked to the Golden Rules in order to improve their behaviour.
- withdrawn from playtime, and even from school trips, when these measures ensure the wellbeing of the other pupils involved.
- be sent home for continuous aggressive behaviour or if there is a serious episode of aggression which breaks the contract.

### **Steps taken in the Prep School**

- The class teacher or any other member of staff will listen to the pupils reporting any bullying incident.
- If there are signs of bullying, staff members will inform the Head of Pastoral Care (Mrs Santos), who will then speak to all those involved and establish if bullying has occurred.
- The Head of Pastoral Care and the class teacher will help the pupils who have demonstrated bullying behaviour to acknowledge the full impact of their actions and encourage them to make meaningful apologies.
- The incident will be recorded in the *incident book* held by the Head of Pastoral Care.
- If there are repeated occasions of bullying, or if a particular situation warrants it on a first occasion, parents will be informed and, if appropriate, pupils will be suspended.
- Pupils demonstrating bullying behaviour might be subject to the following consequences:
  - Pupils will be asked to sign a behaviour contract, in which targets are set.
  - Pupils may be withdrawn from playtime and clubs and societies, and even from school trips, when these measures ensure the wellbeing of the victims.
  - Pupils may be involved in special roles, such as playground helpers, given dining room responsibilities, or asked to make Golden Rules presentations to develop their empathy and respect to others in the Prep School.
- Violation of such a contract may lead to exclusion from school.
- Whenever many pupils are involved, a pupils' committee might be formed in order to assist the victims and prevent future occurrences.

### **Steps taken in the Senior School**

- The class teacher or any other member of staff will listen to the pupils reporting any bullying incident.
- If there are signs of bullying, staff members will inform the appropriate head of year and/or the Assistant Head (Pastoral) (Mrs Fregonesi), who will then speak to all those involved and establish if bullying has occurred.
- The head of year or the Assistant Head (Pastoral) will help the pupils who have demonstrated bullying behaviour to acknowledge the full impact of their actions and encourage them to make meaningful apologies.
- If it is established that bullying has taken place, the incident is logged in the bullying log. The aggressor will be issued with a warning and must apologise to the victim. The incident will be recorded in the *bullying log* that is monitored by the Assistant Head (Pastoral). Depending on the severity of the incident, for example, physical violence, then the aggressor may be sent home while the incident is being investigated further.
- If the aggressor continues to bully and a second incident of bullying is added to the bullying log for that pupil, the bully's parents will be notified and called in for a meeting and a Saturday detention will be issued.
- Subsequent incidents carried out by the same aggressor will lead to an internal

suspension then an exclusion from school respectively.

### **Additional help**

In some situations, it might be that the Learning Support Co-ordinator (Mrs Leão) might be asked to talk with either the bully or the victim. An outcome from this might then lead to a referral to an outside specialist, for example, someone who could help anger management.

### **Pupils who are bullying**

As outlined above, pupils who have demonstrated bullying behaviour will be dealt with very firmly by the school. Teachers will monitor their behaviour closely and liaise with their parents, to ensure that supportive work is being carried out at home to reinforce what is being done at school.

### **The role of the bystander**

Pupils are taught that they should never join in any bullying behaviour. We believe that the role of the bystander should be carefully monitored. Pupils who sometimes witness bullying must be aware of the reasons that might make them feel vulnerable unsafe or prefer not to tell.

Pupils must be aware that saying or doing nothing whilst bullying is happening means giving consent to such behaviour.

We encourage our pupils not to be bystanders; we encourage them that they should try to stop other people from being mean without the fear of becoming the new target.

We encourage them to tell an adult if they see one pupil bullying another.

We teach our pupils that telling about bullying behaviour is not tale telling but an act of good citizenship.

### **Advice for parents whose children are involved in bullying (either as a victim or as a bully)**

Be alert to sudden changes in your child's behaviour or to the comments they make about friendships groups or individuals. Changes in their physical appearance or academic performance might mean that something is bothering them. Try to talk to them and find out what it is. In the first instance they probably may not open up, but by asking questions "so how are things at school?" or "you don't talk about x any more" might be triggers to a longer conversation.

Feel free at any point to talk to your child's tutor/class teacher.

**We would never recommend parents or pupils taking matters into their own hands, this will often make the situation much worse. Always get in contact with the school.**

If your child is accused of bullying behaviour then do not feel ashamed, many children exhibit unacceptable behaviour at different times as they learn and grow.

If your child ever tells you about someone being bullied then as a bystander then please impress upon them how important it is that they speak to an adult at school about this.

### **The way forward**

We believe that this policy will help to make our methods of dealing with bullying clear and transparent to all members of the St. Paul's community. We are committed to constantly reviewing of this policy, in line with the needs of our school. We welcome constructive feedback.

### **In addition to contacting your child's class teacher/tutor parents might find the following contacts useful**

#### **Useful references (UK sites)**

- <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>
- <http://www.bullying.co.uk>

#### **Useful reference (Brazilian site)**

- [www.chegadebullying.com.br](http://www.chegadebullying.com.br)

#### **Books (from the UK)**

- *The essential guide to tackling bullying*, Michele Elliot t(Pearson Education) 2011
- [Bullying at school - A kids book about bullying to help them against bullies \(free for Kindle Edition\)](#)

#### **Books (Brazilian)**

- *Pedagogia da Amizade – Bullying: O sofrimento das vítimas e dos agressores*, Gabriel Chalita (Editora Gente) 2008
- *Mentes Perigosas nas Escolas*, Ana Beatriz Barbosa Silva (Fontana) 2010.
- *Ela disse, Ele Disse*, Thalita Rebouças (Rocco Jovens Leitores) 2010

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### **British Schools Overseas (BSO) Standards**

This policy has been written to meet the requirement of Part 3 of the UK Government's BSO standards regarding the regarding the welfare, health and safety of pupils (3.1) and Part 6 regarding the provision of information for parents (1.6).

## **Policy review**

This policy is to be reviewed, at least, annually by the Compliance Committee and leadership of the school and presented to the Board of Governors for final consideration and approval.

Approved by the Board of Governors on Wednesday 10th June, 2015.

Signed:

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Graham Nye, Chairman

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Louise Simpson, Head

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