

St. Peter's Centre

Medical Short Stay School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed: February 2022

Introduction

St. Peter's Centre aims to ensure that all pupils feel welcome, safe and happy and are able to learn and make progress. Bullying of any kind prevents this happening. Bullying makes people feel unsafe.

At St. Peter's Centre, we take bullying seriously. Bullying is unacceptable. Pupils, parents and carers should understand that reporting bullying is essential, and be assured that St. Peter's Centre will support them fully whenever bullying is reported. It is the responsibility of all members of the St. Peter's Centre staff to implement the Anti-Bullying Policy.

We aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential.

We would expect pupils to feel safe in school, including that they understand the issues relating to safety, such as bullying, and that they feel confident to seek support from school should they feel unsafe.

As part of student induction, we train students to recognise bullying, set expectations for behaviour and ensure that students are aware how to report any incidents of bullying.

Scope of this Policy and Links to other Policies

This policy includes:

- Bullying of pupils by pupils within the short stay school
- Bullying of and/or by pupils outside of the short stay school, where the short stay school is aware of it
- Bullying of staff by pupils within or outside the short stay school

Allegations about bullying of pupils by staff will be dealt with under the Safeguarding Policy.

This policy has links to the following policies and procedures:

- Equality policy
- Behaviour policy
- Internet related policies
- Safeguarding policy
- Complaints procedure

- PSHE and Citizenship Policy

Definition

St. Peter's Centre has chosen to adopt the Anti-bullying Partnership's definition of bullying:

"When a person's or group of people's behaviour, over a period of time, leaves someone feeling one or more of the following:

- Physically and/or mentally hurt or worried
- Unsafe and/or frightened
- Unable to do well and achieve
- 'badly different', alone, unimportant and/or unvalued
- Unable to see a happy and exciting future for yourself

It could be bullying, when a person, or group of people, has been made aware of the effects of their behaviour on another person, and they continue to behave in the same manner. **It could be criminal if behaviour (on or off line) is threatening, offensive, indecent and the purpose of sending was to cause distress or anxiety.**

If someone is made to feel like this, or if they think someone they know feels like this, it should be investigated. This should happen straight away as it can take a long time to build up the courage to tell. However, lots of things can make people feel bad, sometimes it depends on the situation we are in, and it is not always bullying - so we think the following definition, adapted from one written by the Anti-bullying Alliance, is also useful:

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- Is meant to hurt - the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it
- Happens more than once - there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a 'one-off' incident
- Involves an imbalance of power - the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves

It can be:

- Physical, e.g. Kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings
- Verbal, e.g. Name calling, taunting, threats, offensive remarks
- Relational, e.g. Spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups
- Cyber, e.g. Texts, e-mails, picture/video clip bullying, Instant Messaging (IM). See separate section on cyber bullying

Where Individuals or Groups Bully Different People, this will be seen as a pattern of bullying behaviour and treated as such

St. Peter's Centre recognises that bullying that is motivated by prejudice is a particular concern, for example racist, sexist and homophobic bullying and bullying related to perceptions about disability and/or special educational needs. All staff will be provided with appropriate training in equality and diversity, so that they are equipped to tackle these issues on a wider scale as well as in relation to bullying. Staff will challenge language and behaviour that does not meet our high expectations for acceptance and diversity in this area.

Signs of Bullying might be:

Physical: bruises, scratches, cuts, damaged clothes

Health: loss of appetite, stomach-aches, headaches, soiling/bedwetting

Emotional: unwillingness to go to school, withdrawn or secretive behaviour, unhappiness, unusual shows of temper, refusal to speak about problems, high levels of anxiety

Change of routine: asking to be taken to school, coming home for lunch, taking longer to get home, asking for more money, using different routes to school, loss of missing belongings

Academic: concentration difficulties, damage to work, missing work

Bullying can include:

- name calling
- taunting
- mocking
- insulting
- making offensive comments including using racist, sexist or homophobic remarks
- physical assault e.g. hitting, kicking, spitting and so on
- taking or damaging belongings
- cyber bullying - inappropriate text messaging and e mailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet
- producing offensive graffiti
- gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- glaring, turning away from and generally ostracising others

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence, virtually or physically, of others who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'.

Why are children and young people bullied?

Specific types of bullying include:

- bullying related to race, religion or culture
- bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities
- bullying related to appearance or health
- bullying relating to gender, sexual orientation including homophobic and transphobic bullying
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying

There is no hierarchy of bullying: all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Bullying can take place between:

- young people
- young people and staff/other adults
- between staff
- individuals or groups

Preventing Bullying

Prevention is better than cure. All staff at St. Peter's Centre are vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of bullying incidents seriously. We use the curriculum to reinforce the ethos of St. Peter's Centre to help pupils develop strategies to combat bullying behaviour. For some students it takes time to build relationships with new staff and for others, lack of communication ability due to special educational needs means it can be difficult to articulate. For this reason, we have a safeguarding email to offer alternative methods of reporting bullying.

We make sure that pupils understand that they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult and that, when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied, or if they see bullying taking place, it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a member of staff. We audit students and parents termly to ensure we take feedback on how safe students feel and how our culture responds to bullying.

Preventative Measures

The short stay school will:

- Raise awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, and informal discussion, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour
- Participate in national and local initiatives such as Anti-bullying Week
- Seek to develop links with the wider community that will support inclusive anti-bullying education
- Seek feedback from students and stakeholders on bullying and safety
- Intervene early to "minor" issues to ensure there is a lower chance of escalation
- Host safeguarding forums with students to discuss bullying and safety and dig deeper than a survey

Reporting Bullying

Pupils who are bullied, who witness bullying or who have even participated in bullying should feel confident to report it to any member of staff whom they trust enough to tell. Each incident will be dealt with on its merits, but all reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated. Incidents will be recorded.

All pupils will be encouraged to report bullying by:

- Talking to a member of staff of their choice
- Reporting via our email reporting system
- Contacting local and national support agencies for advice/support

Staff who are being bullied will be encouraged to report it to the Headteacher. If they feel this is not appropriate due to the fact that the allegation is in relation to the Headteacher then Gini Lara, Chair of the Management Committee should be contacted via email or phone. Details are on the staff notice board.

Parents/carers will be encouraged to report concerns about bullying and to support the short stay school in tackling it. Trying to resolve bullying directly with pupils or their families can lead to problems escalating.

Responding to Bullying

When an incident of bullying is discovered, staff will discuss issues relating to the incident with the pupils involved, in a way suitable to their age and level of understanding. Where appropriate, we try to make use of the problem-solving and restorative approach. Each pupil will be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion will remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and preventing any recurrence of the bullying. Pupils who have been bullied will receive appropriate support, including help from external agencies, where needed.

St. Peter's Centre will take the following steps when dealing with concerns about bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, it will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been made aware of it
- A clear account of the concern will be recorded
- Parents/carers and other relevant adults will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties involved
- Home schools will be contacted and their off-site behaviour policy invoked
- For persistent and or serious offences, placements of the perpetrator may be terminated and where appropriate the police advised.
- DSL or Deputy DSL will record and log all incidents of bullying on CPOMS

If Bullying Persists, one or any combination of the following actions will be taken:

- An official report will be made and filed in the pupil's personal record
- Existing disciplinary sanctions will be used; initially internal exclusion
- Parents or carers will be contacted to discuss the issues. They will be given feedback on progress in dealing with the incident. Additional external help may be sought for example from Educational Psychologists or Behaviour Support Services
- Exclusion and or termination of placement from the short stay school - this is dependent on the severity and/or persistence of the bullying and will be a final resort

Staff are trained to use strategies to prevent bullying and to report to bullying incidents. These include:

- Role-play and other drama techniques to help pupils understand and appreciate the feelings of others
- Circle approaches to help pupils share information and to provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour

- PSHE and RSE

Pupils and Staff

Pupils and staff who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- Providing reassurance that the bullying will be addressed
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence
- The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. Educational psychology, where appropriate

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the pupil became involved
- Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change
- Informing parents to help change the attitude of the pupil
- The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies where appropriate

Involvement of Parents and Carers

The parents or carers of pupils who bully and those who have been bullied will be informed of the incident and will be asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem.

Pupils who bully will be helped to understand the pain this causes to others and reminded of the possible consequences of bullying. The sanctions for repeated incidents will be explained clearly to them. Support will be agreed to ensure they do not repeat bullying behaviours and their behaviour may be monitored. This monitoring process will usually incorporate a reward for acceptable behaviour. Parents and carers will be involved in ensuring that the monitoring process runs smoothly, and in all other decisions designed to reduce bullying behaviour.

Information for Pupils

If you are bullied:

- Remember that it is not your fault; nobody deserves to be bullied
- Try to stay in a friendly group
- Try to be confident even if you do not feel it, but remember walking away is not cowardly
- If you are worried or frightened you can go the year leader's office at lunchtime
- Keep a diary recording what happened, when, where, and with whom

Who you should tell:

- Any member of staff you feel happy to talk to, or feel you can trust
- Your parent, carer or anyone at home
- Your friend, if this helps
- Use the email listen@sphpru.surrey.sch.uk
- In an emergency tell the nearest adult

When to tell:

- If you are afraid - report the bullying as soon as you can
- Otherwise - report the bullying when you are not in lessons; before school, at break, at lunchtime or after school and staff will make time to listen to you

Important!

- It does not help to keep the problem to yourself; you need support, and pupils who bully need help so that they can change their behaviour
- The problems are unlikely to go away if you ignore them, and they could get worse
- Take a friend with you if you are worried about telling someone – your friend may help you to do this
- Staff will listen to you in confidence as far as they can, but you must be aware that they may have to pass on certain information to get you the help you need; they will always tell you what they are going to do

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying involves harassing, embarrassing, or threatening a young person via cyberspace. It encompasses several different mediums, including the Web, e-mail, and mobile phone communication. Cyber bullying can take place in many ways. Some examples include posting unflattering comments or pictures of another person online, sending lewd text messages, or spamming a person with unsolicited emails. It may also involve teaming up on a specific person and posting defamatory comments on social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace.

Research from the University of London Identifies 7 Categories of Cyber Bullying:

Text message bullying involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.

Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks.

Phone call bullying via mobile phone uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.

Email bullying uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them.

Chat room bullying involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.

Bullying through instant messaging (IM) is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online (ie. MSN, Bebo, etc.)

Bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyber bullying.

What can you do as a parent?

- Don't wait for something to happen before you act. Make sure your child understands how to use these technologies safely and knows about the risks and consequences of misusing them
- Make sure they know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyber bullied
- Encourage your child to talk to you if they have any problems with cyber bullying; if they do have a problem, contact the school, the mobile network or the Internet Service Provider to do something about it
- Parental control software can limit who your child sends emails to and who he or she receives them from; it can also block access to some chat rooms
- Moderated chat rooms are supervised by trained adults; your ISP will tell you whether they provide moderated chat services
- Make it your business to know what your child is doing online and who your child's online friends are

It is important that parents and carers ensure that their children are engaged in safe and responsible online behaviour. Some suggestions for parents to stay involved are:

- Keep the computer in a public place in the house; periodically check on what your child is doing and discuss the kinds of internet activities your child enjoys
- Be up front with your child that you will periodically investigate the files on the computer, the browser history files and your child's public online activities
- Search for your child's name online, look at his or her profiles and postings on teen community sites, review web pages or blogs
- Tell your child that you may review his or her private communication activities if you have reason to believe you will find unsafe or irresponsible behaviour
- Watch out for secretive behaviour as you approach the computer, such as rapidly switching screens, and for attempts to hide online behaviour, such as an empty history file

What Can You Do as a Child?

Text/Video Messaging

- You can turn off incoming messages for a couple of days
- If bullying persists you can change your phone number (ask your Mobile service provider)
- Do not reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages - your Mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details

Email

- Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails
- Don't accept emails or open files from people you do not know

Web

- If the bullying is done via school email or websites, tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying was face-to-face

Chat Room & Instant Messaging

- Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online; it's a good idea to use a nickname; do not give out photos of yourself either
- Do not accept emails or open files from people you do not know
- Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable
- Tell your parents or carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room
- Think carefully about what you write - don't leave yourself open to bullying

Responding to Cyberbullying

- **A member of staff will talk to you** the same day and will go through your statement if one has been made at home, or will take a statement
- **The incident will be logged**
- **The Education Act 2011** amended the power in the Education act 1996 to formally authorise the Headteacher or a staff member with permission to seize and search mobile phones if they have been used in an incident related to school or a school student.
- **An investigation will take place** in the form of Head of St. Peter's Medical Short Stay School talking separately to the bully/bullies and to any witnesses
- **Action will be taken** and external advice sought where appropriate.
- If it seems appropriate, you and the bully may meet with a member of staff to discuss what has been happening and to agree a way forward
- The staff may organise a conference involving all parties. The Head of St. Peter's Centre or Education Welfare Officer could chair such a conference
- Some incidents may warrant the intervention of the Police Liaison Officer who might organise a more formal 'Restorative Justice' conference

Links to other policies

Behaviour Policy
Safeguarding policy
PSHE and Citizenship Policy

References, Documents and related Policy/Guidance

National Documents

Safe to Learn- DCSF Guidelines

- Embedding anti-bullying work in schools – DCSF-00656-2007

- Homophobic bullying – DCSF – 00668-2007
- Cyberbullying – DCSF – 00658-2007
- Bullying Involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities – DCSF 00372-2008
- “Preventing and Tackling bullying” Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2017)
- “Cyberbullying”: Advice for Headteachers and school staff (November 2014)

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy has been developed in line with advice from the Local Education Authority. Monitoring and evaluation of this policy forms a regular part of our self-review process.

Bullying logs will be checked regularly and data collected will be used to inform staff of persistent problems or patterns where necessary.