



Shrewsbury School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Behaviour Policy, the Complaints Procedure, the 'Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy' and the school's 'Yellow Card' all of which are available to parents upon request. Copies of all of these documents are also located on the school website. The 'Yellow Card' is a pocket-size summary of the school's 'Code of behaviour, expectations, encouragement and sanctions'. This is sent to the parent's of all new pupils and in addition each pupil receives his / her own copy.

Shrewsbury's approach to pastoral care actively encourages good behaviour and positive relationships and seeks to minimise the likelihood of bullying. In all our endeavours we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all members of the community. Shrewsbury seeks to preserve the innocence of school days and also to nurture its pupils in their formative years. As a school we wish to foster an environment in which individuality can flourish and be admired. We are committed to every person and our ethos is positive and inclusive. It is acceptance rather than tolerance that underpins 'Salopian' life and all pupils are encouraged to appreciate and celebrate diversity. As such any bullying activity is contrary to these basic principles. Here at Shrewsbury we reject all forms of bullying and will act swiftly and decisively if and when such cases emerge. As indicated in the 'Behaviour Policy' there are a variety of sanctions available including suspension and expulsion.

Aims and Objectives

Our aim is to create a School in which pupils grow up happily, free to pursue their own interests but with consideration for others, and free from fear. We hope to prevent bullying before it occurs through the continuing vigilance of all pupils and staff, by educating pupils in their responsibility for themselves and each other, and by agreeing a definition of bullying, so that all pupils and staff have a clear understanding of what we, as a School, consider unacceptable behaviour. All staff are mindful of their duty of care and the importance of reducing the risks of bullying at times and places where it is most likely.

Definition

Bullying is any action that thoughtlessly or deliberately causes pain, unhappiness, humiliation or suffering to another. Bullying activities include isolated or repeated acts of physical violence, and persistent verbal abuse; teasing and name-calling become bullying when they cause another to feel victimised. 'Initiation ceremonies' intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation would also be classed as bullying activities and treated accordingly. Equally, the exclusion of others from the social groups that form in houses, classes, dining hall and elsewhere, causing distress and isolation, is also an act of bullying. The erosion of self-esteem, and in certain cases the taking or spoiling of possessions may also be classed as bullying. In addition to these broad guidelines, bullying includes discriminatory activity of any form based on **race, religion, culture, sex / sexuality, special educational needs and disability**.

Cyber-Bullying

In an increasingly technological age, the School requires all pupils to sign an Authorised User Policy for ICT. This makes clear that **'cyber bullying'** in any form (such as via social websites, text messages or through the use of email) is forbidden. (See Appendix 'A' for further details).

By their vary nature all forms of bullying erode self esteem and are damaging to community life. Serious examples of such behaviour can cause lasting psychological damage and in extreme circumstances may even lead some victims to contemplate suicide.

Education and Prevention

Education must be at the heart of any effort to eliminate bullying. The risk of bullying is minimised by many aspects of life within the community.

- While all areas of the curriculum provide the opportunity for moral and spiritual development, the role of PSHE, Religious Studies, English and Drama are particularly important.
- Year group and whole school assemblies, as well as chapel services, will often emphasise the positive values we stand for as a community.
- There is practical training centred on leadership and responsibility for all Praepostors.
- The House system plays a pivotal role in the process with the Housemaster / Housemistress as crucial figures throughout a pupil's time here. The House system provides both formal and informal opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership, service and responsibilities.
- Pupils should also be made aware of the fact that while bullying itself may not be a criminal offence, there are laws, which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. In addition to this, bullying behaviour in the work place may well lead to dismissal.
- Effective tutoring along with the corporate priority given to personal relationships enables pupils to develop social and emotional skills.
- The co-curricular programme enables pupils to value each other through corporate participation and team work.
- Dr. C.J. Minns visits each House every year with one of our 'Independent Adults' to talk to new entrants about our Anti-Bullying policy and the pupil complaints procedure.
- Issues relating to bullying may emerge at School Council Meetings.
- Effective pupil supervision is one of the most efficient preventative strategies.
- Ongoing improvements to the boarding provision help to encourage a positive approach to boarding life.

Training

Dr. Chris Minns is the school's appointed Children Act Liaison officer (CALO). He regularly attends training courses run by external agencies and then cascades this material via Housemasters to members of the Common Room. Issues of pastoral care and bullying are regularly discussed at Housemasters' Meetings as well as House Tutor Meetings. All staff new to the school are briefed on issues of pupil welfare via the school's induction programme.

Staff are aware of the need for ongoing vigilance paying particular attention to significant gatherings of pupils such as in Kingsland Hall and the movement of large numbers of pupils around the site at break time and in between lessons, as well as quieter moments in the day in Houses. Our intention is to raise staff awareness through training and for staff to take appropriate action to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely.

All staff are reminded of the possible indicators of bullying behaviour. While this is not an exhaustive list, key signals to look out for might include:

- signs of injury, especially those in unlikely parts of the body, and those which don't have a satisfactory explanation;

- otherwise inexplicable, and maybe sudden, changes of behaviour;
- unexpected changes of routine: late for lessons, changing late for games, not in the bedroom when expected, etc.;
- withdrawal from friends, and social activity;
- morose behaviour; loss of confidence or self-esteem;
- unaccountable deterioration of work.

The Bursar is responsible for training where support staff are concerned.

Reporting Procedures, Investigation and Sanctions

If a member of staff is concerned that a pupil at the school is being bullied then they should report this to the Housemaster / Housemistress. Pupils who become aware of bullying issues should also be prepared to take action. As indicated in the 'Internal Informal Complaints Procedure', pupils should inform any responsible adult.

In any case of bullying, the Housemaster will be initially responsible for taking action. He will immediately inform the Second Master who will decide the seriousness of the case. The Housemaster should log the report, investigate with regard to good practice and ensure that the full details are recorded in the House Day Book. At a later date a digest of these notes should be added to the appropriate pupil welfare record. Where the Children Act Liaison Officer is involved he will produce a report of the incident including any witness statements he has taken. A central record of these incidents is kept at the Headmaster's office. Copies of this report are held by the Headmaster, Second Master and the individual Housemasters / Housemistresses concerned. This record is held to enable patterns of bullying behaviour to be identified.

In serious cases, or where pupils from more than one House are involved, the Second Master will inform the Headmaster who will ask the Children Act Liaison Officer to investigate. He will report directly to the Headmaster who will decide on appropriate action, which may include expulsion. Where there is a suspicion that 'abuse' is involved, no initial internal investigation will take place. The basic outline of the incident should be established and then the Headmaster will make a decision whether or not to inform the relevant external agencies.

With any action the safety and happiness of those threatened will be the first consideration. Every attempt will be made to ensure that information about bullying is handled sensitively and that confidentiality is respected wherever possible.

Once the nature of the incident has been evaluated, the offender's parents will be informed. It is important that the issues of sanctions and, where appropriate, counselling are addressed. All the internal sanctions listed in the 'Behaviour Policy' are available to the Headmaster, including possible suspension or expulsion. The Chaplain, Listening Team, Housemaster / Housemistress and Tutor will be available to continue the process of counselling. This should have regard not only for the individual's welfare but also for their relationship within the community.

The offender will be left in no doubt that we will not tolerate bullying behaviour in the school community.

The victim's parents should also be informed. The Chaplain, Listening Team, Housemaster / Housemistress and Tutor will be available to continue the process of counselling. Guidelines include those mentioned above for the offender. However, priority must be given to the well-being and the continued security of the pupil who has been bullied. Once back in the House community, the Housemaster / Housemistress will monitor the situation closely and provide reports for the Headmaster where necessary.

Sanctions

As indicated earlier in this policy, bullying, by its very definition is contrary to the spirit and ethos of Shrewsbury school. The nature of teenage life is such that tensions do occur within friendship groups and in these circumstances the decision may be reached to manage the situation without recourse to formal sanctions. However, all pupils are made aware of the fact that if they indulge in bullying behaviour then formal sanctions are likely to follow. All the internal sanctions listed in the 'Behaviour Policy' are available to the Headmaster, including possible suspension or expulsion.

The Complaints Procedure

In order to safeguard the interests of children living away from home, The Children Act requires the School to provide a procedure by which a pupil has a right to be heard if he / she is concerned about any matter that affects his / her welfare.

It is likely that such matters already surface in conversations with friends and adults whom the pupil already trusts. However, if he / she feels the need to express these concerns more fully, or if he / she is concerned, worried, or upset about any matter affecting their welfare, then there are three possible courses of action:

THE INTERNAL INFORMAL PROCEDURE

In the first instance, it is recommended that the pupil gets in touch with one or more of the following:

Their parents, their Housemaster or Housemistress, their personal tutor, the House matron, a senior pupil, any member of staff, a House Tutor, the Second Master, the Chaplain, the School Doctor or his staff, the School Liaison Officer for The Children Act (Dr. C.J. Minns),

THE INTERNAL FORMAL PROCEDURE

If the pupil is dissatisfied with the results of the Informal Procedure, or feels that informal discussion is inappropriate to the situation, then they may hand a formal written complaint to the Housemaster / Housemistress, the Second Master or Dr. Minns.

Such a complaint will receive a written reply within 48 hours, and if necessary may be referred to the Internal Review Panel, which may ask to hear his case. The Panel will consist of the Second Master, Dr. C.J. Minns (School Liaison Officer for The Children Act), the School Chaplain and a Governor.

THE INDEPENDENT PANEL

If the pupil is not satisfied with the results of either of the above procedures, or feels that to approach a current member of staff or the Internal Panel would be inappropriate to the situation, then he / she has the right to telephone any of the following Independent Adults, who are "appropriately distanced from The School," and who have agreed to hear complaints:

Mrs. Daphne Capps	Tel. 01743 354540
Prof. John Patrick	Tel. 01743 249303
Mrs. Linda Perks	Tel. 01743 232028

The 'Childrens' Rights Director' can be contacted at
Ofsted, Aviation House, 123 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6SE (0800 5280731)

He / she may choose to contact Mr. David Taylor, Chair of Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board, Shropshire County Council, The Guildhall, Shrewsbury, SY3 8HQ. (Tel. 0345 678 9008 or email; david.taylor@shropshire.gov.uk)

The number for Child Line is 0800 1111