

## **BLESSED EDWARD OLD CORNE CATHOLIC COLLEGE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

### Definition of bullying

Bullying is repeated behaviour which makes other people feel uncomfortable or threatened whether this is intended or not.

There are different sorts of bullying, but the three main types are:

- PHYSICAL- hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belonging including money.
- VERBAL- name calling, teasing, insulting, writing unkind notes.
- EMOTIONAL- being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, spreading rumours looks.

People react differently. It is not always possible to tell if someone is hurt or upset.

### **Aims**

As a Catholic College we have a duty to protect and safeguard every child in our community. The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to clarify for students and staff that bullying is always unacceptable. We wish to encourage an environment where independence is celebrated and individuals can flourish without fear. Every student has the right to be safe and happy in college, and to be protected when he/she is feeling vulnerable.

To eliminate bullying we have to create the right atmosphere. Children have to be able to trust and rely on adults in the college. They have to have the confidence to approach adults with their concerns and know that action will be taken.

As students arrive in Year 7 we make it clear to them in class and in assemblies that we are a 'telling college'. If we are unhappy or concerned about anything we will tell someone. Form teachers have a special role in this as they will normally have the primary relationships with the students.

### **Possible Signs**

Students who are being bullied may show changed in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or clinging to adults. They may show changes in their work patterns, may lack concentration or may even truant from college.

### **Encouragement to tell**

It is important that we create an atmosphere in the college where students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns.

Not telling protects the bully or bullies and gives the message that they can continue, perhaps bullying others too.

## **Procedures**

In the first instance, it is important to make it clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate and to the bully that his/her behaviour is unacceptable, and has caused distress. Every effort is made to resolve the problem through counselling of both parties. When bullying is reported the bully will initially be challenged in a non-judgemental way. If the bullying is proved to have taken place then the bully will be dealt with. This may involve:-

- At this stage; parents of both parties are informed of what has happened, and how it has been dealt with. It is vital everything that happens is carefully recorded in a clear and factual way.
- If the bullying behaviour continues, and counselling has not worked, then sanctions follow. It is important the counselling is maintained for both parties, even when sanctions have been applied.

## **Sanctions include:-**

- Talking to the bully making sure that he/she realises the hurt caused;
- Detaining him/her;
- Involving parents; or even, in very serious cases –
  - Suspension:
  - Exclusion.

## **To Parents:**

If you think your child may be being bullied, or he/she tells you that he/she is, please let us know straight away. Please reassure him/her that we deal with it sensitivity but firmly. If your child tells us he/she is being bullied, or we discover that he/she is bullying others, we will contact you, and will discuss together how the situation can be improved.

## **To Teachers:**

If you think that bullying is happening, talk to the children concerned and ask them what has been happening. Either ask them to write it down, or do so yourself, so that it can be passed on to the tutor or Director of Studies.

We need to be particularly vigilant at breaks and travelling times, around corridors between lessons and in the area of the playground and the toilets. These are times and places where victims are more vulnerable and bullying is not easily seen.

## **Strategies for dealing with bullying:**

Curriculum work can enhance this policy in two ways:-

- By dealing with the topic of bullying, in a way which explores why it happens and gives alternative ways of behaving, and dealing with difficulties: and
- By using teaching methods which encourage co-operative work and a variety of groupings so that students extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.

We also involve our senior students in our anti-bullying campaign. A group of our Year 11 students volunteers to be Bully Counsellors. They are given basic training in counselling, looking at listening skills, body language, eye contact and skills of empathy. They are then on duty every lunchtime. Students with concerns about bullying are free to visit the counsellors in the 'LARK Room'. These counsellors can handle some bullying problems themselves or make reports and pass the problem on.

Students are also able to visit Sanctuary to speak to the College Counsellor and use this area before start of college, and at break and lunchtime.

All these strategies mean that bullying is given a very high profile. The bullies are made to realise that bullying in Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College is totally unacceptable.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by Governors on:

Signed Chairman: