



SILVERHILL SCHOOL

Anti-bullying policy

We believe bullying in any shape or form to be abhorrent and will take positive action to prevent it.

We aim to provide a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Bullying is the use of aggression that results in pain and distress to the victim. It is usually intentional, but occasionally the perpetrator may be unaware, or only dimly aware, of the effect on the victim.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure.

Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out.

It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society.

No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour.

Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at the School.

We want to ensure that all staff, pupils and parents have an understanding of behaviour that constitutes bullying.

We need effective procedures aimed at eradicating bullying.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:-

- a) **PHYSICAL**
A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at or pushed.
- b) **VERBAL**
Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling, teasing and mimicry, or towards physical and social disability, or personality.
- c) **EMOTIONAL**
A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends, or threatened or tormented.
- d) **DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT**
Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hands over property to them.
- e) **RACIST**
Bullying may be directed towards ethnic origin, in the form of racial taunts, gestures and graffiti.
- f) **SEXUAL**
Unwanted physical contact, suggestive or abusive comments on gender.

Signs and symptoms

A young person may not feel able to tell an adult that he or she is being bullied, but there may be signs or behaviour that act as a warning. Parents and teachers need to be aware of this possibility.

Bullying may be involved if a child

- is unwilling to go to school
- is frightened of walking around the school
- begins to do poorly in school work
- becomes withdrawn or timid
- starts stammering
- cries or becomes easily distressed
- stops eating
- becomes aggressive or disruptive
- has clothes or books regularly destroyed
- regularly has possessions 'missing'
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- has nightmares
- runs away

These situations call for careful and sensitive investigation whether they are caused by bullying, problems at home, health aspects or a combination of events or circumstances.

All incidents of bullying should be reported immediately. Standing by and doing nothing is not an option.

All children involved will be spoken to by class teachers and/or the head.

Witnesses will be asked to give their account of the incident.

Parents and staff will be informed.

The bullied child will be helped to overcome their fears and worries.

The offender will be helped to understand the anti-social nature of their actions.

There are many reasons why a bully acts as he does.

It is possible that he or she is the victim of a different situation.

When considering the nature of bullying it should be recognised that it involves an abuse of power that frequently relies on the susceptibility of the victim. For instance, a sarcastic remark to one person might be accepted as amusing, but identical words could be deeply hurtful to another.

Through positive talking about friendships and feelings, we will endeavour to give our children a measure of trust in themselves and each other.

We must encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.

Assemblies will be based on the issue of bullying and children will be encouraged to voice their opinions.