



This policy applies to all pupils at Town Close House including those in EYFS.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(part of the Behaviour Policy)

What is bullying?

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to harm, threaten or frighten someone - it can be a physical or verbal attack. Any pushing, kicking, threatening, teasing or name-calling which happens to make a child feel hurt, frightened and/or lonely is bullying. Racial or overtly sexual remarks may well be bullying as are comments about a disability. In recent years cyber bullying has become prevalent via social websites, text messages or photographs on mobile phones and email.

Policy Statement

Although Town Close House enjoys a happy and friendly atmosphere, there will be occasions when children are unhappy as a result of the behaviour of others. It is the School's policy that behaviour which causes distress to another person, whether intentional or thoughtless, is regarded as bullying and is not acceptable. The seriousness of bullying must not be underestimated because it can lead to psychological damage and even suicide.

Aims

- To encourage all pupils to respect one another.
- To ensure that all victims of bullying are aware of the support available to them, i.e. form teacher / tutor.
- To provide support for the bully as we seek to modify his/her behaviour.
- To outline a variety of courses of action so that the School's response is appropriate to each separate incident, e.g. no blame policy.
- To structure the procedure in such a way that everyone knows what to do when an incident occurs.
- To ensure that everyone knows bullying is unacceptable at Town Close House.
- To raise staff awareness so that the risk of bullying can be reduced.
- To raise children's awareness through the PSHE programme, assemblies etc.

General Statement

Cases of bullying come to light in numerous ways but, in all instances, children and/or parents are encouraged to report the matter to a person in authority. This could be a member of Staff, a Prefect, or a House Captain. As far as possible, such a report will be treated as confidential.

On becoming aware of a bullying incident, a member of staff should intervene immediately to ensure the protection of the victim. Thereafter, immediate consultation should take place with one of the Deputy Heads or the Head of Pre-Prep to decide the appropriate response. It is very difficult to lay down appropriate sanctions because every case of bullying is different. Sanctions can range from a simple apology through to exclusion in extreme cases. On occasions, a no blame policy may be appropriate, especially at the first sign of a problem.

If disciplinary action is required, then this may be administered by senior staff while, in extreme cases, the pupils and their parents will see the Headmaster, who will then decide on appropriate action. In all cases a record should be made of the incident and passed to the Headmaster to enable patterns to be identified.

Help, Support and Counselling will be given to both the victim and the bullies:

Victims are supported in some or all of the following ways:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher or another adult of their choice, and bring a friend for support.
- By informing their parents / guardians.
- By offering continuing support.

Bullies are helped in some or all of the following ways:

- By talking about what happened to discover why they became involved.
- By informing their parents / guardians.
- By endeavouring to dispel their prejudices as far as possible.
- By taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent further bullying.

Disciplinary Steps

- They will be warned officially to stop offending.
- Their parents may be informed.
- They may be given an appropriate sanction.
- For a serious incidence or repeated offences, they may be suspended for a fixed period or expelled from school.

Advice given to children who think they are being bullied

1. Generally it is best to tell an adult straight away. It is right to raise your concerns.
2. Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies.
3. Try not to show that you are upset. This is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
4. Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual. No-one deserves to be bullied; bullying is wrong.
5. Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is **wrong**.
6. Fighting back may make things worse. If you want to fight back, talk to a teacher or parent/guardian instead.

Advice given to children who think another child is being bullied

1. **TAKE ACTION!**
2. Waiting and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
3. If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
4. Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

Revised September 2009