

Queen's College Preparatory School
(including Early Years Foundation Stage)

Anti-Bullying

Policy Document



Introduction

This document sets out the Anti-Bullying Policy to be followed within Queen's College Preparatory School. This policy has been written with regard to *DfE Guidance: Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)* and *The Equality Act (2010)*.

The School has a Behaviour Policy and Physical Contact and Intervention Policy which should be read in conjunction with this policy document.

Policy Aims

At Queen's College Preparatory School, we provide a school environment where children can work and play happily and safely. We promote an atmosphere that allows children to talk openly and confidently about concerns. In order to facilitate this, we encourage our children to develop positive and co-operative relationships with each other. Children have a right to learn free from intimidation and fear.

- We oppose all forms of bullying and such behaviour is not tolerated.
- We take each allegation of bullying seriously.
- We listen to and support children who experience bullying.
- We work with the perpetrator to change their behaviour.

Bullying: A Definition

Bullying is an act of aggression, repeated over time, causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to someone either physically or emotionally. It can take a number of forms; physical, verbal, making gestures, exclusion, cyber-bullying etc. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups or because of individual characteristics that make someone different (racial, religious, cultural, sexist, homophobic, special educational needs and disability or because a child is adopted or lives with a carer).

Bullying of this nature should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. It can be confusing for someone to try and work out whether name calling is banter or bullying. A young person going through something like this might feel intimidated or feel under pressure not to make a fuss because others are saying it is just a joke. If it is a one off incident then it may be that it is banter. However, if the name calling becomes persistent and regular, then this is bullying. Equally if any banter makes a pupil feel uncomfortable and they have told the perpetrators to stop it and they continue to name call, this is verbal bullying. 'Banter' can include any comments about weight, appearance, racists, sexual or homophobic bullying. Name calling has been around for what may seem

forever but for someone who is on the receiving end of this, it can often have devastating consequences.

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

Physical

Pushing, hitting, kicking the victim or damaging, hiding and taking their belongings.

Verbal

Name calling, teasing, insulting, spreading rumours

Cyber

Texting/emailing unkind messages, or other forms of communication using technology

Emotional

Being unfriendly, excluding, ignoring, tormenting, looks or abusive gestures.

Racial / religious / cultural

Focusing on race, religion or cultural background

Sexual Harrassment

Unwanted or unwelcome physical contact, abusive comments, abusive behaviour and sexist graffiti.

Homophobic

Focusing on the issue of gender or sexual orientation

Passive

Being a bystander, not informing an adult, not getting help, not telling.

It is important to realise that being passive reinforces the power of the bully and makes the bystander partly responsible.

Possible Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

Signs and symptoms that a child is being bullied may include:

- Deterioration of work
- Feigned illness
- Unusual shyness and nervousness

- Isolated and withdrawn behaviour
- A desire to remain with adults
- Erratic attendance
- Fear of the journey to school
- Clothes, possessions and/or books regularly go missing or damaged
- Unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts
- Having nightmares or crying themselves to sleep
- Asking for money or beginning to steal money (to pay the bully)
- Expressing low self-esteem
- Giving improbable excuses to explain any of the above

Preventative Measures at Queen's College Preparatory School

PSHE lessons and Form/Circle Time provide opportunities to explore bullying as a topic. Issues considered include why bullying happens, alternative ways of behaving and strategies for dealing with difficulties. Curriculum areas such as English and Drama offer opportunities to explore relationships with bullying as one theme. Assemblies are recognised as an important forum to raise awareness and restate expectations of behaviour. Residential and day visits are seen as an excellent way of developing positive relationships and mutual understanding.

The School Code of Conduct promotes positive behaviour and it is regularly reinforced in each class and in assemblies. Positive behaviour is encouraged and expected at all times. Where appropriate Form Teachers provide time for class groups to discuss issues related to relationships and consider strategies for dealing with difficulties. Teaching methods employed encourage co-operative work inside and outside the classroom.

Girls are taught about the safe and appropriate use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked and the teachers monitor pupils' use. Sanctions may be imposed for the misuse or attempted misuse of the internet. Girls are offered guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal items safe. Girls are not

permitted to have mobile phones in school unless special permission is granted by the Headmistress.

We ensure continuous professional development of staff in order to combat bullying.

Key Advice to Adults Working at Queen's College Preparatory School

All children at Queen's College Preparatory School must believe and know that they will be listened to and accepted, and that our response will be swift, effective and sensitive to their concern.

Anyone who suspects bullying may be happening must inform the relevant Form Teacher of those suspicions. If a child discloses to an adult that they believe they are being bullied or think that bullying is taking place, that teacher must listen carefully and record the information. Again this information must be passed on directly to the Form Teacher.

All adults working at Queen's College Preparatory School need to be vigilant. There are times and places where victims are more vulnerable, and bullying not easily seen. Outside classrooms in the corridors and stairwells, rooms used for changing, play areas and the toilets are such places.

Responsibilities of all Queen's College Preparatory School Staff

Our staff will:

- Foster in our girls self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behavior we expect
- Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every girl learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying
- Listen to girls who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them
- Report all suspected cases of bullying to the Assistant Head
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures

Responsibilities of Girls at Queen's College Preparatory School

We expect our girls to:

- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity
- Intervene to protect the girl who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and to help prevent further instances

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets

Children at Queen's College Preparatory School are told that if they believe that they are being bullied, or believe that someone else is, they should tell the adult of their choice. They are assured that such incidents will be dealt with. This message is delivered through assemblies, PSHE, Circle Time and Form Time.

Responsibilities of Queen's College Preparatory School Parents

We ask our parents to support their daughters and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behavior in their children, which might be evidence of bullying
- Talk to their daughter's Form Teacher immediately if they believe their daughter is unhappy/upset or has any worries about school
- Encourage their daughter to talk to her Form Teacher if they are worried about something
- Advising their children to report any bullying to their Form Teacher, Head of Prep/Pre-Prep or the Assistant Head
- Explain to their children the implication of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and other pupils
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken
- Keep a written record of any instances of bullying
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved
- Co-operating with Queen's College Preparatory School if their daughter is accused of bullying, pointing out the implications of bullying both for the children who are bullied and the bullies themselves

Procedure in the Event of an Allegation

It is the Form Teacher's responsibility to inform the Assistant Head immediately that an allegation of bullying has been made.

In each case the procedure set out below will be followed:

- the Assistant Head will inform the Headmistress about the allegation
- the child's Form Teacher and /or the Assistant Head will talk to the child, whichever is deemed to be more appropriate
- the interview will be conducted in a quiet room
- the interview will be recorded in a clear and factual way
- the Assistant Head and the child's Form Teacher will meet to discuss the information gathered and decide upon the next course of action
- if deemed necessary other children may be interviewed
- at all stages the Assistant Head will keep the Headmistress informed throughout the process
- if deemed appropriate follow-up conversations / interviews with children may take place. A record of such conversations / interviews will be made

If it is established that there has been bullying the following steps will be taken:

- the bully needs to be made to understand that their behaviour has caused distress and unhappiness to another child and that it must stop instantly. A sanction may be given. The bully needs to know that such behaviour is not acceptable at Queen's College Preparatory School. This will vary depending on a number of factors including the age of the child and the circumstances. However, in all such cases, the parents of the children involved will be asked to come into school to meet the Assistant Head and Headmistress.
- the bully will be helped and guided usually by their Form Teacher to change their behaviour

- the victim of bullying will need reassurance that they will be free from bullying and will receive support

Follow-Up Action

- The Form Teacher files the interview records with the Assistant Head.
- The Form Teacher monitors the behaviour of the bully and the recovery of the victim. The aim and hope is for the Form Teacher to be able to reach a judgement that the matter can be considered closed.
- If the bullying returns the Form Teacher informs the Assistant Head to discuss the next course of action. From this point the Headmistress will take responsibility.
- Persistent bullying may result in parents being required to remove their child from Queen's College Preparatory School.

Safeguarding

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm', a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, teachers should discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Assistant Head Fran Buchanan who will discuss concerns with the local authority and work with them to take appropriate action. However, external support can still be given to a child whether or not it is deemed a child protection concern.

Bullying which occurs outside school premises

Queen's College Preparatory School staff have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises in line with The Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Evaluation of Policy

This policy is reviewed each year by the Council of Queen's College London at its Annual General Meeting.