



## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

### **Anti-bullying Statement**

*At Repton we do not accept bullying. We believe that all individuals are of value and worthy of respect. Every pupil deserves to be educated in a safe and secure environment – free from intimidation, threat or harm from any other person. Bullying is unacceptable behaviour at all times.*

*Bullying is any action that thoughtlessly or deliberately causes pain, humiliation and suffering to another person. It is usually unprovoked, is often repeated and can continue for a long period of time. It can cause great distress to the victim and can take the form of physical acts of violence, persistent taunting and name-calling or exclusion from social groups. It also includes cyber bullying which is abusive behaviour by mobile phone or the internet and the photographing or video-recording of any form of intimidation. Bullying also includes the exploitation of others such as older pupils taking unfair advantage of younger pupils.*

*If bullying does occur – seek help!*

*If you are bullied it is important that you seek advice. Bullying thrives on secrecy and does not go away if you do nothing about it. There are many people who are able to help. Your matron, house tutor, housemaster/housemistress, the Chaplain, the Senior Mistress or any other member of staff you feel that you can trust are all experienced in assisting with such situations. You may want to talk to your parents, your house prefects or enlist the help of a friend.*

*If you know that someone is being bullied tell one of the above. Your action may save others being the victim of the bully. It is the duty of all members of the community to take action should bullying occur.*

### *Procedures for pupils*

- Always seek help
- Talk to an adult you can trust
- Enlist the help of friends and house prefects who will ensure that the right help is sought
- Be confident that action will be taken to stop the bullying

*The above is published in The Blue Book and on House Notice Boards*

**Behaviour in pupils that may indicate that they are victims of bullying**

- Pupils appear withdrawn, unduly sensitive, cries easily
- Displays lack of confidence and self esteem
- Rapid weight gain or loss
- Truancy
- Physical injuries

NB If pupils display the above symptoms, do not automatically assume that they are victims of bullying. There may be other reasons for such behaviour.

*Procedures for members of staff who are approached by the victims of bullying*

- Always take the allegation of bullying seriously
- Do not promise confidentiality but reassure pupils that the situation will be dealt with sensitively
- Do not tackle the problem on your own; enlist the help of the housemaster/housemistress, the Chaplain or the SMT. The SMT and the HsMs will pass on any information to the Headmaster.
- Always inform the pupil's housemaster/housemistress who may consider involving the pupil's parents at some stage
- Housemasters/ Housemistresses must complete a Bullying Log form which must be sent to the Deputy Head (Pastoral). A copy of the form must be placed in the welfare files of all pupils involved.
- After consultation with the housemaster/housemistress suggest strategies to make life easier for the victim
- Inform pupils what to do if there are any reprisals from the perpetrator
- Keep written notes of the incident. The housemaster/housemistress will keep detailed records of the allegation, the nature of proof, any discussions held and actions taken. These may have to be sent to the Headmaster at a later date if the situation escalates
- After giving assistance to the victim consider the needs of the bully. There must be a commitment from the bully to change his/her behaviour. It is helpful to obtain help from the Chaplain and the housemaster/ housemistress. Perpetrators are often emotionally damaged and may require help (professional or otherwise)

*If a pupil claims to have been bullied it is useful to ascertain:*

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- Who saw what?
- Where did it take place?

- How often has it happened?
- Do the parents know?
- What proof exists?

It is easier to examine the seriousness of the allegation if the above are known.

### *Strategies to make life easier for the victim in the short term*

Suggest the following:

It is important to tell pupils that the following methods may help to make it easier to cope with the unhappy situation.

- Talk to friends that you can trust
- Talk to a member of staff
- Discuss the matter with your parents
- Do not give in to the bully's threats
- Try not to be alone with the bully
- Try to diffuse the situation yourself. Humour could be used
- In cases of verbal bullying use "blocking" techniques to shrug off the unpleasant remarks
- Try to remain calm
- Try not to react in an emotional manner

### *Discussions with the bully*

When talking to the perpetrator it is important that you do not use bullying techniques to stop the bullying. This may resolve the problem in the short term but in the long term it only reinforces the idea that bullying is an acceptable form of behaviour. It must be made clear to the victim that it is his/her **behaviour** that is unacceptable **not** the pupil him/herself.

### *Sanctions*

Younger pupils sometimes expect a tariff of sanctions to exist for bullying but the older ones realise that this is impossible. The severity of the bullying often depends on the reaction. Pupils should be made aware of this as it prevents the bully from defending him/herself by saying "I was only joking, teasing or play fighting." This may be the case in an isolated minor incident but it is not an acceptable excuse for serious or repeated incidents.

The method of dealing with the perpetrator depends on a number of factors such as the distress of the victim, the severity of the bullying behaviour, the number of incidents, the personal situation of the bully etc. This makes it impossible to list sanctions. However pupils should know that in extreme cases of bullying or in repeated bullying incidents that they risk suspension or expulsion.