



## **Tynecastle High School Anti-Bullying Policy November 2014**

### **1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

This policy is in accordance with the Children and Families Department's 'Policy and Procedures to respond to Bullying and Prejudice'. This policy exists to protect all children and young people from all forms of bullying by other children and young people. Additionally, wherever relevant and possible, the policy extends to protection and prevention out with the school, especially relating to prejudice-based bullying and cyber-bullying and aims to prevent such behaviours and attitudes from developing.

### **2. OUR SCHOOL'S VALUES AND BELIEFS**

We are committed through our school aims to encourage students to develop and mature in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and understanding of the needs of others in society in which students of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds, of all religious persuasions and of varying levels of ability are welcome. We actively foster good relationships between diverse groups and individuals in our school and in our community to help eliminate disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender change, looked-after status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic status or any combination of these.

We strive to create and maintain a climate within which students feel valued, included, secure and happy. We embed positive behaviour practices as part of our ethos. The example and actions of all staff are important in creating this atmosphere and this will be reflected in the relationship between staff and students. If students are always treated with honesty, fairness and respect, the same behaviours can be expected of students by staff. In turn, students will benefit from the supportive environment in which they are encouraged to behave appropriately towards one another.

### **3. DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

**Bullying** is an abuse of power that is defined by its effects. People who are bullied are upset by something someone else has done or said to them or about them. They are likely to fear that this will happen again and feel powerless to stop it. Bullying behaviour can take place via mobile phone or over the internet and social networking websites. Bullying in the form of prejudice and discrimination includes racism, homophobia, sexual harassment, sexism, sectarianism and disability class and faith discrimination and are initially defined by the perceptions of the victim(s) or others involved.

**Such behaviour has no place in Tynecastle High School and will not be tolerated. We will continue to work towards eliminating all forms of bullying in our school and to support those who are being bullied.**

#### **4. COMMUNICATING OUR POLICY**

- This anti-bullying policy is available on our school website at [www.tynecastle.edin.sch.uk](http://www.tynecastle.edin.sch.uk)
- Anti-bullying information and guidance is issued to all our students annually through assembly and tutor groups
- An anti-bullying statement and advice is issued to all parents/carers annually in the 'brown envelope' distribution
- This anti-bullying policy is available to all staff on our staff share
- Particular reference is made to this policy with new staff during their induction

#### **5. EVALUATING OUR POLICY**

- This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it is still "fit for purpose" and in accordance with local authority and national guidance and Equalities legislation.
- All substantiated incidents are recorded, using the Council's Recording Form. We make annual returns as required by the local authority and discuss comparisons year on year. We consider any improvements that need to be made to our strategies and intervention processes.
- We gather students' perceptions and experiences of bullying in Secondary Schools through periodic questionnaires
- We consult with young people through the Student Council and inform parents of any changes needed to be made (if any) to the Policy
- The policy and procedures will be reviewed every 4 years.

#### **6. POLICY STATEMENT**

The Head teacher is responsible for introducing and implementing the Policy. However all staff, students and their parents have an active part to play in the development and maintenance of the Policy, and in its success. It is beyond dispute that all students in our school should be able to participate in any activity or class, or simply to be in or around the school premises, without being exposed to verbal harassment, threat or physical violence of any kind. It is the expectation in Tynecastle High School that all staff, parents and carers will work to prevent and reduce bullying and prejudice among children and young people to ensure that all students feel safe and supported at all times.

##### **Proactive measures**

- Positive relationship building
- Modelling of appropriate behaviour by adults
- Sustaining an ethos of inclusion
- Consistent handling of challenging behaviour through restorative practices
- Build resilience and empathy and raising awareness of issues, e.g. hate crime and cyber-bullying through curricular programmes
- Diversity and anti-bullying days, weeks, assemblies and publications
- Staff development opportunities on policy development, empathy and resilience
- Use of evaluation tools to measure ethos and relationships, e.g. well-being questionnaires
- Involvement of community agencies and partners in health, police, the voluntary sector
- Each year S2 students are invited to participate in the City of Edinburgh Council's bullying survey. The Senior Team will review the results and plan actions as appropriate.
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- **Protective measures**
- Early identification of vulnerable students through effective transition arrangements (information from associated primary schools) and sharing of information in school
- Buddy systems, especially at P7-S1 transition
- Nurture and friendship groups
- Use of curricular materials such as 'Seasons for Growth', 'Keeping Myself Safe'
- Peer mentoring and mediation
- Counselling
- Playground supervision

### **Reactive measures**

We remind students at least twice a year about how our school deals with bullying including cyber bullying

### **Action by someone being bullied:**

Students who experience bullying or discrimination will be listened to and supported. Any student who is being bullied, or who observes another student or students being bullied, should quickly confide in an appropriate member of staff or a senior student. All students are familiar with the procedures to follow when reporting incidents of bullying behaviour. The student who is being bullied should be assured of confidentiality; if anyone else is to be informed, this should be agreed with the student beforehand, and any action to be taken should be mutually agreed. **NB: the guarantee of confidentiality cannot be given if the acts against the student appear to fall within the Council's Child Protection Guidelines In that situation, the procedures outlined in that section must be followed in detail.**

### **Action for those involved in bullying behaviour:**

A student may not be engaging consciously in bullying behaviour, but its impact is still felt and must be taken seriously. However the level of awareness of a student who is bullying will be a significant factor in how it is dealt with.

- De-escalation strategies
- Involvement of parent/carer
- Restorative practices, including acknowledging grievances and helping young people to recognise that their actions have consequences
- Physical separation of person/people bullying, where necessary and possible
- Support base, safe room where feasible
- Assessment of additional support needs for person being bullied or person bullying.
- Referral to specific support service, such as Educational Psychologist, Education Welfare Service, Social Work service or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Multi-agency team approach using Getting It Right principles
- In the most extreme cases, Child Protection procedures will need to be considered

## GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

**If a student confides in you that they or another student are being bullied:**

**Do:**

1. Take it seriously. It may have taken the student considerable courage to tell you. Be prepared to listen.
2. Involve the student being bullied in discussion of possible action.
3. As a rule, refer it to a member of the Guidance or Senior staff.

**Do not:**

1. Tell the student not to be silly, or treat the matter lightly.
2. Tell the student involved that the student has complained.
3. Take action unless you are sure of your approach, and the action has been agreed by the student.
4. Tell anyone else without the student's agreement **unless Child Protection Guidelines are involved**. The student has put their confidence in you by approaching you.

There may be very exceptional cases of bullying when a student's wishes on confidentiality may have to be over-ridden, for example where a student is believed to be at extreme risk.

## CYBERBULLYING AND BULLYING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL PREMISES

We know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and via mobile phones and social network internet sites. The bullying may be done by students from our own school, by students from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a student or parent tells us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Talk to students about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school.
- Talk to the Headteacher of another school whose students are allegedly bullying.
- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses.
- Talk to the police.

## PLANNING

We examine and use all available information to ensure that the promotion of equality and anti-bullying issues are contained within our development plans.

## EQUALITY IMPACTS ANALYSIS

When reviewing or creating any new policies or services within our school, we give due regard to all protected groups and consider whether any individual or group might experience a particularly positive or negative impact. We keep a record of this and where necessary we take steps to reduce any negative impact.

## INVOLVEMENT

We actively encourage all our young people to participate in school and extra-curricular activities and we take positive action to make sure that the diverse school population is represented in activities, surveys and our student council.

## **GATHERING AND MONITORING INFORMATION**

Our school routinely monitors attainment of students by ethnicity and gender. We monitor the achievements of our looked-after and disabled students.

We also monitor attendance and exclusion of all students, including by ethnicity, disability and gender.

We examine our annual records of incidents and survey information

We are aware of our local demography, through student census data

We use information from surveys of students' views and opinions

We take active steps to ensure that all data held on students' disabilities, ethnicity, caring and looked-after status is accurate and regularly reviewed.

## **RELATED POLICIES**

This policy links with a number of other school policies:

- Additional Support for Learning Policy
- Framework for Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy