

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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### Introduction

The Governing Body of Trent College is determined to minimise the instances and the impact of bullying within school. Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and their victims. It is neither an inevitable part of school life nor a necessary part of growing up. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour, the seriousness of which can cause considerable psychological damage and even drive individuals to suicide.

We are committed to promoting and supporting positive pupil mental health and wellbeing through our policies and practice. Our first consideration, as professional, adult practitioners, will be how our actions support and promote the wellbeing of every child.

Our community is based upon respect, good manners, and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence, and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop to their full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other, inside and outside of School.

The School prides itself on its commitment to creating a culture of respect, tolerance and understanding. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that there are consistent expectations of behaviour both at school, online and at home, and that the School and parents co-operate closely together.

Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination of pupils or staff will not be tolerated by the School. We treat all of our pupils and their parents fairly, and with consideration, and we expect them to respect the staff, the School and each other, in return. All forms of bullying are unacceptable at the School (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) and any instances of bullying will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the School's Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse

leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

This policy applies to all pupils at Trent College.

## **Aims**

The aims of this policy are to provide a framework which encourages positive behaviour, respect for individuals and minimises any instances of bullying.

The policy is also written with regard to the principles within:

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti-Bullying Work in schools

Preventing & Tackling Bullying– Advice for school Leaders, Staff and Governors

Teaching Online Safety in schools

Education for a Connected World

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff

and the belief that:

- all pupils have the right to an education free from bullying within a supportive, safe and caring environment.
- all members of staff also have the right to work in an environment free from any harassment or bullying; whether this is from staff, pupils or parents.

## **Definition**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming, or humiliating of another person. It may take many forms, including physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual (including the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes), verbal (including cyberbullying via text messages, email, social media, gaming, or other instant messages, and can include the use of images and video), and/or emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) whether that be a physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator(s) having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate the victim(s).

Bullying can sometimes amount to peer-on-peer abuse, which is defined as abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil. It can be standalone or as part of wider abuse and can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. Further information about peer-on-peer abuse, including the procedures to follow when an incident on peer-on-peer abuse is reported can be found in the School's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions, or because of a child's familial circumstances, such as they are adopted, in care or that they have caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. For example, bullying can still be homophobic if directed towards a child that is perceived to be gay, whether or not this is the case.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone - pupils, other young people, staff, and parents.

Where an incident of bullying causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a pupil, the School will follow the procedures set out in the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Further information on some of the types and modes of bullying:

#### Modes of Bullying

1. Verbal bullying: This may involve name calling, may make use of written notes, e-mails, or mobile phone messages and/or may include threats of physical violence. Referring to an exchange as 'banter' is unacceptable in an attempt to excuse upset being caused to others.
2. Physical bullying: This often consists of deliberate jostling, bumping or shoving and those responsible may easily maintain that it is accidental when detected for the first time. Physical bullying may also involve theft or damage to property. Not all theft or damage is bullying, but bullying occurs where the intention is to create fear and to use power improperly.
3. Manipulative (Social) bullying: This may involve manipulating social networks (including electronic networks) with the intention of excluding, ostracising or marginalising individuals from their friends and normal relationships. Manipulative bullying may also involve the spreading of rumours, posting of electronic images without the other persons consent or malicious accusations.
4. Cyberbullying (Online bullying): This is the use of information and communications technology, particularly mobile phones, social networking sites and the internet in general to deliberately upset someone else. [Childnet provides detailed and up to date advice]

#### Types of Bullying

Bullying can relate to many different traits. This list highlights and defines some of the more common traits that can be subject to bullying behaviour. It is not a prescriptive list, the school will judge whether or not behaviour constitutes bullying on the basis of intent, impact and actions.

1. Homophobic Bullying: Homophobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, transgender or bisexual people.
2. Racist bullying: The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. The term racist bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, community, national origin or national status.
3. Faith bullying: Relates to behaviour motivated by attitude to an individual's religious beliefs.
4. Socio-economic bullying: Relates to behaviour motivated by an individual's perceived socio-economic status
5. Social bullying: Relates to inclusion or exclusion in social groups. (See manipulative bullying).
6. Physical appearance
7. Disability

The school recognises the increased vulnerability to bullying to those with any of the protected characteristics under the Equalities Act. Bullying frequently focuses on individual differences and anything that is implied to be different from the perspective of the instigator. In this respect it undermines the school's ethos of promoting equal opportunities and disregards the teaching of important social and moral principles. Bullying may seize upon aspects of body shape or appearance or focus on parental, cultural or ethnically based lifestyle choices. It may dwell upon race, religion or nationality. It may also reflect parental lack of awareness and bigotry or neighbour feuds. Sexual bullying may involve misogyny or homophobia and focus on alleged sexual attractiveness or lack of it. The school recognises the additional potential vulnerability of boarders and, in particular, junior boarders and is committed to providing them with the necessary care, support and encouragement to enable them to flourish.

All staff should be mindful that boarders who experience bullying may find it more difficult to find respite or resolution from the situation and, therefore, can experience greater distress. They may also find it more difficult to report bullying in the close-knit boarding community. As a result, boarding staff take care to monitor and discuss the welfare of each boarder. HOMs have an important role to play in fostering an active dialogue about relationships and behaviour within their boarding team. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) has a scheduled weekly meeting with HOMs. These meetings provide an important forum for sharing information across houses, including concerns relating to bullying. The annual survey of boarders includes a question on bullying to support the school's monitoring processes.

All pupils should be just as clear about what is expected of them online as offline.

### **Bullying outside school premises**

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town.

Staff are expected to act in response to suspected cases of bullying in line with the guidance which follows. Where bullying outside school is reported or witnessed, it should be investigated and acted on. The Head will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify external agencies of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

### **Prevention**

We intend that the ethos of our school will help to instil mutual respect and civilised behaviour and encourage the avoidance of prejudice-based language but we recognise that in our proactive approach to bullying we should provide pupils with the opportunity to discuss the topic whenever necessary but at least once a year in PSHE.

Senior Pastoral managers will speak at the start of the school year about pastoral issues, including bullying, how to prevent it and report it. This will be followed up in year group assemblies to highlight the procedures in place in the school as well as PSHE sessions addressing the same issues. Year group assemblies, chapel and tutor time will also ensure that the culture of mutual respect and civilised behaviour is maintained. Assemblies and activities during anti-bullying week also raise awareness of the need to prevent and tackle bullying.

The school Counsellors are available for pupils and staff should they wish to arrange a meeting.

In addition to the regular staff training, teaching staff complete online training in Bullying Prevention, Online Safety and Equality and Diversity to underpin our commitment to the prevention of bullying.

Staff and pupils are invited, and expected, to sign our pledge "We All Belong" which is displayed prominently around the school to embed the philosophy it contains.

Pupils are given the opportunity each year to complete an Anti-Bullying Survey which allows the school to understand the pupils' experience and address any concerns which are raised. In practical terms, the pupil views have led to revision of the supervision rota, themed assemblies and a focus on ensuring that all types of bullying are no more than rare, overall.

## **WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED**

### **For pupils:**

1. Go straight to a member of staff and discuss the matter in private. Remember your silence is the bully's greatest weapon. If you do not feel you can tell a member of staff then tell a friend, a prefect or your parents/guardians.
2. Fill in a Student Bullying Form (available from tutor or Intranet)
3. Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
4. Be proud of who you are. It is good to be an individual.
5. Try not to show that you are upset. A bully thrives on your fear.
6. Stay with a group of friends as much as you can.
7. Tell yourself that the bully will not feel good about their own behaviour and they need help. By informing a member of staff of the whole background, you can help the bully and yourself.

### **For staff:**

Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team, your line manager or the Chair of the Common Room who will ensure the matter is treated sensitively and there are no repercussions for the member of staff making the allegation (further detail is given in the Whistleblowing policy). Alternatively, a formal complaint can be made in accordance with the Complaints Policy.

## **WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IF YOU KNOW A PUPIL IS BEING BULLIED**

### **Pupil action:**

Do something - tell someone, ideally, a member of staff immediately. If not a member of staff then a Prefect, your parents/guardian or a friend.

All staff understand the seriousness of bullying and will provide support. The following staff will ensure that your concerns are investigated and addressed:

- Tutor
- Head of Year
- Head of Tier
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Deputy Head (Pastoral)

### **Staff action:**

Be vigilant and look for any early signs of bullying in a classroom, activity or anywhere around the school site. These may include the sudden deterioration in a pupil's work; spurious illness and erratic attendance; arriving late for lessons; a desire to remain with adults; damaged or disappearing schoolbooks and other property; an appearance of isolation or a major mood change. Whilst such behaviour might be symptomatic of other problems, it might be the early signs of bullying, and the problem should be investigated and, where necessary, referred to the Tutor in the first instance and then on to the Head of Year, Boarding Housemaster/Housemistress, Head of Tier or Deputy Head, as appropriate. Reports of bullying must be logged (in the Bullying Log held in the Pastoral Folder of the shared network area for staff), even if the outcome is that it is believed bullying hasn't taken place. The central bullying log is used by pastoral managers to identify patterns of behaviour that is causing upset and plan corrective action.

### **School action:**

1. Pupils are made aware of what constitutes bullying, its outcomes and how it can be dealt with through our PSHE programme, Chapel and assemblies.
2. Staff, through the regular Inset programme and briefings, are made aware of what constitutes bullying, and how the school sets out to prevent and tackle instances.
3. The school has systems in place to maintain a clear picture of bullying throughout the school and ensure that measures are in place to identify patterns and minimise instances.

4. The school actively listens to pupils through a variety of channels including surveys so insights are provided into how pupils are feeling about their lives both inside and outside school. The central bullying log also enables staff to have an overview of the instances of bullying across the whole school.
5. The school promotes a 'mindful culture' in which pupils are encouraged to be caring and kind both within the day and boarding community. The Rewards and Sanctions policy was designed with this purpose and encourages staff and pupils to recognise and reward acts of kindness and compassion.
6. Pupils are encouraged to report bullying and not to join in or stand idly by. They must understand that bullying is not an acceptable part of life within our school and that everyone has the responsibility to ensure that it does not happen. To report is to help the bullied and the bully.
7. It is important that pupils reporting incidents of bullying are taken seriously and listened to and that positive action is seen to be taken. Staff who observe intimidatory behaviour or have it reported to them should write a summary of the incident and pass this on to the Tutor and the relevant Housemaster/mistress/Head of Year. The school can then identify any pattern of bullying or intimidating behaviour & act accordingly.
8. All pupils holding any position of responsibility are given a briefing on the Anti-Bullying measures taken by the school and the Anti-Bullying policy.
9. Childline references displaying phone numbers and web addresses are posted throughout the school and on the Intranet.
10. The school will work with the parents of the bully and the bullied, engaging with them promptly when issues of bullying come to light. This partnership will provide consistent guidance away from any bullying behaviour.
11. When managing cases of suspected bullying, the bully and the bullied are likely to be offered counselling to help them with coping strategies so they can be happy and feel safe in school.
12. Following any incident of bullying the situation will be formally monitored over a period of time to ensure behaviour improves and the pupils feel safe and supported. Patterns of conduct likely to cause unease to pupils will also be monitored as will places on the site where pupils feel vulnerable.
13. The school covers Anti-Bullying as a core part of the staff induction programme and staff training so all staff are fully aware of their role in maintaining a safe & happy school and their legal responsibilities.
14. Initiation (hazing) activity of any kind is not allowed.
15. The school carries out risk assessments to identify the times, places and circumstances in which the risk of bullying is greatest. Action is taken to counteract the risk of bullying.
16. The school ensures that effective policies and procedures relating to Acceptable use of Technology, E-Safety, Whistleblowing, Mobile Phones & Personal Devices, Rewards and Sanctions and Photographs & Images of Children, Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.
17. The results of the bullying survey are discussed at senior level and reviewed to identify action that is required. These findings are shared with the Child Protection Welfare and Boarding sub-committee. Pupils are informed through assemblies.

#### **Parent:**

Parents should report any anxieties they may have to the Tutor in the first instance. These would be passed on to the Head of Year & Boarding HoM for boarders or Head of Tier, as necessary. Parents can be reassured that the school will treat their concerns seriously, and sensitively, and that they will be kept informed of any action taken.

#### **Dealing with incidents of Bullying**

Incidents of bullying are likely to be treated as a matter of serious misconduct within our school's sanction structure. Instances of staff being bullied will also be taken very seriously and such cases are likely to be dealt with according to the Staff Capability and Disciplinary Policy with respect to our Whistleblowing Policy.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to deal with incidents of pupils bullying other pupils. Indeed, the member of staff "on the scene" is often best placed to take prompt action and to deal with each individual incident in an appropriate manner. There is no one way of dealing with incidents; however, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. It is important, in the first instance, to reassure the victim of bullying that they were right in coming forward. Staff should liaise with the Tutor, Head of Year, Housemaster/mistress

- and the Head of Tier, where appropriate to determine the most appropriate course of action.
2. Where practicable, the pupil(s) involved should write down their version of the incidents. Statements from other witnesses should also be collected.
  3. Guidance and support will be given to both the victim and the bully. Both parties are likely to be encouraged to meet with the school counsellor.
  4. Depending upon the seriousness of the incident the alleged bully may receive a detention, may be sent home while an investigation takes place, the school may call a meeting with the parents, the pupil may receive a formal or final written warning, or, in the most serious cases, the pupil may be required to be withdrawn from the school or excluded. The resultant action will always be consistent with the Rewards and Sanctions Policy.
  5. Details of the incident will be recorded in the central (tier based) log of bullying incidents.
  6. The tutors and Head(s) of Year of the pupils involved, and boarding staff if applicable, will take responsibility for the behaviour of all pupils involved. This will include dialogue with each pupil and, if necessary, feedback to the parents of all involved.
  7. The school will make clear its expectations to any pupil who has bullied someone else. In line with our zero-tolerance approach, persistent bullying behaviour can jeopardise a pupil's place at the school. Policy to be read in conjunction with Behaviour Policy and Acceptable Use of Policy.

Incidents of bullying are summarised by report and reviewed in each meeting of the Child Protection, Welfare and Boarding Sub-Committee of the Governing Body.