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Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy is an integral part of our Behaviour Policy.

Purpose & Background

Beaumont School aims to ensure that all members of the school community feel welcome, safe and happy and so are able to learn and make progress. Bullying of any kind prevents this from happening.

As a school, we take bullying seriously. Pupils, parents and carers should understand that reporting bullying is essential, and be assured that the school will support them fully whenever bullying is reported. It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to implement the Anti-Bullying Policy.

An effective Anti-Bullying policy is fundamental to meeting the expectations of *Every Child Matters*.

What is Bullying ?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. It can be a one-off incident but, more commonly, it is repeated over a period of time. It can be carried out by individuals, or by groups.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, nicknames, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat-room misuse; mobile threats by text messaging & calls; misuse of associated technology , e.g. camera & video facilities

Policy Objectives

- To build and maintain an anti-bullying ethos in the school
- To ensure all staff, pupils and parents and carers have a clear understanding of what bullying behaviour is
- To ensure all governors and staff know and understand the school policy on bullying and follow it when bullying is suspected or reported
- To ensure that all pupils, parents and carers know the school policy on bullying and feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems
- To challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour
- To increase understanding for pupils who are bullied

Practice and Procedures**Preventing Bullying**

While we acknowledge that bullying cannot be completely eradicated, as a school, we are wholly committed to taking measures to minimise its presence and impact on individuals and the student body. The following strategy, developed in consultation with students, parents, staff and governors, gives details of how we hope to achieve this.

- Beaumont School has an effective pastoral system which takes all allegations of bullying seriously, investigates them and acts upon the findings according to the guidelines in this and the associated behaviour policy. This will always involve discussion with all pupils involved and, if deemed appropriate, their parents.
- The teachers' observation of the behaviour of the students in their care is often the first indicator of bullying. The Form Tutor's role is vital but all staff will be vigilant and alert for signs of bullying.
- A "worry" post box is located outside the school's Finance Office where students can leave notes about any issues causing concern, including bullying. Students can choose to address the note to a specific member of staff if they so wish. The box is checked regularly with its contents passed, in confidence, to a senior pastoral post-holder.
- Year 11 students are used as form mentors for Year 7 tutor groups. This relationship allows younger students to discuss problems, including bullying, with older peers. Prefects are aware that they should always alert a member of staff to any bullying of which they become aware.
- Sixth form students take part in a peer-mentoring scheme operating in Years 8 and 9. All participants have received training in mentoring and would make an informed judgement about when to involve pastoral staff.
- Anti-bullying advice will be published in all pupil Planners, commencing September 2009.

- The PSHE and Citizenship curricula address issues such as bullying, conflict and its resolution and peer pressure as do other subject areas such as Drama. Students discuss both the impact of such behaviour on others and also look at effective ways of dealing with the situations they may experience. Students will also be made aware of anti-bullying strategies through assemblies and form periods.
- The ICT Code of Conduct includes specific measures to tackle cyber bullying through the misuse of digital media, such as images of pupils, both in and out of school.
- A notice board in the main building will display the contact details for reputable local and national agencies that offer services to children in difficulty.

Reporting Bullying

Pupils who are bullied, who witness bullying or who have even participated in bullying, should feel confident to report it to any member of the school staff whom they trust enough to tell. This would typically be their Form Tutor. Each incident will be dealt with on an individual basis, but all reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated. Incidents will be recorded with pupils' statements and actions taken forming part of this record. Proven instances of bullying will be recorded using the *CSF Integrated Bullying and Harassment Record and Monitoring Form*. If the bullying has a racist element then it will also be treated as a racial incident according to the Hertfordshire County guidelines ('*Preventing and dealing with racist incidents*', 2007). School Incident Forms contain specific "tick boxes" to enable staff to record whether an incident should be categorised as bullying and/or racist. A separate record is kept of these for submission to the LA in a termly report provided by the school.

Responding to Bullying

When an incident of bullying is confirmed, staff will discuss issues relating to the incident with the pupils involved, in a way suitable to their age and level of understanding. We try to make use of a problem-solving approach, centred upon facilitated mediation. Each pupil will be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion will remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and preventing any recurrence of the bullying. Pupils who have been bullied will receive appropriate support, including help from external agencies, where needed. Pupils who have bullied will be offered help or mentoring and may be placed on a behaviour contract.

If bullying persists, one or a combination of the following actions will be taken:

- An official report will be made and filed in the pupil's personal record (see above).
- The Head of Year or senior staff will be informed.
- Existing disciplinary sanctions will be used.
- Parents or carers will be contacted to discuss the issues. They will be given feedback on progress in dealing with the incident. Additional external help may be sought for example from the Links Centre, Behaviour Support Team

or the PCSO which may involve the running of an Acceptable Behaviour Contract for the pupil.

- Exclusion from the school – this is dependent on the severity and/or persistence of the bullying and will be a final resort.

Involvement of parents and carers

Where appropriate, the parents or carers of pupils who bully and those who have been bullied will be informed of the incident and will be asked to support the strategies used to resolve the problem.

Pupils who bully will be helped to understand the pain this causes to others and reminded of the possible consequences of bullying. The sanctions for repeated incidents will be explained clearly to them. Support will be agreed to ensure they do not repeat bullying behaviours and their behaviour may be monitored. Parents and carers will be involved in ensuring that the monitoring process runs smoothly and in any subsequent actions designed to reduce bullying behaviour.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy has been developed in line with advice from the Local Education Authority and in accordance with the DCSF published anti-bullying guidance for schools *Safe to learn: Embedding anti bullying work in schools (2007)*.

Monitoring and evaluation of this policy forms a regular part of our self-review process. All policies are evaluated and reviewed with involvement from staff, pupils, the governing body, parents and carers.