NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying and Anti-Cyber-Bullying Policy

> This policy relates to all children including those in the Junior School.
> This document is available upon request to parents and prospective parents and is published to parents and prospective parents on the School's website.

This policy has regard to the DfE guidance *Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies*.

1. Statement of Intent

At Newcastle-under-Lyme School, 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 his/her 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. Newcastle-under-Lyme School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance.

Ours is a diverse community, with pupils from a variety of cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds. Some pupils require additional support and help.

Parents/carers have an important role in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and home have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect

them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the School. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. Where necessary, we will apply the sanctions described in our Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy for behaviour that constitutes bullying or harassment of any kind.

2. Links
This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:
- Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy
- Computer Network Agreement for Pupils
- Special Educational Needs & EAL Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

3. Aims and Objectives
The aims and objectives of the School's Anti-Bullying and Anti Cyber-Bullying Policy are:

- To clarify for pupils, parents and staff that bullying is always unacceptable.
- To ensure that every pupil has the right to be safe and happy in the School, and to be protected when he/she is feeling vulnerable.
- To create an atmosphere where pupils who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and be believed, and that action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns.
- To make clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate, and to the bully that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress.
- To resolve problems through a variety of methods.

4. Definition of Bullying
Bullying may be defined as: 'Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally." *Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies*.

Bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person. It can take the form of racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, homophobic, Special Educational Needs or disability related bullying. It could involve physical (including sexual) intimidation, or bullying by verbal, cyber *[see section 7]* (including social websites, chat rooms, email, e-photographs, mobile phones and text messages), or emotional means (for example by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, or which

focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. It can cause serious and lasting psychological damage and even suicide. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. Bullying conflicts sharply with the School's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles and the code of conduct.

5. Signs of Bullying

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that he/she is being bullied. Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Asking for money or stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Torn clothes
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary, or stopping eating)
- Psychological damage and diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the School nurse with symptoms such as stomach pains or headaches etc
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of (or attempting) suicide or running away
- Giving implausible excuses to explain any of the above

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of, these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

6. Prevention of Bullying

Our first priority is to educate pupils in the seriousness of bullying with the aim of preventing it from happening in the first place. Our programme of education promotes an awareness of the psychological damage that bullying can cause to pupils (including suicide), and reminds pupils about the possible sanctions that can be imposed for bullying (ultimately including expulsion).

Our programme includes:

• Lessons delivered through the PSHE scheme, which is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other. It specifically tells pupils whom they should inform if they are being bullied, or are worried that another pupil is being bullied.

• Appropriate assemblies, which are used to reinforce our anti cyber-bullying and anti-bullying policy.

• Other lessons within the curriculum that highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills.

• Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the School site, paying particular attention to areas where bullying might occur. They are advised to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.

7. Cyber-bullying

School has a duty to provide a safe environment for all members of its community and in doing so recognises that technology plays an important and positive role, both educationally and socially, in everyone's lives. It is committed to helping all members of the school community to understand both the benefits and the risks, and to equip students with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly.

Cyber bullying may be defined as "the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others", *Bill Belsey, creator of the web site: www.cyber-bullying.org*

School recognises that cyber-bullying can involve Social Networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat, emails and mobile devices used for SMS messages and as cameras.

It can be used to reinforce face-to-face bullying. It can also go invade personal space and can involve a greater number of people across age groups including targeting of adults. It can involve bystanders and includes: threats and intimidation; harassment or 'cyberstalking'; vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information of images and manipulation of images. Some cyber-bullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws including Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

Preventing Cyber-bullying

In addition to the preventative measures described in Section 6 above, NuLS takes

the following precautions to reduce the risk of cyber bullying in School:

- Students sign an Acceptable Use Policy before they are allowed to use School computer equipment, the internet and Wi-Fi in school, and parents are encouraged to discuss its contents with their children.
- All pupils are expected to adhere to the School rules related to the use of electronic devices.
- School blocks certain sites by a filtering system and the ICT Department monitors pupils' use. The ICT Department uses filtering, firewall, anti-spyware software, anti-virus software and secure connections to safeguard the students.
- Sanctions may be imposed for misuse or attempted misuse of the Internet.
- Access to external web-based email, such as Hotmail, is not allowed. Pupils in Year 3 and above are issued with their own personal School email addresses.
- Guidance is given on safe use of social networking sites and anti cyber bullying.
- Guidance is provided on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- The use of mobile phone and tablet cameras is not allowed in washing and changing areas.
- The school uses a variety of opportunities, in and out of the classroom to promote safe use of technology and provide guidance on dealing with and reporting cyber-bullying. The school encourages its students to be involved in a response to cyber-bullying e.g. through PSHE lessons.
- Parents are provided with information and advice on e-safety and cyber-bullying.
- As technology changes very quickly, the school seeks to provide opportunities for policies to be reviewed and for students to be involved in the process of updating and improving them.
- The School trains staff to ensure that they can recognise non-verbal signs and indications of cyberbullying.
- All members of the school community are informed about the various ways in which bullying can be reported and in addition there is reassurance that the school will deal sensitively with students who report concerns.
- Where there are concerns about misuse of technology, senior staff e.g. Heads of Year, Deputy Head (Pastoral) may request a student to reveal a message or other content and may confiscate equipment. If they consider that equipment may contain evidence of bullying they may investigate the specific contents relating to that act
- As part of the annual Child Protection Safeguarding Audit there is a review of recorded bullying incidents and cyber-bullying in particular.

8. Procedure for Reporting Bullying

• All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of the teaching staff (or the School Nurse) at once if they know that bullying is taking place.
• Every member of staff is advised on how to respond to such allegations.
• All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records are kept so that patterns may be identified.
• We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.

9. Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:
• The member of staff to whom it was reported, or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved.
• He/she will inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible.
• The victim will be interviewed individually and asked to write an account of events. (In the case of very young children a written record of the interview will be made by the interviewer).
• The alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, and any independent witnesses, will be also interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events. (Again, in the case of very young children the account may be written by the interviewer).
• The incident will be recorded.
• All relevant staff will be informed. In serious incidents, the Headmaster will be informed.
• After the incident has been investigated, the victim will be interviewed by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator. It will be made clear to him/her why revenge is inappropriate. He/she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself.
• The alleged bully will also be interviewed by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions.
• The parents/carers of all parties will be informed and may be invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support will be sought. A way forward, including any disciplinary sanctions and counselling, will be confirmed.
• This procedure will recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures.
• At staff discretion, a meeting led by staff and involving all the parties will be convened to agree a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.

• A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.
• It is the policy of Newcastle-under-Lyme School to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the School's own disciplinary procedures. However, in very serious or persistent cases, including those where a criminal prosecution is possible, and only after the Headmaster has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to Social Services.
• Any bullying that is suspected of causing significant physical, sexual or emotional harm will also be reported to Social Services under the school's Child Protection Policy.

9. Procedures for dealing with reported cyber-bullying

Most cases of cyber-bullying will be dealt with through the School's existing anti-bullying strategy **[see Section 8]** and this is the framework within which all incidents of bullying are investigated. However, some features of cyber-bullying differ from other forms of bullying, for example the scale and scope of cyber-bullying can be greater than other forms of bullying and the people involved may have a different profile from perceived bullies. The anywhere and anytime nature of cyber-bullying means that the person being bullied will not always know who is bullying them and some students may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying.

To support the student being cyber-bullied the School will:
- Offer support to the student; reassure students that they have done the right thing in reporting this to someone.
- Advise students to keep the evidence but not to retaliate or reply. Sometimes the victim may be able to block the bully from their sites and services.
- Unless the student sees it as a punishment, they may be recommended to change mobile phone number
- Try to remove hurtful or embarrassing content material from the web, ensuring those who posted it realise why it was wrong, or contact the host provider to report and get the content removed.

Investigation of cyber-bullying
- If any member of the community suspects cyber-bullying is taking place, they should contact the Head of Year or Deputy Head Pastoral and the investigation will begin in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Victims will be asked evidence their abuse for example; saved phone messages, save-and-print messenger conversations, print a screenshot of social network pages, forward to staff whole email messages.
- If images are involved and they might be illegal or raise child protection concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead may involve the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), the police in cases of actual/suspected illegal content, or CEOP.

- Any allegations against staff will be handled as other allegations following
- the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and School Whistleblowing Policy.
- The school will confiscate electronic devices where appropriate and suspend use of school network and Wi-Fi until the investigation is complete

Working with the cyber-bully and applying sanctions
- The aims of the sanctions are to help the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop
- To help the bully to recognise the harm caused and deter them from repeating the behaviour
- To reinforce the message to the school community that cyber-bullying is unacceptable and that the school has effective ways of dealing with it, so deterring others from behaving similarly
- Sanctions for any breaches of Acceptable Use Policy will be applied, taking consideration of the type and impact of bullying and the possibility that it was unintentional or was in retaliation.
- The outcome will include helping the bully to recognise the consequence of their actions and providing support to enable their attitude to change
- A key part of the sanction may well involve ensuring that the student deletes files
- Parents will always be informed about sanctions imposed

10. Sources of Help and Advice
- In the Senior School we have a strong and experienced pastoral team of Form Tutors and Heads of Year who support the Deputy Head Pastoral. In the Junior School, strong pastoral care is provided by staff who support the Head of Junior School, Deputy Head and Head of Pre-Prep.
- All staff are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies.
- All pupils in need of impartial and independent advice may speak to the local authority Nurse, who visits the School for one day each week.
- Noticeboards and the School offices display the contact details of useful organisations, including details of confidential help lines and websites connecting to external specialists such as Childline, the Samaritans, the NSPCC, Staffordshire Victim Support and the Police.
- We provide leadership training to our Upper Sixth Prefects which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils.

- We welcome feedback from parents and carers on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

11. Further Advice to Pupils
Treat those around you with respect and consideration. Witnessing bullying and doing nothing suggests support for the bullying. If you do witness someone you know bullying another pupil you should try to make clear to the bully that you disagree with his/her actions.
We all have a responsibility to make sure that bullying is not allowed to continue in the School.

12. Further Advice to Parents
If you think your child is being bullied, or is involved in bullying in some way, please let the School know straight away.
Talk to your children about the subject. Let them know you will be supportive and encourage them to confide in you. Re-assure your child that the School will deal with the matter sensitively.

J A Simms
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