



Birchfield Independent Girls School

POLICY FOR BULLYING AND ANTI-BULLYING

The Prophet *sallaa Allaahu aliahe wa sallam* said:

“The believer is not a person that hurts others with words, or curses, or swears, or is foul-mouthed.”

Saheeh Al-Bukhari

“A Muslim is a brother of the Muslim. He should not be wronged, belittled, or insulted.”

Saheeh Muslim

We have committed ourselves to fostering a safe secure environment for students admitted to Birchfield Independent Girls School. Our aim is to provide a disciplined, orderly atmosphere, which will promote dignity and respect, and where the students will not endure in fear of being bullied, whether verbally or physically. Bullying behaviour occupies no position whatsoever in the Islamic belief and will not be tolerated. The school defines bullying as” the conscious desire to harm in a threatening, verbal or physical manner.” Racial and sexual harassment also fall within this definition.

Policy on Bullying

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The teaching of Islam clearly indicates the rights that each individual holds. In the Qur’an we find the reference:

“Co-operate with one another in virtue and heedfulness, and do not co - operate with me another for the purpose of vice and aggression.”

Surah Al Maa’idah 5: 2, Al Qur’aan Al Kareem

Bullying behaviour must be reported to the head teacher, members of staff or School manager. The school will take action against the student concerned, which may result in the student being expelled from the school.

Pupils learn most effectively in an environment where they feel valued, stimulated and safe.

Bullying is not only an attack on physical and emotional well-being; it also prevents students from realising their full potential as learners.

Combating bullying is most effective when applied across the whole curriculum, not just in PSHE and tutor time. If all teachers should act to reduce bullying behaviour, then the performance of all students would surely improve, for they would be free to concentrate on the subject area and not have to worry about the behaviour of some of their peers.

Everyone has a part to play in preventing bullying – no-one is allowed to be a bystander. Anyone who knows about or witnesses bullying must tell and get help.

The Prophet Muhammad (*sallaa Allaahu aliahe wa sallam*) said:

“O my servants, I have forbidden oppression for myself and have made it forbidden amongst you, so do not oppress one another.”

Saheeh Muslim (and others)

What is Bullying?

Bullying is a type of abuse, which can be verbal, emotional, physical, psychological, sexual or gesturing. It can include the following:

- Name calling and verbal teasing
- Backbiting and spreading rumours or gossip
- Verbal and physical threats
- Hate messages through mobile and Internet
- Neglecting another and singling one out
- Physical attacks on another person
- Pushing or shoving another or tripping them up
- Theft or damage to another’s property
- Racism, sexism or prejudice
- Revenge-related attacks
- Damage to one’s property or attack on one’s family
- Giving evil looks or causing discomfort to another through gestures
- Sexual harassment or molesting
- Forcing another to do something against their will
- Taking advantage or using another
- Ganging up against another

- Jealously or grudge related attacks

Bullying may involve inappropriate use of technology to harass, intimidate or threaten another. Bullying at its worst is the deliberate, repeated and systematic persecution of an individual or group, by another individual or group. It is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten, upset or frighten another. Single instances of anti-social behaviour are always unacceptable in school, and if ignored, can lead to bullying. The victim's perception of events may often be different from the bully's perception.

All allegations of bullying will be investigated further.

Staff, parents and students should always be prepared to:

Listen
Believe
Act

Birchfield Independent Girls School Community School Rules:

At no time should anyone do anything that would cause harm, offence, inconvenience or unnecessary work for any other member of the school community. Always be polite and considerate to others.

Remember: Care, Consideration and Co-operation at all times.

Realistically, we are likely to encounter incidents of bullying in the school community from time to time. Our anti-bullying policy has been developed to guide staff, students, parents and governors, and to enable the whole school community to tackle bullying primarily in a proactive, rather than reactive manner.

Cyber-Bullying

Information and Communication Technologies are key within education to support learning and school systems but they can also be misused. Birchfield Independent Girls' School aims to ensure that children are safe and feel safe from bullying, harassment and discrimination. They are committed to teaching children the knowledge and skills needed to be able to use ICT effectively, safely and responsibly.

The Prophet *sallaa Allaahu aliahe wa sallam* said:

“The believer is not a person that hurts others with words, or curses, or swears, or is foul-mouthed.”

Saheeh Al-Bukhari

- Cyber-Bullying is the use of ICT (usually a mobile phone and or the internet) to abuse another person.
- It can take place anywhere and involve many people.
- Anybody can be targeted including pupils and school staff.
- Cyber-Bullying may consist of threats, harassment, embarrassment, humiliation, defamation or impersonation.
- Cyber-Bullying may take the form of general insults, or prejudice-based bullying, for example homophobic, sexist, racist or other forms of discrimination.

Procedures to Prevent Cyber-Bullying

Pupils will learn about Cyber-Bullying through PSHE, assemblies, Anti-Bullying Week activities and other curriculum projects. Parents will be provided with information and advice on how to combat Cyber-Bullying. Staff, pupils, parents and governors will be made aware of issues surrounding Cyber-Bullying. Pupils and parents will be urged to report all incidents of Cyber-Bullying to the school.

Students are expected to comply with the following when using school services. Any misuse may result in disciplinary action.

- Ensure that communications through the Internet and email are related to learning.
- Promptly report if they suspect they have received a computer virus or spam (i.e. unsolicited email) or if they receive a message that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Keep personal information including names, addresses, photographs, credit card details and personal telephone numbers private and not share them over the email and the mobile phone.
- Avoid using the electronic identity of another person to send messages to others or for any other purposes.
- Students must not send threatening, bullying or harassing material.
- Students must not engage in sexually explicit or sexually suggestive material or correspondence.
- Avoid giving false or defamatory information about a person or organisation.
- Avoid identifying the school or exposing the logo without the written permission of the Head teacher.

Procedure in the event of Cyber-Bullying

1. All reports of Cyber-Bullying will be investigated, recorded, stored in the Head teacher's office and monitored regularly.
2. The Local Authority can provide support and assistance in dealing with incidents of Cyber-Bullying and can be contacted by staff and parents.
3. The police will be contacted in cases of actual or suspected illegal content.

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Saheeh Muslim

The Community

- We aim to share and celebrate success, fostering a sense of community and positive shared values.
- We aim to provide a positive and rewarding culture permeating every aspect of school life that enables students to achieve their potential.
- We hold celebration assemblies each term, have an active system of rewards for both behaviour and achievement and a tutorial system enabling one-to-one discussions between every student and their tutor at least twice each year.
- We hold regular whole-school and support individual charity events.

The Curriculum

- We have a developed programme in place to deal with the issues surrounding bullying in form time, whole school workshop, English and Drama.
- The curriculum is geared to help students of all abilities achieve success.

The full range of sanctions has been undertaken at Birchfield Independent Girls School to deal with instances of anti-social behaviour and bullying.

Respect

- We believe that it is important to treat students and colleagues with the same basic courtesy and respect that we would wish students to show to teachers and each other.
- Our Home / School Agreement states:
- Students will: ‘Support others and behave respectfully towards others.’
- Parents will: ‘Support the school behaviour policy to maintain a safe learning environment.’
- Staff and Governors will: ‘Support each student’s right to feel safe, cared for and respected.’
- Our Prefect System enables students to take an active part/role in school life. Many students have additional responsibilities as monitors, prefects, school council or head girl/secretary.

This policy was put together with the help of students, teachers, parents and governors.

It follows a whole school survey of bullying at Birchfield Independent Girls' School and several working groups of students putting together their ideas on how to counteract bullying in school.

Assemblies that deal specifically with bullying have been held and are planned as an ongoing theme in future. Students have been involved in presentations to Year 7 and 8, followed by workshops to help tackle bullying behaviour.

An anti-bullying poster competition was held in summer 2007. This will be repeated on an annual basis to maintain a high profile on the ongoing Anti-Bullying Policy.

Students will be producing a newsletter for students to help combat behaviour that leads to bullying and to provide support for those who are bullied. Students requested training to help other students being bullied.

Advice for Teachers – Expected Course of Action

When an incident is reported, listen, believe and act by:

- Recognising and defining the problem
- Completing a bully log and passing it to the form tutor
- Tutors receiving information directly from a student being bullied should check with the student to see if parents are aware (see advice to parents). If parents have already discussed the bullying with their child, tutors should ring back immediately or put a note in the Student Planner, confirming that the student has spoken with you and that you will be following it up. Agree a date by which you will contact parents again informing them on the course of action that will be taken.
- Form tutor consulting senior staff, joint decision on who will investigate further and carry out the follow up: (tutor, senior staff , head teacher or student mentor)
- Investigator interviewing bullied student again to collect further data, seeks agreement to involve parents / home, defines and decides with the bullied student the course of action. It is important that the student being bullied is enabled to feel in control of the decisions taken on the course of action.
- Investigator providing parents/guardians with information on helping their child at home and confirming course of action in school
- Investigator interviewing those involved (see later advice), informing parents/guardians and form tutors.
- Carrying out agreed course of action
- Informing bullied student, parents/guardians and tutor/s as agreed

- Form tutor and Investigator monitoring on a regular basis

Advice for Teachers – Dealing with Bullying

This approach depends on a commitment to the **desire to change behaviour** and not to punish an individual or group.

Interviews with suspected bullies must not be directly after an “incident” or the bullies will assume their victims has “grassed “ on them and could well make matters worse.

Arrange individual interviews with those suspected of bullying allowing 5 – 10 minutes for each interview.

The dialogue between the teacher and pupil is characterised as follows:

1. “I have brought you here because I have heard that you have been unkind/unpleasant/mean to X.
2. “What do you know about it?” Notice that there is **no accusation** at this point. The bully is able to blame other people if he/she wishes and to externalise the unpleasant behaviour.
3. “All right, we’ve talked it through for long enough.”
4. “What can you do to make X’s life more pleasant?” Here we encourage the bully to make two or three statements about his/her behaviour using the SMART method (specific, measurable, agreed, realistic, and time-related).
5. “That’s good! We shall meet again in a week’s time and see how things are going.”

The important stage is after question 2. Most bullies want to talk about how they have been sucked into a situation from which they cannot now extract themselves. Remember, this is **not an interrogation to uncover the guilt** of some miscreant. It is an attempt to change the patterns of behaviour in group interaction.

If we only want to stop the bullying, it is **not necessary to uncover the truth** behind the pupil’s statements about what has or has not happened. Often the truth is difficult to uncover and much valuable teacher time is misdirected at trying to uncover it.

The follow up to this series of interviews is **then to interview the person being bullied** after the bullies have outlined their future behaviour to check on **how well they are carrying out their suggested behaviour**.

The **interviews are repeated** until the teacher is satisfied that **behaviours have changed**. In this way we can change student’s behaviours towards each other without recourse to punishment. Should no change be forthcoming, the sanctions policy should be initiated.

Advice for Parents

Parents and families have an important role to play in helping schools deal with bullying.

Discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show them how to resolve the difficult situations without using violence or aggression. A wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten, upset or frighten anyone is viewed as bullying behaviour.

Watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents and families are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Don't dismiss it. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

How Bullying May Affect the Child

Although the presence of any of these symptoms may not imply that your child is being bullied, bullying as a cause of the changes in behaviour should not be overlooked.

Physical effects: stress – related physical symptoms including:

- Headaches /stomach aches / sore throats
- Changes in body weight
- Nausea / vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Sleeplessness / nightmares
- Bedwetting
- Depression

Emotional effects:

- Anger
- Anxiety / nervousness
- Humiliation / embarrassment
- Self blame / guilt
- Irritability
- Dread, powerlessness, fear
- Confusion

In the short term, these can result in:

- Isolation
- Loss of self – esteem / confidence
- Paranoia
- Loss of trust in the ability of adults to deal with problems
- Mood swings

In the long term this may lead to:

- Behaving badly
- Absenteeism / truancy
- Poor class marks
- Inability to concentrate
- Loss of friends

- Not fulfilling one's potential
- Ill health

If Your Child is being Bullied

Calmly talk with your child about his/her experience.

Make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened.

Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying.

Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should to tell the form tutor that day. Our registration period is at the end of the afternoon; encourage your child to stay behind at the end of the day to tell the form tutor what has happened.

Your child may be reluctant to 'tell' on the bullies for fear of reprisal. Reassure your child that, if we all work together – parents, teachers and children- we can overcome the problem. However, teachers must be made aware of the problem in order to act to help resolve it. Following the initial meetings and agreed course of action, further incidents of bullying will be dealt with in line with the school's sanction policy. At Birchfield Independent Girls School, we will exclude students for extreme or prolonged cases of bullying.

Seek your child's agreement for you to discuss the bullying with their tutor. It is important that your child knows what will happen and feels in control of the situation. Offer a choice: Your child can decide to tell the tutor and ask the tutor to contact you back to confirm that this has been done, or you will contact the tutor yourself.

Rehearse techniques with your child at home that will help deal with bullies. These may be provided from school staff or researched by your child and yourself together, from the library or the internet.

The Noble Prophet sallaa Allaahu Alaihe wa Sallam said:

"The similitude of the believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy is like that of one body, when one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever."

Saheeh Al Bukhaari

Consulting Teachers about Bullying

Try and stay calm – bear in mind that the tutor or Senior staffs may have no idea that your child is being bullied. Indeed, there may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.

Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened. Give dates, places and names of other children involved.

Make a note of the action the school intends to take. The incident may be referred on to a senior staff members or Head teacher, or to the Student Mentor (Mrs. Asma Boodi) who will contact you to inform you of the action to be taken in more detail.

An agreed course of discussions may take place which leads to changed behaviour by those bullying over several weeks. Keep the school informed: let them know (perhaps once a week) if things improve as well as if problems continue.

Teachers will ensure that their personal views and beliefs are not expressed in ways that exploit your child's vulnerability or might lead them to break the law and that they are not indoctrinated or unduly influenced by the promotion of partisan political views.

What Action can Parents Expect the School to Take?

We will aim to work with your child and yourselves in partnership. This might involve each of us in an agreed course of action.

We want all members of the school community to abide by the school's rule and behave with care, consideration and co-operation at all times. We may decide to set up a series of meetings with those involved in bullying to help the bullies change their behaviour. This may not involve sanctions in the first instance.

The parents of those involved in bullying may be asked to meet together with a member of staff, to discuss together ways in which the conflict between students may be resolved.

Students may be referred to the senior staff or Student Mentor to discuss ways in which to manage aggressive behaviour, behave assertively, or develop friendships.

Supporting the student may involve a series of techniques to practise at home to help deal with bullies and bullying behaviour.

In extreme cases of aggressive or anti-social behaviour, the school's sanction policy will be followed. Sanctions for those bullying include a senior detention, a day's isolation, social time isolation or a suspension, as deemed appropriate by the Head teacher.

If You Think Your Child is Bullying Other Children

Many children may be involved in bullying others at some time or other. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- They don't know it's wrong.
- They are copying elder brothers or sisters or other people in the family whom they admire.
- They haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends.
- Their friends encourage them to bully
- They are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings.

To Stop Your Child Bullying Others

Talk with your child; explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy.

Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.

Show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying.

Make an appointment to see your child's tutor or senior staff. Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing. Discuss with the teacher how you can work together to stop the bullying behaviour.

Regularly check with your child and ask how things are going at school.

Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he/she is co-operative or kind to other people.

If you are not satisfied:

Parents who feel that their concerns are not appropriately addressed should contact the senior staff or Head teacher.

Useful Internet Sites

The following are useful websites to educate oneself about bullying:

- www.scre.ac.uk
- www.kidscape.org.uk
- www.childline.org.uk
- www.dspcc.org.uk
- www.bullybeware.com
- www.antibullying.net
- www.bbc.co.uk/education
- www.bullying.co.uk
- www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying

Pupils also have access to the Muslim Youth helpline for free and confidential advice.

- Telephone – Call free on 0808 808 2008
- Live web chat – Click on the Need Help icon
- Email – Email help@myh.org.uk
- Post - Send a letter at: MYH FREEPOST RLZS-XJGE-JLBH
- Also: ChildLine can be contacted on 0800 1111, free of charge.

Advice for Students

Nearly everyone is bullied at some time in their lives: by brothers and sisters, by neighbours, by adults or by other children. If you are being bullied, you may feel scared, vulnerable and quite alone. You owe it to yourself to try to sort out the situation so that the bullying stops.

Remember: no-one deserves to be bullied.

It is surprising that all sorts of people — who are now very successful adults — were bullied when they were young. It is encouraging to know that it is possible to succeed, in spite of being tormented at school. All of these well-known people were bullied at school: Phil Collins, Harrison Ford, Mel Gibson, Tom Cruise, Michelle Pfeiffer, Frank Bruno and many others.

For some, the bullying went on for years; for others, it was less frequent. All of them feel that bullying is wrong. They know now that it was not their fault, but the fault of the bully who was looking for a victim.

Bullying hurts. It can make you feel scared and upset. The bullies can make you feel awful and that it is your fault.

You may feel that it is only happening to you. You may not want to tell anyone in case it makes matters worse.

At Birchfield Independent Girls School we will work with you to make sure that it does not make matters worse and we will follow up reported incidents until we are satisfied that the bullying has stopped.

How Can You Stop Bullying?

Firstly, you must tell us that you are being bullied. Talk to your form tutor, your parents or senior staff. Ask your parents to visit the school to discuss it with your tutor.

Teachers have to listen carefully and act when bullying is reported to them.

Tell them what has happened and that you feel you are being bullied.

Keep a diary of what has happened.

It is your right to ask for help from an adult. Agree with the adult what you want to happen.

Some Handy Tips When Dealing With People Who Bully You

Stand tall, look the bully in the eye, breathe deeply and speak calmly and with certainty.

Practise in front a mirror (or a friend) saying:

- “I don’t like it when you do that.”
- “I want you to leave me alone.”
- “I would like you to be quiet.”

- “I would like you to give me back my pencil.”
- “I would like you to

Start your sentences with a clear and firm “No”.

- “No, I don’t want to.”
- “No, I won’t lend you money.”
- “No I.....”(Make up your own line).

Keep looking the bully in the eye and repeat your statement, regardless of any arguments they may put forward. After three or four statements, walk away, keep your shoulders up, walking tall, and do not put your eyes to the ground.

Concentrate on thinking about positive things, people and places. Think about good times that you have enjoyed, people who care for you, places where you feel safe and things that you are good at.

Don’t Become Resigned To Being a Victim; You Can Help Yourself and Ask Others to Help You

Tell a friend what is happening:

Ask him, or her, to help you. It will be harder for the bully to pick on you if you have a friend with you for support.

Try to ignore the bullying, or say ‘No’ really firmly. Then turn and walk away

Don’t worry if people think you are running away. Remember, it is very hard for the bully to go on bullying someone who won’t stand still to listen.

Don’t fight back if you can avoid it

Most bullies are bigger and stronger than you. If you fight back you could make the situation worse, get hurt or be blamed for starting trouble.

It’s not worth getting hurt to keep possessions or money

If you feel threatened, give the bullies what they want. Property can be replaced. It helps to prove wrong doing, if a person is caught with someone else’s belongings.

Try to think up funny or clever replies in advance

Make a joke of it. Replies don’t have to be wonderfully brilliant or clever, but it helps to have an answer ready. Practise replies in the mirror at home. Using a prepared reply works best if the bully is not too threatening and just needs to be put off. The bully might just decide that you are too clever to pick on.

Try to avoid being alone in the places where you know the bully is likely to pick on you

This might mean changing your route to school, avoiding parts of the playground, or only using common rooms or toilets when other people are there. It’s not fair that you have to do this; but it might put the bully off.

Sometimes asking the bully to repeat what they said can put them off

Often bullies are not brave enough to repeat the remark exactly, so they tone it down. If they repeat it, you will have made them do something they hadn't planned on and this gives you some control of the situation.

Keep a diary of what is happening

Write down the details of the incidents and your feelings. When you do decide to tell someone, a written record of the bullying makes it easier to prove what has been going on.

What Action Can You Expect the School to Take?

- We will aim to work with you and your parents. This might involve each of us in an agreed course of action.
- We may decide to set up a series of meetings with those involved to help the bullies change their behaviour. The first steps may not include sanctions.
- The parents of those involved in bullying may be asked to meet together with a member of staff, to discuss the ways in which the problem between students may be resolved.
- You may be given a series of techniques to practise at home to help deal with bullies and bullying behaviour.
- In extreme cases of aggressive or anti-social behaviour, the school's sanction policy will be followed. Sanctions for those bullying include a senior detention, a day's isolation, social time isolation, a warning meeting with a governor or an exclusion.

Our Civil Treaty - Some Year 7 Suggestions

- Admit when you have done something wrong - then put it right
- If you can not make friends, stay away
- No filthy looks or nasty comments to other people's friends
- Be civil, say 'Hello' and 'Good-bye'
- Find your own space
- Do not jump on the bandwagon and gossip
- Involve teachers when you need help
- Do not take sides, be friends with everyone
- Recognise that everyone is entitled to the same respect
- No bitching, secrets or gossiping
- Think before you speak or act
- Do not jump to conclusions

Beat the Bullies

Everyone has the right to be safe and happy at school—if this is not true for you because of bullying, we want to know about it. Everyone has a part to play in preventing bullying and keeping Birchfield Independent Girls School a place where students want to attend. If you know of, or have witnessed bullying, we want to hear about it, so that we can help stop it.

Abu Hurairah (radhi Allaahu anhu) reported:

The Prophet (sallaa Allaahu alaihe wa sallam) said: *"He who has done a wrong affecting his brother's honour or anything else, let him ask his forgiveness today before the time (i.e., the Day of Resurrection) when he will have neither a dinar nor a dirham. If he has done some good deeds, a portion equal to his wrong doings will be subtracted from them; but if he has no good deeds, he will be burdened with the evil deeds of the one he had wronged in the same proportion".*

Saheeh Al-Bukhari

This document was produced on January 2022 and is due to be reviewed on January 2024.

Signed (Chair)..... Date.....

Print Name..... Date of next review.....

Head Teacher.....