



CATERHAM PREPARATORY SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

PHILOSOPHY AND AIMS

Caterham School seeks to be one of the country's finest co-educational schools, providing an education for life in a caring environment based upon Christian values.

We are a School with a strong Christian ethos, providing a sound foundation for boys and girls in a warm and friendly environment. We aim to maintain a high academic standard but also to encourage pupils to make the most of all the opportunities open to them in other areas of school life.

We believe in helping pupils to become balanced and interesting people, with the intellectual freedom to be creative, the confidence to initiate and the resilience to cope with adversity.

The act of bullying can make the difference between a positive, fulfilled school experience, which is one of our core values, and a negative, damaging one. We at Caterham will not tolerate bullying in any form; whilst we recognise that bullying can occur, our aim is to deal with any issues in a firm and sensitive way.

Definition

Bullying comes in many different forms and can be described as being 'deliberate and sustained acts done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can be a series of such frightening incidents which cast a shadow over a child's life.'

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include,

- physical (including sexual) assault.
- verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing or making offensive remarks.
- cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group in a way that is intended to upset others. Examples include using social websites, mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, video and e-mail.
- indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours.

Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidatory but is often hidden and subtle. It includes actions or comments that are racist, religious or cultural, homophobic, sexist, sexual or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape).

The seriousness of bullying cannot be emphasised enough. Bullying is among the top concerns that parents have about their children's safety and well-being at and on the way to and from school. Bullying is also a top concern of children and young people themselves. Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self esteem; and destroys their sense of security. Bullying impacts on its victims' attendance and attainment at school,

marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives. At worst, bullying has been a factor in pupil suicide.

It is acknowledged that bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and may well need help. It should also be recognised that the consequences of being allowed to 'get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victim. All pupils deserve the opportunity to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment, assault and threatening behaviour.

So why do bullies behave in this way?

Often children who behave in this way are used to that form of behaviour and consider it part of social interaction. Often lacking in self-esteem, the child can believe that bullying is one form of achieving status amongst his peer group, as other avenues for achieving status may not be available to him. The bully will need our help and current research supports the view that bullying is not simply a discipline issue. It is also important to recognise that the bully may decide, once exposed, to take his own surreptitious revenge. The situation therefore needs to be carefully and sensitively explored and a monitoring process put in place. Our intention at Caterham is that the behaviour pattern is broken at an early stage thus helping to prevent such anti-social and damaging behaviour in later life.

Who are the victims?

Anyone can be a victim of bullying and no one ever 'asks for it'. The child will need support in understanding what is happening and in dealing with the situation. The child must know that he is being listened to and taken seriously. The child must feel assured that school provides a safe and secure environment for everyone.

Self –awareness and empathy

Initially, both parties will need to spend some time separately discussing the issues involved with the Form Tutor. The bully will need to consider the effect he is having on others and thus develop the ability to empathise with others.

How does Caterham Preparatory School deal with bullying?

The ethos of the School should provide an atmosphere of trust and respect. This should exist between teachers and pupils and between the pupils themselves. Children must never feel humiliated or be made to feel inadequate. In such an environment, bullying can be brought to the attention of staff either by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people.

The School will raise awareness of the staff through training and take action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur.

What does the school do to prevent such incidents?

- ❑ Two members of staff are on duty at morning break (four in Pre-Prep) and also at lunchtime, after school and at the end of the day. At the Pre-Prep the same applies for the whole day with the exception of dismissal at the end of the day, where the class teacher hands the children over to parents on a one-to-one basis.
- ❑ Form tutors, class teachers and break time supervisors are all available for the children should they have issues to discuss.
- ❑ Events logged in the Incident Books are openly discussed at regular staff briefings.
- ❑ PSHCE sessions are used to promote good relationships between peers and encourage open discussion in a safe environment.
- ❑ Assemblies and House events reinforce the importance of friendship and respect throughout the school.
- ❑ Various displays contain diverse sources of information that promote the values of cooperation, friendship and respect for other people's values.

What is the procedure for dealing with bullying?

If it is communicated to a member of staff that a child is being bullied Caterham follows these steps:

- ❑ Discussion at length with the 'victim', who will be afforded patience, understanding and the ability to listen, believe and act. This takes place with the Form Tutor or an adult the child feels comfortable with. The Form Tutor must be kept informed. In the Pre-Prep this is usually the class teacher or member of staff on duty. It is essential that the class teacher be informed as soon as possible.
- ❑ Identify the concerns of parties involved and gather as much information as possible, taking into account both viewpoints.
- ❑ Inform the Deputy Head, who is available to support staff with an issue at any time. At the Pre-Prep issues are usually more easily dealt with by the class teacher, who keeps the Head of Pre-Prep informed. If parents are invited into school to discuss the situation, both class teacher and the Head of Pre-Prep will be present.
- ❑ Meet with the child identified as the bully. Discuss the situation as presented to you with the 'bully' and listen to their views and thoughts.
- ❑ If they agree with the scenario proposed by the victim, the member of staff will discuss the issue with the children concerned and use a sanction as they see appropriate. If the child disputes the information from the 'victim' investigate the situation further, by involving the Deputy Head, meet with the concerned parties on both sides and gather further information from other witnesses.
- ❑ Parents of both parties should be informed **if the incident seems serious enough**. This is a sensitive area and should be discussed with the Deputy Head, **beforehand**, if possible.
- ❑ Should the above measures fail to resolve the situation, the Headteacher will have the power to suspend, and ultimately exclude, a bully from the school community.

Monitoring

Staff, at morning break and lunch break, monitor any situation and inform all staff of any issues. Depending on the severity of the incident, the Form Tutor or Deputy Head will work with both parties to ensure there is no repetition of the undesired behaviour.

There is an opportunity for staff to review the behaviour of the children at separate departmental meetings where pupil-focused sessions take place. This is more formally organised in the Prep Department as the children do have contact with many different members of staff, all of whom may have contributions to make.

There are 'Behaviour Incident Books' located in the Prep and Pre-Prep staff rooms, where staff record any disputes detailing the main issue raised, pupils involved and action taken. The Deputy Head (Prep) and Head of Pre-Prep monitor these records on a regular basis.

In the Prep School, in the case that the above procedures do not stop incidences of bullying, the Deputy Head will draw up a contract, in the presence of the 'bully' and 'victim'. The contract will state what behaviour will be acceptable in the future and will be signed by the 'bully' and 'victim', as well as by the 'bully's' parents. Copies must be placed in the children's' files in the School Office. The Deputy Head will meet weekly with the children concerned, over a period of 4-6 weeks, or longer if necessary, when progress made will be discussed. Praise will be given to the 'bully' when patterns of behaviour are changed.