



# Ilford County High School

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(December 2020)

The adoption of this policy was approved by the Governing Body on:	10.12.20
Signed by the Chair of Governing Body:	
Next review date for this policy:	Autumn 2021

Policy prepared by: Mr V Murdock

## **Policy Statement**

The aim of this policy is to prevent bullying of any kind and ensure that students can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour that impacts everyone within a school community. It is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at ICCHS. Everyone in the school community has responsibility to report any incident of bullying that is brought to attention. Any reports of bullying will always be taken seriously, logged and investigated. The school will also respond to bullying reports that happen outside of the school premises in circumstances such as journeys to and from school, external trips, lunch and after school clubs. Unwanted, unkind and inappropriate comments made either in person or via any social media platform will be explored further. We will liaise with outside agencies, such as Social Services, the Police and local authority support services as appropriate.

All members of the school community including teaching and support staff, students and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is, be familiar with the school policy and take responsibility for enforcing its principles. Every person at ICCHS is entitled to feel safe and secure within the environment of our school. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that this is possible so that all stakeholders are in a position to maximise the educational and pastoral opportunities offered. The intention of this policy is to support members of the ICCHS community when faced with bullying and, more importantly, to prevent it occurring.

This policy is formulated in line with current DfE Guidance – Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies (November 2014) and Keeping Students Safe in Education (September 2016) and should be read in conjunction with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy (March 2017).

We expect our students to work to the best of their ability, in a cohesive manner, with complete focus in order to create a positive learning environment.

## **Definition of Bullying**

At ICCHS we see bullying as:

***“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”***

ICCHS will not tolerate peer on peer abuse as ‘banter’ or ‘part of growing up’ and any individuals who experience unacceptable behaviour will be supported.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include but are not limited to:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online /cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion
- Indirect - Can include the exploitation of individuals.

Continued:

- Physical (including sexual) assault
- Verbal abuse – name calling; teasing or making offensive remarks
- Deliberate isolation of an individual leading to indirect emotional tormenting by exclusion from social groups or spreading malicious rumours
- Acts of extortion such as material blackmail or cheating in relation to money
- Pressing/Coercing a person to do something they do not wish to do
- Cyber bullying – using IT, Digital devices or electronic based resources inappropriately

### **Cyber bullying**

Examples of unacceptable cyber behaviour include:

- Abusive comments, rumours, gossip and threats made using digital communications and/or technologies - this includes internet trolling
- Sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause harm or humiliation
- Hacking into someone's email, phone or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send hurtful content while posing as that person
- Creating dedicated websites that intend to harm, make fun of someone or spread malicious rumours
- Blackmailing or pressuring someone to do something they do not want to such as sending images, documents, copies of protected exam papers

### **Who gets bullied?**

Students and young people can be targeted for many reasons, bullying is often:

- Racist: Bullying based on ethnicity, skin colour, language, religious or cultural practices
- Homophobic: Discrimination based on sexuality and/or gender identity and/or identify as LGBTQ
- Sexual: Unwelcome sexual advances or remarks that are intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation. This could include pressure to send images of a sexual nature
- Disability based: The bullying of students who have special educational needs and disabilities
- Based on 'difference': Bullying based on any real or perceived difference. This can include, but is not limited to factors surrounding the way someone looks or dresses, hobbies and interests, family set up, social behaviour, social economic background
- Towards individuals from the Travelling community

Bystanders can prevent bullying by:

- Reporting the incident to a trusted teacher or adult (this can be done anonymously)
- Disagreeing with the type of bullying behaviour and making it clear their behaviour is not acceptable
- Supporting a group of peers to stand up to those who use bullying behaviour and report the incident
- Not isolating anyone and offering to befriend all students who may appear lonely

### **What is NOT bullying?**

- One-off incidents: *Bullying is persistent and repetitive, and generally fits a pattern of behaviour.* (There may be occasions when a one-off incident is so significant that it causes long term effects, and it is therefore categorised as bullying e.g. extreme public humiliation that deters someone from engaging in discussions or social events)
- Mutual conflict: A disagreement, argument or fight in which both parties have equally participated and where there is no imbalance of power.

### **The signs of bullying**

Students do not always ask directly for help or discuss their concerns openly. When bullying is involved, they may feel at fault or anticipate there will be negative repercussions if they tell an adult. Changes in a student's behaviour and body language cannot indicate for certain that bullying is happening. However, the following signs are indicators something may be wrong:

- Unexplained injuries
- Lost or broken possessions
- Low self-esteem
- A loss of friends
- Withdrawing from social situations
- Change in attitude or behaviour
- Difficulty sleeping or bed wetting
- Truancy or feigning sickness
- Declining grades and a lack of interest in school
- Self-destructive behaviour
- Refusal to talk about what is wrong

A number of the signs outlined above can be indicators linked to safeguarding or a child protection issues. All teaching and support staff must be aware how the behaviours can be signals and if witnessed, must be investigated further.

### **Students who are bullied are more likely to:**

- Have low self-esteem
- Develop depression or anxiety
- Become socially withdrawn, isolated and lonely
- Have lower academic achievements due to avoiding or becoming disengaged with school
- Be unable to form trusting, healthy relationships with friends or partners in the future

### **Students who use bullying behaviour are more likely to:**

- Drop out of, or be at risk of exclusion
- Engage in criminal behaviour
- Be abusive towards their spouse, sexual partners or children as adults
- Develop depression or anxiety

### **Students who witness bullying are more likely to:**

- Feel powerless
- Live in fear and guilt

### **Schools that do not take significant action against bullying are more likely to:**

- Create a negative environment based on a culture of fear and disrespect
- Have poor student engagement, staff retention and parent satisfaction
- Give students the impression that teachers have little control and do not care
- Instil insecurity, low self-esteem and lack of ambition in their students
- Fail in inspiring students to reach their full academic potential

The seriousness of bullying cannot be emphasised enough. Bullying is among the top concerns that parents/carers have about their child's safety and wellbeing, both at school and on the journey to and from school. Bullying is also a major concern of students and it makes the person experiencing bullying's life miserable; undermines their confidence and self-esteem; destroys their sense of security and can be psychologically damaging. Bullying impacts on the individual's attendance and attainment at school and marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies. It can have a lifelong negative impact on some young peoples' lives. At worst, bullying has been a factor in student suicide.

It is acknowledged individuals who bully 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 the individual experiencing bullying behaviour. Therefore, all students deserve the opportunity to understand what acceptable behaviour is. ICHS students are educated through Personal Development, PSHEE, assemblies and other lessons (such as role play in English, E-Safety in Computing, and positive leadership, teamwork and influence in PE) to raise awareness of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice. Some students also engage in mentoring, peer mentoring, support sessions for anger management and external counselling if there is a need identified by the intervention team. There is also a staff presence in corridors during changeover times between lessons, at break time and during lunchtimes to support and supervise all students. Senior staff provide a visible presence during every break and lunchtime with the support of lunch supervisors and/or student leadership team.

### **ICHS Procedures**

Students should report bullies and bullying activities to a responsible adult. This could be their Form Tutor, Head of Student Development or Director of Student Development, a trusted teacher, a member of support staff or a senior leader. The way to stamp out bullying is for people to be aware of the issues involved and be clear in their own minds on the correct action to take.

If you are the individual experiencing bullying behaviour and you feel able, you should:

- Confront the bully by verbally making him aware that you think what he is doing is wrong
- Share your feelings with someone else
- If possible, speak to a member of staff, your Form Tutor, Head of House or a trusted adult about your concerns
- If you would rather not go straight to a member of staff, talk to your friends, a mentor, student leader or any trusted adult as they may well be able to advise you on the appropriate course of action or involve other people who can.

You can also report any bullying anonymously through the - [\*\*stopbullying@ichs.org.uk\*\*](mailto:stopbullying@ichs.org.uk) e-mail address

If you witness bullying behaviour:

- Support the victim by offering your friendship and make it clear that, in your opinion, what is happening to them is wrong
- Encourage the victim to speak out on their own behalf by confronting the bully or, with their permission, confront the bully yourself
- Take the victim to a trusted adult or suggest that you see their Head of Student Development or Director of Student Development
- You may want to report the incident on their behalf

You can also report any bullying anonymously through the - [stopbullying@ichs.org.uk](mailto:stopbullying@ichs.org.uk) e-mail address

Getting an individual to report a particular bullying offence is likely to be the biggest problem encountered. All staff should be vigilant regarding possible bullying and should take the initiative to act if bullying is suspected. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous; feigning illness; taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

All members of staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and should, in accordance with school policy, act promptly and firmly against it. In the vast majority of bullying incidents, most students know that what is taking place is wrong. Sometimes people, either through lethargy, peer group pressure or tacit support for what is occurring, fail to take action. Experience has shown that students are likely to fear that reporting bullying will result both in the bully finding out, and thus in an increased frequency and severity of the bullying, and that any staff action towards the bullying will be incomplete and ineffective. Staff must respect these fears, address them honestly and ensure that they are not realised. Approaches can be made on individual, group or year levels.

All members of staff have a role to play in preventing and challenging bullying. When dealing with incidents staff should:

- Make themselves fully aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy
- Investigate all incidents thoroughly and discuss with DOSD
- Liaise with the relevant Head of Student Development
- Support the student(s) involved and ensure there is no safeguarding issues as a result of the incident
- Identify individual(s) responsible for the bullying behaviour, such as the ringleader, associates and bystanders
- Inform students that all details of the incident will be passed onto the relevant member of the pastoral team
- Keep careful records the incident, add to ClassCharts with the action taken and provide a copy of this for the relevant HOSD or DOSD

All staff are responsible for:

- Investigating and monitoring incidents of bullying
- Recording all incidents of reported bullying and ensuring the pastoral team are made aware
- Keeping the Pastoral team informed as they will keep a central log of all complaints or incidences of bullying and record the way in which they were dealt with
- Liaising with other members of staff and parents
- Keeping detailed and accurate records of meetings
- Promoting the Anti-Bullying Policy during assemblies

- Ensuring delivery of the pastoral programme through form time, which will include education in topics linked to the Anti-Bullying Policy
- Acting as role models to others within the school in how they treat others

Staff should never ignore suspected bullying and must not make premature assumptions. It is good practice to listen carefully to all accounts in order to distinguish the facts and to be particularly vigilant with collective statements when tackling a group bullying situation. Staff should adopt a problem-solving approach, which moves students on from justifying or vindicating themselves. DOSD, HOSD and Form Tutors should follow up repeatedly to check the bullying has not resumed. Some claims of bullying may turn out to be false or exaggerated. Nonetheless, all claims of bullying should be treated seriously and not dismissed without further enquiries being made.

### **Individual approaches**

On an individual level, suspected individuals who may have experienced bullying behaviour should be approached discreetly not to arouse suspicions from other students, ensuring anonymity of the individual. Once engaged in a professionally discrete environment, the student should be informed that staff suspect he is being bullied and information is necessary before action can be taken. The individual who may have experienced bullying will be interviewed on his own by the appropriate member of staff. The individual will be asked to write an immediate account of events. The process of dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. The individual will also be given the opportunity to discuss their own reactions and behaviour towards the bully. The individual will be asked to share any evidence or digital content (e.g. screenshots) that they possess in relation to the bullying incident. The individual will be given support, advice and an offer of counselling (if appropriate, and after discussion with their parents). Counselling is dependent on specialist services being available.

The suspected bully(s) of bullying behaviour will be interviewed on his/their own by a member of staff e.g. Form Tutor. DOSD or HOSD. The individual(s) responsible for the bullying behaviour will be given the opportunity to discuss their own reactions and behaviour towards the individual. The individual (s) is/are likely to have any digital devices searched (in-line with our Behaviour and Discipline Policy) in order to obtain any digital content (e.g. screenshots) that they possess in relation to the bullying incident. Once the appropriate member of staff or DOSD/HOSD are clear that a bullying offence has been committed, they will collate statements, any digital evidence and complete an investigation summary form which will be reviewed by a senior member of staff before any sanctions are implemented.

### **Group approaches**

General "bullying" issues can be discussed in Form Time or can be made the subject of Personal Development lessons or assemblies. This may result in further information being shared by students with staff. The use of the anti-bullying box for physical notes (located by the entrance to the Main Hall) and the [stopbullying@ichs.org.uk](mailto:stopbullying@ichs.org.uk) reporting system is to be encouraged for students in all year groups and will be publicised through house assemblies and displays. The victims of bullying themselves can choose to use this, or friends that are concerned of ongoing situations may choose to inform staff using this system as it provides anonymity.

### **House/Year team approaches**

If it is suspected that bullying is a problem in a particular year or house group, we will hold a separate house or year group assembly. The assembly will be led by a senior member of staff and relevant members of the pastoral team.

### **Involving parents**

We recognise that parental support is a key to the success of anti-bullying initiatives. Therefore, the school will:

- Regularly consult and communicate with parents
- Provide information about the nature and effects of bullying
- Advise parents of possible consequences of their child being involved in bullying
- Alert parents to suspicions of bullying if they arise

The first point of contact for parents to report bullying is likely to be the school office. The office will assess the concerns and contact the Form Tutor or DOSD. Should the issue be deemed as requiring an immediate response, in line with child protection procedures, a senior member of staff will lead on any investigation. Parents may also use the [stopbullying@ichs.org.uk](mailto:stopbullying@ichs.org.uk) e-mail system to report concerns.

### **Good practice includes:**

- Recognising that the parent may be upset
- Keeping an open mind as bullying can be difficult to detect
- Remaining calm and understanding
- Making clear that the school does care and that something will be done
- Explaining the school policy, making sure procedures are followed
- Asking for details and record the information
- Making a further appointment to explain actions and find out if it has stopped
- Following up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken and that school policy has been implemented
- Maintaining communication until the situation is resolved

### **Consequences and sanctions**

Where students have been involved in bullying incidents, sanctions will be rigorously applied, and we will expect parents to support the school in enforcing its rights and responsibilities when dealing with unacceptable behaviour. All homophobic, sexist, disablist and racist incidents will be permanently recorded on student files and will be added to our central records.

Sanctions have three main purposes, namely to:

1. Impress on the individual that what he has done is unacceptable
2. Deter him from repeating that behaviour
3. Signal to other students this type of behaviour is unacceptable and promote positive behaviour

Sanctions might include:

- Removal from the group (in class)
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- Withholding participation in any school trip or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum
- House detention
- School (Senior Staff) detention
- Inclusion

- Temporary placement in another educational establishment (school, respite unit or pupil referral unit)
- Fixed period exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

The following guidelines will be used when dealing with **persistent** bullying:

**An initial sanction will be delivered to the bully.** A copy of this sanction will be communicated via a telephone call or a letter to parents/carers and will be recorded on the student's school file. Any possible special educational needs of the individual who uses bullying behaviour will be assessed or reviewed at the next intervention group meeting and, if appropriate, provision will be made for additional support. Individuals will be made aware of the consequences of their behaviour for their future lives.

**Inclusion (Isolation)/exclusion from school for a period of time.** Parents/carers will be informed. A copy of this sanction will be communicated via a telephone call and a letter to parents/carers and will be recorded on the student's school file. At the end of inclusion (Isolation)/exclusion the student, accompanied by a parent/carers, will attend an interview with the Assistant Headteacher and Director of Student Development. The student will be placed on an Orange report for a 1-week period which will also include a final review meeting with the Assistant Headteacher. Any possible special educational needs of the individual will be assessed or reviewed at the next intervention group meeting and, if appropriate, provision will be made for additional support.

**Longer period of exclusion or permanent exclusion from school.** Parents/carers will be informed. A copy of this sanction will be communicated via a telephone call and a letter to parents/carers and will be recorded on the student's school file. If the student is re-admitted at the end of the exclusion the student, accompanied by a parent/carers, will attend an interview with the Assistant Headteacher and Director of Student Development. The student will be placed on a Red report for a 2-week period which will also include both an interim and a final review meeting with the Assistant Headteacher. Any possible special educational needs of the individual will be assessed or reviewed at the next intervention group meeting and, if appropriate, provision will be made for additional support. If an individual serves a fixed term exclusion and then re-offends, they **will be at serious risk of permanent exclusion**.

These are minimum sanctions and each incident will be judged on its own merits, alongside a review of the individual's prior conduct. In very serious cases it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or Social Services. However, it is the policy of the school to attempt to resolve such issues internally, using our own disciplinary sanctions, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal offence has been committed. Any bullying offence involving a crime (e.g. demands for money) will be reported to the Police. Where serious violence is involved, the Headteacher will normally permanently exclude the student. Any retaliation by an individual (s) or person appointed by the individual against any other student whom the individual suspects of having provided information which has led to his punishment, will result in an immediate exclusion from school pending consideration of permanent exclusion.

### **Staff awareness and training**

The school will raise awareness of the policy through training and take action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur. The key points from this policy will be discussed with students during assemblies and tutor periods. It will also be reinforced in other areas of the curriculum as opportunities present themselves. Staff will be briefed and will attend relevant training related to behaviour management, anti-bullying, child protection and

digital technologies as part of our annual schedule. Senior staff will provide annual updates to parents on digital technologies through the newsletter or via Class Charts, home school links meetings and other appropriate networks. The appointed governor will include this policy for review annually in-line with other policies implemented by the school.

### **References and links**

This policy will be e-mailed to parents, available for download on the school website and available in hard copy upon request. This policy links to:

- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equalities Act 2010
- DfE Guidance – Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies (November 2014)
- DfE Guidance - Keeping Students Safe in Education (September 2016)
- ICHS Equality and Diversity Policy
- ICHS Sex and Relationships Policy
- ICHS Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- ICHS E-Safety Policy

### **Some useful outside agencies**

Kidscape	0207 7303300	<a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a>	@kidscape facebook.com/kidscapecharity
Childline	08001111	<a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a>	facebook.com/childline
Anti-bullying Alliance		<a href="http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk">www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk</a>	@ABAonline
Ditch the Label		<a href="http://www.ditchthelabel.org">www.ditchthelabel.org</a>	@DitchtheLabel

# Appendix

• - Discuss with any teacher you feel comfortable with

- Email us at [stopbullying@ichs.org.uk](mailto:stopbullying@ichs.org.uk)

• - Let us know what's going on anonymously by using the anti-bullying box outside of the Main Hall



## Useful websites

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/>

<http://www.standupfoundation-uk.org/>

<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

<https://bulliesout.com/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

<https://www.bullying.co.uk/>

**ILFORD  
COUNTY  
IS ANTI-  
BULLYING**

# We...

## INCLUDE OTHERS.

All pupils, regardless of physical, mental, intellectual, social, religious and cultural characteristics are celebrated for their contribution to the school and wider Society. The world would be a lot more boring if we were all the same!

## CAN IDENTIFY WHAT BULLYING IS.

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of someone by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It doesn't matter whether bullying occurs face to face or online – either way, it is wrong.

# We...

## HEAR YOU.

Every member of staff is here to listen and support you to prevent and report bullying. We will investigate everything that is reported; whether that's face to face to a teacher, privately via the anti-bullying box outside of the Main Hall or online at [stopbullying@ichs.org.uk](mailto:stopbullying@ichs.org.uk).

## STAND TOGETHER.

We will work with you, parents, carers and other members of staff to formulate an appropriate response to bullying. Sanctions for bullying can vary from an SLT detention to permanent exclusion. We will do whatever we can to make the school a safe and happy place for everyone, but we need your support too...

## AT ICHS WE...

- INCLUDE OTHERS
- CAN IDENTIFY WHAT BULLYING IS
- HEAR YOU
- STAND TOGETHER