

Anti-bullying Policy

Mutual respect is one of our core values and we are determined to maintain a safe, calm and happy learning environment. We actively promote values of mutual respect, equality and integrity, and work to ensure that differences and diversity are celebrated across an inclusive school community.

Such experiences can affect your personal performance at school and may cause you unnecessary upset; this is what we aim to eradicate.

Bullying is a form of behaviour that is not tolerated in this school; it can include persistent teasing and physical and mental bullying. The school is keen to work together, as a team, to eradicate the occasional incidents of bullying that occur, and uphold our school ethos and core values, in particular integrity and mutual respect.

There is never a good reason to bully somebody, and this makes us, as a school, determined to deal with this unacceptable form of behaviour and also challenge derogatory language and prejudice-based incidents such as one-off unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards an individual or group.

It will not be tolerated whether it takes place in school or travelling to and from school or at home.

The start of the problem

Bullying can take the form of:

- Psychological intimidation, e.g. deliberately ignoring or excluding people, whispers, sniggers, noises and other types of behaviour that makes the victim feel uncomfortable.
- Unpleasant text messages, e-mails, and telephone calls.
- Unpleasant comments on social networking sites e.g. snapchat, instagram or facebook.
- Extortion, e.g. taking property, demanding money, property or services.
- Physical abuse, e.g. hitting, pushing, spitting, ruining work and any other action that could cause physical injury.
- Attacking property, such as damaging, stealing or hiding someone's possessions
- Verbal abuse, e.g. name calling, spreading rumours about someone, using derogatory or offensive language or threatening someone

Bullying is normally undertaken persistently. It is not always obvious to others and can appear to be harmless to the bully. However, the victim can be very disturbed by bullying, although no emotions are shown. Retaliation to bullying is not acceptable, as the problem is normally then made worse.

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- Race
- Religion or belief
- Culture or class
- Gender (sexist, homophobic or biphobic bullying, and transphobic bullying)
- Special Educational Needs or Disability
- Appearance or health conditions
- Home or personal circumstances

What to do?

No form of bullying will be tolerated and all incidents will be taken seriously. All incidents of bullying need to be reported, no matter how small. The school will investigate all incidents of bullying that are reported, and record them. It is, however, difficult to investigate and deal with incidents of bullying that are not reported.

The person with whom the problem is discussed needs to be someone who the victim can trust. To make you feel more comfortable, the Anti-bullying Committee are there to help. Within the school there are many people willing to listen to problems regarding bullying; the list of people to whom you can talk is endless; parents, teachers, anti-bullying representatives, sixth formers, and bus prefects. There is an email account set up within the school – [‘antibullying@queenelizabeths.co.uk’](mailto:antibullying@queenelizabeths.co.uk) – whereby students can express any issues without initially having to speak to anyone directly.

Students may also call Childline to speak to someone in confidence on 0800 1111.

Do not feel bad about reporting incidents of bullying, it is the right thing to do in reporting the problem. You are not being weak by involving an adult, on the contrary, reporting a bully is an act of someone who is brave, strong and mature. Remember that a bully is a person with a problem who needs help. If you do not report the incident the bully will hurt more people. So you won't just be helping yourself, but someone else who isn't as strong willed as you.

Cyber bullying in particular can cause cases which students may find hard to deal with. It is important to remember that there is always someone who you can talk to with regards to this issue. People can use the internet in many ways to bully, including making themselves anonymous to anyone with whom they speak. Therefore, without police involvement, it is almost impossible to find the source of the abuse. If this is the case, the victim or anyone else aware of the problem must tell someone. Do not think because the bully is anonymous that nothing can be done. In these cases it would also be helpful to take a screenshot or have some kind of evidence showing the bullying to help get to the bottom of the problem.

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic comments are unacceptable at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, for example 'that's so gay', referring to a bisexual person as 'greedy', calling someone a 'tranny'. Every student is welcome at our school and all should be treated with respect.

Similarly, sexist language such as 'Don't be such a girl' is not acceptable,

What will happen next?

The school will investigate and record all incidents of bullying that are reported, whilst keeping information confidential and, where possible, anonymous. The teacher concerned will agree the action to be taken with the pupils concerned and the victim's position will always be respected. They are in control of the situation. The school will, however, try to pro-actively respond to the bully who is likely to need support.

Incidents of bullying arise from different circumstances and therefore the action taken will be adapted appropriately to the situation. Because no incidents of bullying are the same, no punishments can be fixed. The member of staff dealing with the incident will decide the punishment given.

The school is committed to dealing with bullying and will take whatever action is necessary to stop it, including exclusion.

Putting a stop to bullying should be everybody's responsibility, not just the victims'. If you see someone being bullied, or know that it is going on, behave as you'd want others to behave if you were in their situation, tell someone what is going on. If you are friends with a bully, talk to them about why they bully others, and try to let them know it is not right, even if you're scared of them. The main thing to remember is that no one has a right to make anyone else's life a misery.

Based on Policy drawn up by Anti-bullying Captains and updated in March 2018