ANTI BULLYING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

DEFINITION
(from DfE Non-Statutory advice "Prevention and Tackling Bullying" 2014)

'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case. '

All forms of child-on-child abuse fall into this category.

Bullying can be related to:
• race, religion or culture
• radicalisation
• special educational needs or disabilities
• appearance or health conditions
• sexual orientation: homophobic, sexist or sexual bullying
• young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances

Bullying includes:
- Physical: name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing or taking belongings
- Cyber: social media, mobile 'phones, text messages, photographs and email
- Verbal: name calling, sexist, racist and homophobic remarks, and other discriminatory language
- Indirect: cyber-bullying, spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups
- Inappropriate text messaging and emailing, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet
- Producing offensive graffiti
- Gossiping, excluding people from groups, and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- 'Initiation ceremonies' intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation
- Pressure to follow extremist activities/views

1. **AIMS**

Students and staff should understand that bullying is never acceptable whether on the School site, at extracurricular activities or on trips. Adcote wishes to create an environment where independence is celebrated and individuals can flourish without fear. Everyone has the right to be safe and happy in school, and to be protected when feeling vulnerable. When it occurs, Adcote aims to deal promptly and effectively with bullying.

2. **PREVENTION**

Following these guidelines will help to prevent bullying:
• Ensuring students know what is meant by bullying through education in PSHE lessons, form time and assemblies
• Creating a school atmosphere in which students know that they are listened to and that their problems are taken seriously
•Maintaining a level of understanding which will prevent bullying ever happening
•Consistency in the way the School deals with allegations of bullying

•Taking any claims of bullying seriously and investigating them promptly
•Treating cases of bullying as a breach of conduct as stated in the School Rules. Serious cases of bullying can result in expulsion.
This will normally be done by the Deputy Head who will then report to the Head. The situation will then be closely monitored with follow up meetings.

3. POSSIBLE SIGNS OF BULLYING

The school recognises the seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage and even suicide (although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour). Students being bullied may demonstrate emotional and/or behaviour problems including signs of depression, physical problems such as headaches and stomach pains, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff
Our staff will:
• Foster in our students self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others.
• Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our students.
• Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every student learns about the damage it causes to both the student who is bullied, and to the bully, and the importance of telling a member of staff about bullying when it happens.
• Where appropriate, deal with the topic of bullying in the curriculum, exploring why it happens, looking at alternative ways of behaving and dealing with difficulties.
• Use teaching methods which encourage cooperative work and a variety of groupings so that students extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.
• Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality and promote equality and tolerance of others.
• Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
• Be particularly alert with behaviour in the playground, changing rooms, boarding houses and during free time.
• Listen to students who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
• Report suspected cases of bullying to the Assistant Head Pastoral and/or Deputy Head.
• Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
• Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively. Record all incidents in writing on CPOMS and inform the Assistant Head, Deputy Head or Head. Parents will be involved if appropriate.

Students
• Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
• Intervene to protect the student who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.
• Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:
• Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

Parents
We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:
• Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.

- Advising their children to report any bullying to their Personal Tutor/ Head of Boarding, Assistant Head Pastoral or Deputy Head, and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other students.
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying ad informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied, and for the bullies themselves.

5. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

• Personal Tutor/Assistant Head Pastoral to investigate all involved. This includes both the bullied, student or students who have been accused of bullying and any students who may have been witnesses.
•Some cases prove to be little more than a misunderstanding, and generally clear guidance as to the standards of behaviour expected will suffice. It may also be appropriate to investigate more closely any underlying reason for the bully behaving as they did.
•If it is suspected that a child is suffering significant harm, the case will be referred to the Local Safeguarding Board. In this instance, both bullied and bullying students are likely to be classed as 'at risk'.
•Support to be offered to both the bullied and the bullying students (See section on Student Support)
•Records to be kept at all stages and logged on CPOMS. These should be reviewed regularly to ensure the situation has been resolved.
•Inform parents and any other relevant parties.
•Give out sanctions as necessary.
•Feedback to all concerned.
•Contact relevant professionals where appropriate eg. EWO, Behaviour Management Team, Education Psychology, Pupil Personal Development Team.
•Ongoing support, and counselling where necessary, to be offered for all parties involved.

All school staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly, sensitively and effectively against it in accordance with school policy. There is no "hierarchy" of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. As bullying is part of the school's safeguarding duties to protect children, this policy needs to be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy.

6. Cyberbullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for online bullying, which can occur in or outside of school. Cyberbullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessible as people forward on content at a click. The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Some cyber-bullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, but it is important to recognise that some incidents of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. What may be sent as a joke may not be received as one, and indeed the distance that technology allows in communication means that the sender may not see the impact of the message on the receiver. There is also less opportunity for either party to resolve any misunderstanding or to feel empathy. It is important that students are made aware of the effects of their reactions.

Preventing Cyberbullying
1. Ensure that all staff are made aware of cyberbullying.
2. Raise awareness of cyberbullying and the unacceptability of it through education in PSHE/CLEAR; tutorials and presentations made in ICT lessons and assemblies. Discuss what students should do if they feel they are a victim of cyberbullying.
3. Adcote invites parents to a presentation on cyberbullying/ internet safety with further information communicated in bulletins via email.
4. Ensure that students are aware of the procedures and sanctions for dealing with cyberbullying – through tutor time and occasionally in assembly.
6. Ensure annual review of the policy regarding use of school ICT networks and mobile phones.
7. Record and monitor incidents of cyberbullying in the same way as all other forms of bullying (see Procedures).
8. Discuss the responsible use of technologies and e-safety.

Responding to Cyberbullying
• Cyberbullying is a form of bullying and should be dealt with as any other form of bullying, following the same use of sanctions – consideration should be given to the victim of cyberbullying taking into account the different nature of cyberbullying. The invasiveness of cyberbullying and the size of the audience should be taken into account when dealing with the victim and the perpetrator.
•The person being bullied should keep any evidence (print off internet material, save texts etc., even if the material is embarrassing – such material will be treated with discretion but may be crucial in dealing with the issue. If necessary there are additional reporting routes available, through mobile phone companies, internet service providers and social networking sites.
•Advise those experiencing cyberbullying on steps they can take to avoid recurrence – for example, advise those targeted not to retaliate or reply; provide advice on 'blocking' or removing people from 'buddy lists'; and ask them to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.
•Take steps to identify the person responsible for the bullying. Steps can include looking at the school system and computer logs; identifying and interviewing possible witnesses; and, with police involvement, obtaining user information from the service provider.

7. Student support

•Students who have been bullied will be supported as appropriate by:
•having an immediate opportunity to discuss the incident(s) with an appropriate member of staff
• being reassured that they will be listened to and that they have done the right thing by seeking support
• being offered support
• raising their self-esteem and confidence
• being encouraged to report further issues
• arranging a review date/time to discuss outcomes and appropriate follow-up.

Students who have bullied will be supported by:
•having an immediate opportunity to discuss the incident(s) with an appropriate member of staff
• establishing what behaviour was inappropriate and why the student became involved
• establishing clearly what behaviour needs to change, and how the school can support this change
• informing parents/guardians of agreed actions, and establishing how they can support
• arranging a review date/time to discuss outcomes and appropriate follow-up

8. Staff Training:
Anti-bullying policies are most effective when all school staff understand the principles and purpose of this policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support. Adcote will invest in training to help their staff understand the needs of their students, including those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) students.

Don't put up with bullying – of yourself or others.

Take responsibility – TELL SOMEONE!