

## **THE BANDA - ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**A definition:** Bullying is an “unprovoked and repeated behaviour that meets a need for excitement, status, material gain or group process and does not meet the needs or rights of other people who are harmed, made to feel miserable or frightened by the behaviour”

It is likely to occur between pupils, but also between staff and pupil. Teasing and exclusion is less serious in that no physical harm is caused but can lead to just as much distress and unhappiness. In every case, there is an imbalance and abuse of power: the stronger (not necessarily the older or bigger) inflicting an abuse of his/her power upon a person who is somehow perceived as weaker. By clear preventative steps and an open policy against bullying, we hope that The Banda will remain as free as possible from the problem.

### **Measures designed to support the school’s policy:**

Pupils are told that bullying is not tolerated at The Banda. This is reinforced through PSHE, Assemblies and Form Takers’ meetings, which focus on aspects of bullying and interpersonal relationships. Openness is encouraged.

Staff are advised on measures to prevent, detect and deal with bullying whilst non-academic staff are encouraged to report unacceptable behaviour they witness and pupils who seem anxious or unhappy. Parental support and communication is encouraged.

The “**Who will listen to me?**” leaflet is given to all pupils and displayed around the school and in the Pegasus Boarding House. It is explained to pupils by Form Takers and Class Teachers, emphasising the options open to them for communication of all problems to someone who will listen and help.

Reliance is placed on the Form Takers and Class Teachers, where pupils should feel they have access to a confidential ‘ear’ on a regular basis as they will see the pupils daily. They are alert to pick up an ‘atmosphere’ and unusual patterns of behaviour. Indeed, PSHE lessons provide an open forum for discussion when concerns can be voiced and support sought and offered. In addition, Duty Staff visit remote parts of the school regularly during the duty day.

However, sometimes children can be, and are, nasty to each other and all adults in a school need to have help in how to deal with such situations. These guidelines are for the use of pupils and teachers who come across any form of bullying - whether it is verbal teasing or physical assault.

### **First steps for:**

#### **Pupils:**

- a) If you feel you are being “picked on” (or teased) tell a member of staff (Form Taker, Class Teacher, Miss Rutter or any other) in confidence.
- b) If you see anyone being bullied (or teased) inform a member of staff immediately.
- c) Never support a bully.
- d) Do not accept a bully as a friend.
- e) Remember that you can hurt others by doing and saying unpleasant things as well as being a physical bully.
- f) Remember also that by doing and saying nothing, you are helping the bully

## **Staff:**

- a) Remain calm; you are in charge. Reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun and give the bully control of the situation.
- b) Take the incident or report seriously. Incidents need to be resolved, not just smoothed over.
- c) Take action as quickly as possible but give yourself time to think through the situation before reacting. Blame may not be one sided. Both victim(s) and alleged bully(ies) must be spoken to. Do not jump to conclusions.
- d) Think hard about whether your action needs to be private or public; who are the children involved?
- e) Reassure the victim(s). Don't make them feel inadequate or foolish.
- f) Offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim(s)
- g) Make it plain to the bully you disapprove.
- h) Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view and put themselves in his/her place
- i) Deal with every bully in an appropriate way. Take into account your knowledge of him/her and which type of "punishment" would be effective for the bully. For example: some children will respond to a teacher's anger/disapproval by being mortified and by changing their behaviour; whereas others might be so used to hearing angry and disapproving words from adults that a teacher's anger would not be effective and so much more counselling is necessary in this case.
- j) Remember it is known that the "blame-punishment" approach is now flawed – the bully usually ends up feeling abused and vengeful. It does not encourage the bully to accept responsibility for their behaviour and try to change.
- k) Miss Rutter has a short but very useful video on dealing with bullying which offers concrete suggestions for teachers who feel a little uncertain.

**The Banda's approach should be constructive and positive and not only punitive.**

## **Involving others – DO**

- Inform the Headmaster, Deputy Head or Heads of Junior School or Pegasus Pre-Prep
- Inform colleagues if the incident arose out of an unexpected situation where everyone should be vigilant in the future.
- Fill in the Incident Sheet in the Staff Room.

## **Final steps – DO**

- Make sure that the incident doesn't live on through reminders from you.
- Try to think ahead to prevent a recurrence of the incident, if you uncover the trigger factor.

## **If you have to deal with bullying, what should you avoid? - DON'T**

- Be over-protective and refuse to allow the victim to help him or herself.
- Do not assume that the bully is bad through and through; try to look objectively at the behaviour with the bully. Deal with the incident not with the person.
- Keep the whole incident a secret because you have dealt with it or if the victim asks you to.
- Call in the parents without speaking to the Headmaster, Deputy or Heads of Junior School or Pegasus Pre-Prep. first and without having a constructive plan to offer either side.

## **The elements of the school's policy are:**

- Bullying is wrong and all members of the school, children and adults, have a responsibility to report any incidents.
- Any reports of bullying will be taken seriously.

- The Deputy Head (and, by extension, the Headmaster) should be informed of any incidents of bullying.
- The Headmaster (or, through him, the Deputy) will decide whether parents should become involved.
- Teachers should use the curriculum to get across messages about acceptable behaviour - drama, discussion groups, role-play etc.
- The prevention of bullying is everybody's business.
- Everybody is encouraged to speak out against bullying. Everybody must care. Silence and secrecy nurture bullying.
- If in doubt, speak to the Headmaster, Deputy Head or Heads of Junior School or Pegasus Pre-Prep.

### **The School's Responsibility**

**The Headmaster and his Staff take a very serious view of bullying and will investigate all cases with great vigour and urgency.**

- a) The School's ethos encourages and supports an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding
- b) Pupils are assured that someone will listen to their version of events.
- c) Systems are in place to allow all staff to report concerns about pupils to the senior staff or form taker.
- c) A meeting between the Headmaster/ Deputy/ Head of Junior School or Pegasus Pre-prep and the parent (and if need be the culprit or/and victim) will take place.
- d) Counselling by an appropriate person will be offered to all sides.
- c) The Banda will undertake to remove from school on a temporary or permanent basis anyone who makes another person's life miserable. These decisions will be made at the discretion of the Headmaster.

**Mike Dickson  
Headmaster  
January 2009**