

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SENIOR SCHOOL

Governors' Committee normally reviewing:	Education Committee
Date last formally approved by the Governors :	Autumn Term 2021
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Person responsible for implementation and monitoring :	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Other relevant policies :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promoting Positive Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy ● Discipline and Exclusions Policy ● Child Protection Policy and Staff Behaviour Policy ● Disciplinary Policy ● Restraining Policy ● Death of a Child Policy ● Crisis Management Policy ● Medication Policy ● Health and Safety ● Equality Policy ● Social Media Policy ● E-Safety Policy ● Preventing Radicalisation Policy

This policy sets out to support the Aims and Ethos of Felsted Senior School

Aims and Ethos

**Mr Chris Townsend
Head, Senior School**

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Felsted is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all pupils and a 'culture of vigilance' to safeguard and protect all in its care, and to all aspects of its 'Safeguarding (Child Protection and Staff Behaviour) Policy'.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

The aims of the School and the principles of excellent pastoral care will be applied to all children irrespective of their race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy or maternity; equally these characteristics will be recognised and respected, and the School will aim to provide a positive culture of tolerance, equality and mutual respect.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This Policy draws on the government guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, (July 2017) and the Cyber bullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014). This is a document of the Government’s legal obligations, the powers that schools have to tackle bullying, and the principles that underpin the most effective anti-bullying strategies in schools. This Policy is also mindful of the Equality Act of 2010 and the protected characteristics outlined therein, the Education Act of 2011, and of “Keeping Children Safe in Education”

1. The Importance of an Anti-Bullying Policy and Culture

Felsted School (“the School”) puts pupil wellbeing at the heart of everything we do and considers bullying to be exceptionally serious and not to be tolerated. Bullying incidents will always be dealt with immediately and taken very seriously and may incur a disciplinary sanction. No one should suffer the pain and indignity that bullying can cause. Providing a safe and happy learning environment is integral to achieving the wider objectives of school improvement: raising attainment, improving school attendance, promoting equality and diversity, and ensuring the wellbeing of all members of the school community,

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. It can cause serious and lasting psychological damage, depression and even suicide. Harassment and threatening behaviour are criminal offences. We always treat it very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the School’s policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles.

2. Aims and Objectives

This policy sets out to support all the Aims of the School by taking its responsibility to support the healthy emotional development of the pupils in its care extremely seriously.

The aims of this policy are:

- To develop and maintain a community based upon respect, good manners and fair play; and to maintain a culture of vigilance through regular monitoring and evaluation of anti-bullying measures
- To provide a safe and caring environment that is free from violence and any form of harassment
- To assist in developing every student’s wellbeing and full potential by encouraging learning in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere
- To promote that pupils should care for and support each other
- To ensure that bullying is clearly defined and different kinds of bullying are recognised by the community
- To ensure that the signs of bullying are clearly understood by staff and senior students
- To ensure that the legal requirements upon schools in relation to anti bullying should be understood by the whole community
- To ensure that staff and students understand how to prevent and respond to bullying and report and record incidents of bullying
- To ensure that the school works effectively with students and parents, whether victim or bully, to manage and improve their behaviour

Please see also the Aims listed under Section 5, Preventative Measures, relating to antibullying strategies and intervention.

3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined in Preventing and Tackling Bullying as:

behaviour by an individual or group which may be repeated over time, which hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media 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. Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories 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.

4. Signs of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly going missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Psychological damage and diminished levels of self-confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

- Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of, these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

5. Preventative Measures (please also refer to Felsted's Behaviour Policy)

The aims of Felsted's anti-bullying strategies and intervention systems are:

- *To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour*
- *To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way*
- *To safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the pupil*
- *To apply disciplinary sanctions to the pupil causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi-agency support.*

We take the following preventative measures:

- Pupil-led Chapel services and House assemblies and PSHE lessons are used to underline the School's commitment to prevent and act upon cases of bullying. Our PSHE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other. It specifically tells pupils whom they should inform if they are being bullied, or are worried that another pupil is being bullied.
- Other lessons, particularly RS, English and Drama, highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills.
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place.
- Pupils and staff may report bullying behaviour at any time using the "Report a Concern" button on the MIS (or Felsted Connect site for Operational Staff) or the QR codes located around the site. This report goes directly to the DSL who will act to support the victim and start an investigation.
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents.
- Where it emerges that, rather than intentionally hurting another pupil, the unhappiness has been caused by a genuine misunderstanding of how the other pupil feels, further upset is prevented by working with the pupil(s) involved to develop their emotional intelligence, coupled with a formal warning that the damaging behaviour cannot be repeated.
- Our trained School Counsellors are an important part of our pastoral support service, providing specialist skills of assessment and counselling. They are available to give confidential advice and counselling support to pupils who can refer themselves to her when they have social, emotional or behavioural concerns. Alternatively a tutor, HM or the Medical Centre may refer a pupil to the School Counselling Service.
- The School Chaplain will give support and guidance to pupils of all beliefs who are unhappy or worried about something, perhaps at a time of family break-up, sickness or bereavement. The Chaplain will provide confidential advice (whilst maintaining the safeguarding protocols of the School) and seek to encourage the development of tolerance, understanding and respect for others in a multi-faith community.
- In Boarding Houses, there are strong teams of Tutors and the Matrons supporting the Housemaster/Housemistress who act in loco parentis. The informal house

environment is important in reinforcing a pupil's standards and values, providing the opportunity for friendly, informal discussion of matters of concern to the individual pupil outside the formal classroom. We encourage close contact between the House Master/Housemistress and parents/guardians, and would always make contact if we were worried about a pupil's well-being.

- Our Medical Centre (and all our Boarding Houses) display(s) advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and web sites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline and an independent listener.
- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private.
- We operate a peer counselling scheme, whereby trained older pupils are encouraged to offer advice and support to younger pupils.
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- We provide leadership training to our School and House Prefects which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils.
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- Participation in the Diana Award anti-bullying ambassador training
- We have banned initiation ceremonies designed to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation.
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents which take place outside school hours if there is the possibility that such an incident may impact on a pupil
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

6. Cyberbullying

Digital technology is a large part of modern life and Felsted's view is that education is the key way to ensure that pupils behave in a safe and respectful way online. It is understood that most pupils will have a number of devices where they can access the internet and socialise as well as work. Whilst the school systems contain firewalls and can block unsuitable sites, this is not the case for personal devices. It is made clear to pupils that they may not:

- Download inappropriate material, including pornography.
- Send, request or save inappropriate material, including pictures and film clips.
- Use any website/app to post upsetting comments or in any way harass/intimidate/bully another person.
- Communicate with anybody they don't know in the real world. Pupils are taught about safe use of technology and informed about the need to report any upsetting or antisocial behaviour. Sanctions are applied to any pupil misusing technology as stated in the "Use of Social Media Policy".

Further details are given in our Policy on Pupils' use of ICT, Mobile Phones and other electronic devices. **Appendix 1** contains a definition and guidelines for the safe use of the internet.

7. Awareness and Training of Staff

- Appropriately-targeted information and professional development is delivered to all staff (teachers and support staff, to whom parents may report concerns directly) and Governors.

- All staff are regularly updated in their awareness and training relating to anti-bullying measures and the reporting of bullying incidents.
- Every member of staff is trained on how to respond to such allegations as part of their induction safeguarding training.
- Staff are encouraged to identify ways to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur.
- We have a team of Housemaster/mistresses and Tutors who support the DSL and DDSL and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
- Many of the teaching staff have been trained in the Youth MHFA course.

8. Procedures for dealing with Reported Incidents of Bullying

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved.
- He/she will enter details of the incident on the Bullying Concerns Log, which automatically alerts the Head, DSL, Deputy Head, HMs and Tutors of the pupils mentioned in the entry.
- The DSL will arrange for the alleged victim to be interviewed and to write out an account of events.
- The DSL will arrange for the alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, to be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events.
- The victim will be given support and guidance by an appropriate member of staff. It will be made clear to him/her why revenge is inappropriate. He/she will be reassured and offered advice about future strategies and behaviour.
- The alleged bully will be interviewed at a later stage by the Deputy Head, DSL or his/her HM, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions.
- The parents/guardians of all parties will usually be informed and, in serious cases, be invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought and their engagement in a possible range of strategies to support students involved.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, as appropriate, should---
be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures.
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode; this and other appropriate forms of restorative justice will be employed as appropriate, in conjunction with appropriate sanctions.
- The situation is monitored, reviewed and recorded on the MIS Bullying Concerns Log. Impact is evaluated on a monthly basis, as appropriate.

9. The Relationship of the Anti-Bullying Policy to other directly relevant policies

- Bullying may incur sanctions, which will be of an appropriate and proportionate nature and could include apologising, a Deputy Head's Detention, House or Head's Gating, temporary or permanent exclusion (some of which will be accompanied by a letter to parents which includes a behavioural contract or final warning).

- In very serious and persistent cases, and only after the DSL and/or Headmaster have been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Social Services, or engage other agencies to resolve the matter. This will always be the case if there is a threat or indication that a pupil is being exposed to radicalisation or violence (physical or sexual).
- The School recognises our obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The aims of the School's Equality Policy and Equal Opportunities Statement are applied to all pupils irrespective of their age, race, sex, disability, religion and/or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy or maternity.

10. Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

- All bullying issues are recorded on a central log on a central Bullying Concerns Log which is accessible to all staff via the MIS.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead monitors the log closely and ensures that procedure is followed and the needs of all pupils concerned are met; bullying incidents are analysed by type and location to identify patterns.
- If the incident was serious, it may be necessary to involve external agencies such as the police. In borderline cases the DSL will liaise with the relevant external agencies for advice.
- There are regular follow-ups to ensure the welfare of the pupils concerned.
- The School engages in structured data-gathering and also reviews aspects of the school environment to make them safer.
- This policy is evaluated and updated as necessary and at least annually.

N F S O'Brien
Designated Safeguarding Lead

Appendix 1 YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

FELSTED ACTION AGAINST BULLYING- ALWAYS STOP AND THINK *BEFORE* YOU ACT!

WE NEED *YOUR* HELP. WE WANT FELSTED TO CONTINUE TO BE:

- A safe and caring environment
- Free from violence and any form of harassment at all times
- A community based upon respect, good manners and fair play
- A place where pupils always care for and support each other

PLEASE SUPPORT AND CARE FOR OTHERS AT ALL TIMES

- *Report any concerns you have immediately to a member of staff*
- *Stop bullying from happening to you or to someone else by reporting it*
- *Do not suffer in silence, or stand by while someone else suffers in silence*

**PLEASE SHOW TOLERANCE AND RESPECT FOR OTHERS
AT ALL TIMES**

- *Be tolerant and show respect at all times for others' views, opinions, religion, creed, ethnic origin, abilities and attitudes*

STOP AND THINK TWICE BEFORE ACTING HARMFULLY

- *Before you say or do something hurtful, send a hurtful text or email, exclude someone from your group, or any other bullying act, please stop and think about the consequences:*
- *If this was done to you, how would you feel?* If you would not like this done to you, don't do it to others
- *Would a witness change your actions?* If you would stop saying or doing something if you knew it was being witnessed by a member of staff, your parents or your peers, then it is not acceptable
- *Would you try and deny this action if asked?* If you would deny the action when asked, then don't do it in the first place

FELSTED ACTION AGAINST BULLYING - ALWAYS STOP AND THINK *BEFORE YOU ACT!*

BULLYING IS A VERY SERIOUS MATTER

- Any activity undertaken that upsets another student is inappropriate and unacceptable
- Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time.
- It can cause serious, lasting psychological damage, depression and even suicide.
- Harassment and threatening behaviour are criminal offences.
- We always treat any form of bullying very seriously.

DEFINING BULLYING

In the government publication 'Safe to Learn', bullying is defined as:

- *"behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally".*
- This is further defined as *"name calling; taunting; mocking; making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; pushing; taking belongings; 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"*