



Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent: Imberhorne School supports the stance taken by Ed Balls, the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families:

“Every child should be able to learn in a school environment free from bullying of any kind and in which they feel safe and supported. There is no place for bullying in our schools and communities and each of us involved in education has a role in creating a culture in schools where bullying is not tolerated. No child deserves to suffer the pain and indignity that bullying can cause. We recognise the negative impact it has on the educational experiences and wider development of so many of our children and young people. Bullying has no place anywhere in the school community, and this applies both to the bullying of students and adults”.

(Extract taken from ‘Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti-Bullying Work in Schools’ DCSF 2007)

What do we perceive bullying to be?

Bullying may be defined as:

‘Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which **intentionally hurts** another individual or group either physically or emotionally.’

Specific examples include:

- ♦ **Physical:** any unwanted contact.
- ♦ **Emotional:** tormenting, humiliating
- ♦ **Sexual:** unwanted contact, comments/gestures.
- ♦ **Racial:** taunts, comments, graffiti or gestures
- ♦ **Verbal:** name-calling, teasing, sarcasm etc.
- ♦ **Homophobic:** comments, gestures, graffiti.
- ♦ **Religious/Cultural:** Comments, gestures, graffiti.
- ♦ **Written:** Note-passing, anonymous letters etc.
- ♦ **Technological:** Via email, text message, websites, MSN, Message boards etc

What makes people vulnerable to bullying?

Any child can be bullied but certain factors are known to make it more likely:

- ♦ Lacking close friends in school.
- ♦ Being shy or introverted.
- ♦ An over-protective family environment.
- ♦ Being from a different racial, cultural, or gender group to the majority.
- ♦ Being different in some obvious respect e.g. wearing glasses, stammering, having a disability.
- ♦ Behaving inappropriately, intruding or being a ‘nuisance’.
- ♦ Possessing expensive accessories e.g. mobile phones, computer games etc.
- ♦ Jealousy... where the victim is perceived to be very prominent due to a particular gift/talent (such as sport or music) or physical attraction.

(Extract taken from ‘Bullying: Don’t Suffer in Silence’).

How can it be identified ?

The following areas may indicate a child is being bullied:

- ♦ Being unwilling to go to school due to illness more frequently than previously.
- ♦ Being frightened to travel to or from school without supervision.
- ♦ Beginning to perform poorly at school.
- ♦ Becoming anxious and withdrawn.
- ♦ Regularly coming home more hungry than normal (lunch money stolen?)
- ♦ Having significant possessions ‘go missing!’
- ♦ Asking for money more regularly than normal, or stealing it!
- ♦ Coming home with books/clothes torn or unexplained physical injuries
- ♦ Truancy or trying to change their usual routine.
- ♦ Self-harm, attempted suicide, crying themselves to sleep.
- ♦ Becoming aggressive or unreasonable.

What should be done about it?

We would urge any victim of bullying to:

- ◆ Inform their family, who will contact the appropriate Head of Year, or inform a school representative directly (Head of Year, form tutor, subject teacher, learning mentor etc.)
- ◆ Record instances of bullying as clearly as possible. A written account which includes dates, times, venues, witnesses and specific details is always extremely helpful to the member of staff investigating the problem.
- ◆ Ask a friend to support them in speaking to a member of staff if they lack confidence.
- ◆ Remain calm and trust that the school will do everything possible to support any victim of bullying and work continuously until the problem had been eradicated.
- ◆ Retain a sense of dignity and self-worth.
- ◆ Be assertive when faced with bullies, informing the person(s) responsible that you will be reporting what has happened.

What will the school do?

1. The Head of Year, or other appointed staff member, will investigate any accusation of bullying at the earliest opportunity. In almost all cases, this will be on the day the complaint is made.
2. Any allegations of bullying will be recorded by the Head of Year in the school's bullying register. The outcome of any investigation will also be recorded. The register will enable the school to monitor the number of reported cases of bullying and to evaluate the school's current procedures.
3. Following investigation and confirmation of bullying behaviour, the normal school sanctions may be applied as appropriate. If applied, these will range from detentions to exclusion in accordance with the frequency and severity of the bullying behaviour.
4. The results of any investigations will always be discussed with the person who has raised the concern and their family.
5. In most cases the results of any confirmed case of bullying will also be discussed with the family of the student(s) who enacted the bullying behaviour.
6. We will seek the support and guidance of the school counsellor and outside agencies as appropriate.

What if I feel the situation is not resolved?

There is a clear line of communication for parents or students to follow. We would urge parents not to 'leapfrog' different levels of responsibility and go straight to the Headteacher, as he would need a summary of the investigations made by earlier points of contact before he could proceed.

The points of contact are as follows:-

The Head of Year (Current Year in brackets)
Mrs Croft(7) Ms. Solomon(8) Mrs Martin (9)
Mr Swan(10) Mr Johnson(11)

The Head of Key Stage

Ms Barr (KS3)
Mrs Jones (KS4)
Mrs Walker (KS5 – Sixth Form)

The Headteacher

Mr Jon Ford

The Chair of Governors

Mr Bob Darvill – who can be contacted through the school