

How do we define bullying and conflict?

Pastoral Lead for the school: Miss Liza McCarthy

Bullying

The National Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

‘Emotionally harmful behaviour and physically harmful behaviour that is repetitive, wilful, and persistent. It is carried out intentionally to be harmful by an individual or group of people.’

Bullying can be physical, verbal, mental, religious, racist, sexist and regarding sexual orientation. It can happen at any time in and out of school. Bullying is harmful to all those involved and can affect not only young people, but also adults who can be subjected to threatening or intimidating behaviour.

Bullying is contrary to the values held at Balcarras, which include courtesy, compassion and integrity, and will not be tolerated in any form. Every member of the Balcarras community has the right to feel and stay safe and bullying prevents this. It is unacceptable in whatever form it takes and will be assertively challenged at Balcarras School.

Conflict

Conflict between students can often lead to bullying. Conflict can arise due to personal differences between individual students or groups of students, problems from outside school becoming interwoven with school life or from difficulties arising from the breakdown of relationships between individuals or groups of students.

Types of Bullying

- Name calling/taunting/mockery
- Pushing/shoving/hitting/kicking/biting
- Spreading malicious gossip or rumours
- Harassment (including following people and displaying intimidating body language)
- Writing insulting graffiti about another person on property, furniture or buildings
- Exclusion from social groups
- Verbal pressure to conform
- Using personal knowledge of another person to provoke a reaction
- Making unpleasant comments about another person’s family or friends

- Taking belongings/defacing the property of others
- Extortion
- Intimidation
- Incitement
- Homophobic Bullying (bullying motivated by prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people)
- Cyber bullying (aggressive and intentional sending or posting of harmful or cruel text or images by internet or other digital communication by a group or an individual; videoing others being harassed or abused; making private information public without permission).

Please be aware that this list is not exhaustive and is subject to change.

Signs of Bullying

Pupils may indicate by signs or behaviour that s/he is being bullied. Parents and staff should be aware that these are possible signs and should pass on their concerns if a child:

- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn
- regularly has clothes or books destroyed
- becomes disruptive or aggressive
- starts stealing money
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- begins to do badly in school work
- attempts suicide or runs away

Aims and Objectives of anti-bullying work at Balcarras School

- To stamp out bullying incidents
- To help and support the victims of bullying
- To understand the reasons why people bully and work to change their behaviour
- To work with parents and the wider community to develop an holistic approach to tackling bullying and conflict between students
- To appropriately punish and educate and support students guilty of bullying and conflict to enable them to change their behaviour.
- To make Balcarras a 'Telling' School and bring any bullying out into the open. All members of the community are actively encouraged to speak out about any incidents of bullying.

Roles and responsibilities

Pastoral Lead for the school (see top of policy) is the named member of the Senior Management Team responsible for co-ordinating anti-bullying work at Balcarras School. However, every member of the school community has the responsibility to treat bullying seriously.

The Pastoral Lead

- Will co-ordinate all aspects of anti-bullying work across the school.
- Will provide training for all staff on strategies to deal with issues of bullying.
- Will liaise with members of teaching staff to develop anti-bullying work as and when appropriate.
- Has overall responsibility for ensuring that parents and students are aware of anti-bullying procedures.

SMT

- Will discuss anti-bullying work as and when appropriate.
- Will ensure that the Pastoral Lead is supported in coordinating anti-bullying work across the school.
- Will actively seek to promote a culture free from bullying.

House Heads

- Will ensure that all bullying incidents in their year group are accurately reported and recorded.
- Support their tutors in dealing effectively with any incidents of bullying.

Teaching and Support Staff

- Staff must always listen to and deal with any bullying that they become aware of using the range of procedures outlined below, using their professional judgement about the best course of action in each individual case.
- Once an incident of bullying is reported, staff must aim to take action within a 48 hour turn around period
- Staff have a responsibility to pass on details of bullying incidents to house heads.
- Staff have a responsibility to teach about bullying, its effects and strategies for dealing with it via tutorial time and as part of the PSHE curriculum.
- Students
 - Should follow the policy at all times and follow the school code of conduct.
 - Help to make Balcarras a 'Telling' school by doing the following things:

- Victims of bullying should always report bullying to their parents, a member of staff or someone else who will report it for them.
- Students should always report any bullying that they know about or have witnessed to a member of staff
- Students should encourage the victim to tell someone, doing nothing is not acceptable behaviour
- Students should show their disapproval of bullying and tell the bully to stop if it is safe to do so.
- Should form a friendship group for the person being bullied to make sure they are not isolated if appropriate. Should remember all they have been taught about the hurt listening to and spreading rumours can cause.

Parents/Carers

- Parents have a responsibility to report any incidents of concern as quickly as possible and to work co-operatively and supportively with the school to resolve issues between students accepting the use of both punitive and preventative measures against bullying to achieve a long term solution to the problem.
- Parents of students who are bullied on the way to or on the way home from school should refer the matter to the school.
- Parents should understand that the school can and will, when appropriate, involve the local police with issues that overlap both home and school life.

Strategies and Procedures

Strategies for dealing with issues of bullying and conflict at Balcarras School are outlined below. Strategies combine punitive and preventative approaches. Paperwork recommended for use with these strategies is available for staff via the staff shared area of the school intranet. House heads must always complete a CPOMS write-up that records any bullying incident. These strategies and procedures are guidelines for staff who are asked to use their professional judgement and judge the best action for each case individually.

Work within the curriculum

Staff will raise awareness of bullying and strategies to prevent it through tutor time and lessons.

Work with the local police

For certain incidents the local police will be informed and/or involved in the process. This collaborative work enables Balcarras to deal effectively with issues within school which have arisen due to matters outside. Our work with the police is an integral part of our extended school service.

Communication

Communication about anti-bullying work occurs through the following:

- Termly meetings of the House Councils consist of representatives of all members of the school community. The groups review all aspects of school life, including anti-bullying work, on a regular basis. Members of the groups take their roles seriously and actively seek to promote the values of Balcarras School.
- The school newsletter
- The school website
- Assemblies
- Induction Evening for Year 6 students and parents
- Parents Evenings

When this policy was reviewed, an equality impact assessment was conducted to ensure any changes did not have an adverse effect under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. Should you have any comments regarding this policy, please contact the school.