

Anti-bullying Policy



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This document complies with:

- *HM Government, The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014*
- *HM Government, The Equality Act 2010*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education, September 2018)*
- *Boarding Schools: National Minimum Standards (Department for Education, April 2015)*
- *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (Department for Education and Department for Health 2015)*

This document has regard to:

- *Preventing and tackling bullying; Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (Department for Education, October 2014)*

This document should be read alongside the following, which are openly available on the School website:

- *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*
- *Behaviour Policy*

Aims

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all boys so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Caldicott. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell somebody about it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a CARING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening should be prepared to tell somebody.

Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Behaviour and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.

One: How bullying is defined

1. At Caldicott, 'bullying' is the name we give to behaviour which:

- hurts or distresses another pupil, either emotionally or physically, and
- is repeated, or part of a broader movement, and
- is based on an imbalance of power.

2. An 'imbalance of power' means that the bully has control over the relationship in a way that makes it difficult for the victim to defend himself. Some examples might be:

- the bully is physically larger and more intimidating
- there is a difference in age, experience or intellect between bully and victim
- the bully has found out exactly what upsets someone
- the bully is a member of a particular social group and has the power to exclude or isolate others

3. We call this 'bullying' whether it takes place in the physical world or online. Caldicott has a separate Policy on Cyber Bullying.

4. The bully does not have to be an individual, and neither does the victim. Two, three or more people may be involved on either side. In addition, there are often bystanders who know about the bullying or even enjoy watching it, but say nothing.

5. Under the definition just given, deliberately excluding someone from a social group is a form of bullying. In practice, however, adults cannot force children to be friends with each other. Staff at Caldicott will do everything in their power to encourage happy social relationships amongst pupils, but it is sometimes only possible to deal with exclusion as bullying when other factors (as outlined below) are involved, too.

Two: The damage done

6. Bullying makes the victim's life miserable and has no place in a civilised community. If you see or become aware of bullying directly, whether you are a pupil, a parent or a member of staff, we expect you to do something about it, as set out below in Section Four.

7. Below is a list of some of the noticeable effects bullying can have on a young person. Although there may be other explanations, these types of behaviour (especially in combination) are often typical of pupils who are being bullied. Therefore all members of the Caldicott community should watch out for and raise any concerns, however low-level they might seem at the time, about boys who:

- become frightened of other pupils and avoid them, or certain places, because of fear
- cut meal-times or become reluctant to sit with peers at meals
- change their usual routine, and perhaps begin to miss commitments
- seem unwilling to return to school
- become withdrawn, anxious, or lose their confidence
- run away, or threaten or attempt suicide
- have nightmares, or cry themselves to sleep at night
- feel ill in the morning
- begin to do poorly in school work
- have clothes torn or books damaged
- have possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- have money continually 'lost', ask for money, or start stealing money
- have unexplained cuts or bruises
- become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable, and perhaps start to bully others
- stop eating
- give unlikely excuses for any of the above
- beg peers, staff or parents not to say anything about what they have seen or been told
- become unwilling to use the internet or mobile phone
- become nervous and jumpy when a text or other message is received

8. Sometimes this kind of fear or behaviour has a permanent effect on the victim, changing forever their self-esteem, relationships, career, or the way they see the world. In English law, bullying which harms the victim significantly in that way, or physically, or which has the potential to harm the victim, is a form of abuse. In government guidance it is called 'peer on peer abuse'.

9. All members of staff are required to be familiar with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, which explains that they must report quickly to the police, the local authority or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (as appropriate) if they have reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm — even if that harm is being caused (or likely to be caused) by another child.

10. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy also makes it clear that some forms of potential peer-on-peer abuse must be reported promptly and directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, for example (but not limited to):

- sexting
- gender-based abuse, sexual bullying and sexual assaults (this includes, for example, touching or groping someone else in a sexualised manner such as bottom slapping)
- physical assault causing harm or injury

Sometimes, however, members of staff may not be immediately clear on whether an incident or concern should be called bullying or peer-on-peer abuse. In such cases, staff should not try to investigate or make a judgement, but simply pass on their concerns quickly and clearly, as detailed below.

Three: Bullying behaviour to watch out for

11. The person who is doing the bullying will behave in certain ways, too. What follows is a list of things we would like everyone in the School community to look out for. Members of staff, in particular, should not tolerate a pupil doing any of the following:

- teasing someone (for example) by calling them names or being sarcastic
- spreading rumours about someone
- making abusive comments (including by message, graffiti or notice)
- mocking another pupil by imitating their accent or anything else about them
- making gestures towards someone which are designed to belittle or ridicule them
- mocking another pupil's contributions in the classroom or elsewhere
- interfering physically with someone or with their possessions (for example 'bed flipping', 'room trashing', hiding someone's things or knocking them off their desk)
- making threatening gestures
- barring somebody else's way or otherwise preventing them from moving freely
- pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, or using other kinds of physical aggression
- throwing or kicking things at someone else
- misusing seniority or imposing hierarchy (for example 'fagging', sending juniors on errands or expecting them to surrender certain areas of play, queue-jumping)
- encouraging or attempting to compel others to take part in initiation processes.

12. Everyone needs to be aware that bullying is often based on 'difference'. This means that the bully notices someone is different, and turns them into a victim because they are vulnerable. Pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying because they are new to the School, or because of:

- race
- gender
- physical difference
- sexual orientation
- special educational need
- disability
- a different economic background or unusual family situation (for example, adoption)
- an interest in things (academic work, classical music, acting, sport) which are considered 'uncool' by a dominant peer-group
- or any of those factors which other pupils perceive to be true, whether or not that is actually the case.

Four: intervention process

13. Members of staff are expected to intervene if there is an immediate risk of harm to a child, and to report the matter as explained in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

14. Otherwise, members of staff (and, ideally, other members of the Caldicott community) who see or become aware of any behaviour which

- a) fits our definition of bullying or
 - b) is outlined in the bullet points above or
 - c) might otherwise reasonably be thought significant in this context
- should proceed as follows.

15. Firstly, teachers and others who are employed to care for pupils directly are expected to try to stop anti-social behaviour amongst children when they see it, by intervening and reprimanding, as is natural to the job.

16. However, it is important to note that, just because a member of staff has only seen something once, it does not mean that the element of 'repetition' is not present, and therefore that the incident cannot be an instance of bullying.

17. Therefore, regardless of whether or not the member of staff is aware of something relevant having happened before, if the behaviour seems to contain an element of bullying as just explained, he or she should, in addition to intervening:

- a) not apply the labels 'bully' or 'bullying' to pupils or situations
- b) not try to start their own investigations
- c) not impose their own disciplinary sanctions
- d) refer the matter onwards as detailed next

18. As the School Rule makes plain, "Bullying is totally unacceptable." This means that members of staff should not try to deal with the matter themselves, but should instead send a written report of the incident, or their concerns, to the Head of Year(s) of the pupils involved, both victim and perpetrator. If the Head of Year is not available, the report should be sent to the Deputy Head Pastoral. Ideally, other members of the community — pupils, parents — would also pass on their concerns to the Head of Year.

19. The Head of Year will consult the Deputy Head (Pastoral) before anything else. The Head of Year will then attempt to gather information discreetly from victims, perpetrators, bystanders and perhaps senior pupils, and record the incident or concern on iSAMS. The incident or concern must be recorded promptly on iSAMS and then on the Bullying Record held by the Deputy Head Pastoral.

20. The Deputy Head Pastoral will evaluate the case and discuss with the Head of Year(s) how to proceed. Matters are sometimes complicated because there is a safeguarding concern (the Deputy Head Pastoral is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead), or because the bullying has reoccurred from earlier, or because it has included a separate breach of school rules, such as theft or damage to property.

21. In such cases, the Deputy Head Pastoral, in consultation with the Head of Year (and perhaps the Headteacher), may well impose an appropriate disciplinary sanction, as the Behaviour policy makes clear:

“Persistent bullying may lead to expulsion.”

22. However, if there is no complicating factor, and it appears to be an initial case of 'bullying-in itself', the incident or concern will in the first instance be dealt with as a pastoral matter, not a disciplinary matter. The pastoral approach will in every case involve a formal process:

- a member of staff will speak individually with all pupils involved, leaving the perpetrator(s) and victim until last
- the victim's parents will be informed early on
- each interview will start with an expression of concern for the victim
- no accusations will be made, and no 'facts' sought
- each pupil will be asked for ideas on improving the situation
- suggestions made will become recorded agreements
- the victim will be asked what he/she wants to happen in every case, and his/her wishes respected
- specific dates (for example, five days) will be set for review
- other parents (including perpetrators) will be informed as appropriate, and their support enlisted

23. The aim of this process is to stop the bullying behaviour. It is not to try to force pupils to be friends, or to punish the perpetrator. It is understood that victims (and their parents) may sometimes feel that perpetrators have escaped lightly, but we would ask them to accept that a great deal of educational research shows that the longer-term well-being of victims is rarely best served by stringent punishment of perpetrators at an early stage.

24. Nevertheless, the School reserves the full range of disciplinary sanctions for pupils who wilfully refuse to engage in the pastoral process of reflection and review.

Five: Advice to boys

The following advice can be found in the Pupil Planner.

What to do if you are being bullied:

1. Do not retaliate in any physical or verbal way.
2. Walk calmly away from the situation.
3. Tell an adult member of staff what has been happening. This will often be your Form Teacher or your House Tutor, but you can talk to any member of staff. If you cannot tell an adult, tell one of your friends or a School Prefect or Monitor or put a message in the 'Boys' Black Box' outside of the dining room.

What to do if you see someone being bullied:

1. Find a member of staff and explain what you have seen and heard.
2. Do not ignore bullying. Think how you would feel in the victim's position.

Some advice on how to avoid being bullied:

1. Think positively about yourself. Be confident.
2. Be friendly. If you are with friends, you are less likely to be bullied.
3. Try to ignore the person who is attempting to bully you.
4. Remember, bullies are often people with their own problems who need help to change their behaviour.