

Anti-Bullying **Policy**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Every student has the right to be safe and happy in school and to be protected when they are feeling vulnerable. We realize that bullying is very serious, both physically and emotionally and may cause psychological damage. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. When bullying occurs, all students should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We work hard to ensure bullying is prevented in the first instance. This is made clear in the Code of Conduct which must be signed by all students before the course starts.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is behaviour repeated over time, by an individual or group, which makes other people feel uncomfortable or threatened whether this is intended or not. The main types are:

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| EMOTIONAL | - | being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, spreading rumours, looks, gestures |
| VERBAL | - | name calling, teasing, insulting, racial taunts, writing unkind notes |
| PHYSICAL | - | hitting, kicking, unwanted physical contact, taking or hiding belongings including money |
| ICT RELATED
(CYBER) | - | harassment or defamation, including sending photographs or messages, via email, phone text or posting on any website, social networking site |
| RACIAL, SEXIST,
SEXUAL AND/OR
HOMOPHOBIC | - | Racial taunts, discriminating against gender/gender reassignment, sexual bullying (i.e. talking or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way) |
| INDIRECT OR
MANIPULATIVE | - | Manipulating others to ostracize, marginalize or intimidate individuals OR encouraging others to become agents of physical or verbal bullying against someone. |

INTELLECTUAL	-	Making someone feel uncomfortable regarding academic, intellectual or performance or ability
RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL	-	Making someone feel ostracized or uncomfortable due to their religious affiliation or cultural background
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS or DISABILITY	-	Making someone feel ostracized and uncomfortable due to a disability or a special educational need.

Prevention of Bullying

As well as recognizing the signs and symptoms of bullying and using strategies to deal with this, LSI actively strives to *prevent* bullying in the day to day running of the school.

We foster mutual respect between all students.

We involve parents and guardians.

Frequent class discussions about cultural, linguistic and other differences promote tolerance and raise awareness of diversity.

Posters around the school reinforce the positive messages and encourage students to speak out against bullying.

Teaching staff are made aware of the signs and symptoms of bullying and instructed to report any and all suspicions to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Seán P Buckley) or the Deputy DSL (Michael McGrath).

Some signs and symptoms

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware that these are possible signs that they should discuss with the DSL if a student:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begins to do poorly in school work
- becomes withdrawn, starts stammering
- regularly has books or clothes destroyed or stolen
- becomes distressed, stops eating, overeats
- cries easily, has nightmares
- becomes disruptive or aggressive
- has possessions go 'missing'
- starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- has frequent injuries
- runs away
- attempts suicide
- self-harm

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but certainly bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be discussed with the designated person.

LSI recognizes the seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage and even suicide (although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour).

The following procedures are in place at LSI.

1. We will implement disciplinary sanctions which reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect. Any breach in the Code of Conduct will result in a series of warnings and eventual expulsion. Any one incident deemed serious enough by the Principal may result in immediate expulsion.
2. Teachers must report a bullying incident or any concerns they may have about a child to the DSL. Any reports of bullying or incidents will be recorded on a 'bullying monitoring form' so that patterns can be identified. This includes bullying incidents outside school when brought to our attention.
3. Parents and host families may report any concerns they may have about their child being bullied to the DSL.
4. Upon admission to LSI all students are made aware of this anti-bullying policy through the Code of Conduct.
5. All members of staff need to be vigilant at all times and report any signs of bullying immediately.
6. LSI raises the awareness of staff through training, meetings and frequent communication
7. LSI understands that this Anti-bullying policy links with our Discipline and Exclusion/Behaviour policy. The Promoting Good Behaviour policy outlines the sanctions that are in place to deal with bullying, including exclusion in the cases of severe and persistent bullying.

Safeguarding Children and Young People: The Legal aspects

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this is the case, staff will report their concerns to the DSL who will in turn report to the local authority children's care. Even where safeguarding is not an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

Bullying is not in itself a specific criminal offence. However a person who makes a physical or sexual assault on another, or who steals or causes damage to the property of another, commits a criminal offence and also a civil wrong known as a 'Tort' for which there can be legal consequences outside of school. Bullying behaviour may also be regarded as threatening behaviour or harassment which can be either a criminal offence or a civil wrong. Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence, for example it is an offence to send an electronic communication (such as a text message or

email) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety. Should staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

Staff Awareness and Training

As LSI has an open door policy, teachers can also discuss any concerns with the Director of Studies, DSL or Principal informally at any time.

Bullying Linked to Disability

At LSI, we are aware that a student with a disability be it physical or mental may be subject to bullying from other students. These students will be monitored to ensure that they are not the subject of ridicule or bullying in any way. By nature of their disability, eg. autism, some students may be seen to provoke other students into an act of aggression or verbal abuse. However, this is not acceptable.

To be viewed in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy

Reviewed: August 2022 by Seán Buckley

Next review: August 2023

Additional Sources of Guidance and Information

Childline: 0800 1111

NSPCC: 0800 800 5000

Samaritans: 08457 90 90 90

Connexions: 080 8001 3219

www.childline.org.uk

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.antibullying.net

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.direct.gov.uk

www.safenetwork.org.uk