



What to do if your child is being bullied.

***A guide for parents and carers of children at
Kingsthorpe College***

beatthebullies@kingsthorpecollege.org.uk

Respect Responsibility Aspiration Care

Introduction

Finding out that your child is being bullied is a stressful and distressing experience. This guide is to help support you and your child so that you can work together with the College to ensure that any bullying is effectively dealt with.

We believe that every student has the right to feel safe and secure. Students should feel free from any threat of bullying and know where to go and to whom to speak if bullying occurs.

What is bullying?

Our Student Council have developed the following definition of bullying:

'Bullying is any form of behaviour (physical, psychological, social or verbal) which intentionally causes distress to an individual, which may be a one-off event or repeated'

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Many children do get involved in disagreements every now and then. Bullying is not a one off fight or disagreement.

What are the different types of bullying?

Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:

- Physical: hitting, kicking, taking belongings;
- Verbal: name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks;
- Indirect: spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious e-mails or text messages on mobile phones (cyber-bullying).

Bullying can be related to:

- Race, Religion or culture
- Appearance
- Special educational needs
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Home circumstances
- Sexist or sexual bullying

How do you recognise that your child is being bullied?

Your child may indicate the following signs or behaviour:

- Is frightened of walking to or from College.
- Does not want to go on the College/Public bus.
- Begs to be driven to College
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to College
- Begins truanting
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in College
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions go 'missing.'
- Asks for money or starts stealing (to pay the bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (lunch money has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

What do you do if your child is being bullied?

The most important step is for you and/or your child to report the bullying. Bullies depend on teachers not knowing about the bullying.

There are four ways to report bullying:

- Your child can speak to any member of staff. The Heads of House and House Managers are experienced in dealing with incidents of bullying and have received training.
- Your child can e-mail beatthebullies@kingsthorpecollege.org.uk. A member of the House team will then speak to your child.
- Your child can place a note in our anti-bullying boxes located in Student Services and the library.
- You can contact the College to speak to the Head of House to discuss your concerns.

Your child should not fight or hurl insults back. This allows the bully to say that they were provoked or acting in self-defence. This makes it very difficult for the College to act

Recording incidents

As a parent/carer you can help us by recording every incident. Jot down:

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- Who saw it?
- How did it affect your child at the time?
- Were there any later effects?
- Did you tell us?
- What did we do in response?
- When did it happen? Date and time

Bullying outside of College

We can take action if the bullying happens on the way to or from College. Contact us so that we are aware of the incident and suggest strategies of support. If you feel necessary contact the Police.

Cyber-bullying

As mobile phone use and the internet have developed, so has the misuse of this technology to bully. Cyber-bullying can be particularly hurtful as it can take place at any time and can intrude into personal and home space. The audience can also be very large and reached rapidly through placing messages and/or pictures on messaging websites.

We recommend that as parents/carers you should do the following:

- Talk with your child and understand the ways in which they are using the internet and their mobile phone.
- Keep the personal computer in an open area like the dining or living room so that children are not in their bedroom with the computer.
- Make sure that you are using the internet safety features
- Keep the evidence of any offensive e-mails, text messages or online conversations.
- Discuss with your child safe and responsible mobile phone and internet use. This particularly relates to the taking of photographic images which can be easily passed onto other students by Bluetooth technology

What we will do when a bullying incident is reported

Once a case of bullying behaviour has been reported the House teams will investigate the incident. This will include taking a statement from your child and the student engaging in the bullying behaviour.

The following actions may be taken dependent upon the type and form of bullying:

- You will be informed and the parents/carers of the student engaging in the bullying behaviour will be informed and may be invited into College for a meeting.
- If it is deemed appropriate, your child and the student engaging in bullying behaviour will meet with the House Team to discuss what is happening and a way forward.
- Support mechanisms will be put into place to support the student engaging in the bullying behaviour to understand their actions and prevent future bullying.
- Consequences will be put into place dependent upon the severity of the bullying. In serious situations the student doing the bullying may be removed from lessons into BASE for the remainder of the day. Serious incidents of bullying may lead to an internal exclusion or fixed term exclusion.
- Bullying incidents will be logged in the student's file for a fixed period of time. Previous bullying incidents will be taken into consideration.
- Outside agencies may become involved, as deemed appropriate.

House teams will closely monitor your child and any students who have engaged in bullying behaviour. If bullying persists after the intervention of the House team the Head of House will liaise with the Assistant Principal who will decide upon the next actions. If a student engages in bullying behaviour after the intervention of the House team this will result in a higher level of consequence, including the possibility of fixed term exclusion.

If your child has experienced bullying they will be offered support. House Managers will act as a point of contact, and your child may also be 'buddied' with a peer mentor. Outside agencies may be offered, including the College counselling service and/or support through the Learning Support Unit. It is crucial that your child understands who they should go to if they are worried, what will happen next, what support they will receive and when they will receive an update on the situation.

What to do if you are not happy with the outcome of what we have done and the bullying continues

We strive to be a College where you will be satisfied with the support your child has received. Our aim is that through careful listening, discussion and sensible actions we can work together to stop any bullying.

However, if you are not happy with the support you have received then you can make a complaint. The first point of contact is the Assistant Principal who is responsible for anti-bullying. He/She will invite you into College to discuss the matter and at this stage hopefully the matter will be resolved.

If you are still unsatisfied you should write to the Principal who will investigate the handling of the complaint. If you are then still unsatisfied then you can write a letter to the Chair of Governors who will investigate the matter and may invite you to meet the Governors to discuss your concerns.

Useful websites

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.stoptextbullying.com

www.bullying.co.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.parentlineplus.org.uk

College contact details

Kingsthorpe College
Boughton Green Road
Kingsthorpe
NN2 7HR

01604 716106

www.kingsthorpecollege.org.uk

**A full copy of the Anti bullying policy is available under
'College Information' on the website**