



FINTON HOUSE SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This draft policy is currently being reviewed by the Pastoral Team and will be signed off by Governors at the full board meeting in the Autumn Term

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Date Revised: September 2024

A copy of this policy is available to all governors and parents via the school website or a hardcopy on request from the School Office. It is accessible to all staff electronically (in the Policy folder on the Staff Admin Drive) and a hardcopy held on file in the Head's Office. This policy applies to all at the school including those in Reception (the EYFS).

Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Aims.....	2
3. Objectives.....	3
4. What is bullying?.....	3
5. Bullying - Prevention.....	4
6. Vulnerable pupils.....	5
7. Where bullying has a severe impact.....	6
8. Support Information for adults working in the school.....	6
9. Guidelines for Practice/Procedure.....	7
10. Procedure for dealing with bullying.....	8
11. Bullying which occurs outside school premises.....	10
12. Listening buddy.....	10
13. Training.....	10
14. Behaviour Generally.....	10

1. Introduction

Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school not only affects an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, we can help to create safe, disciplined environments where children are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 require that an independent school ensure that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy. A key provision in *The Equality Act 2010* is the *Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)*, which came into force on 5 April 2011 and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In addition to the duties in relation to children with disabilities under the Equality Act, schools also have duties under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to ensure that children with special educational needs engage in the activities of the school together with children who do not have special educational needs.

This policy also reflects the 2024 update to statutory guidance - *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'*, and *'Preventing and tackling bullying - Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies'*, July 2017.

Bullying of staff by pupils, parents or colleagues is equally unacceptable. (*Please see 'Whistleblowing' policy and 'Equality' section of Employment Handbook.*)

At Finton House, we recognise that bullying is one of the factors associated with a child who becomes vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and extremist behaviour. For more details, see *Child Protection & Safeguarding policy and KCSiE, Sept 2021.*

Bullying is an antisocial activity and needs to be dealt with sensitively. At Finton House School, we recognise that it can have a very negative impact on the lives of those who are bullied and, in extreme circumstances, can lead to psychological damage and even suicide. It can lead to criminal prosecution under 'harassment' and 'threatening behaviour'.

2. Aims

One of the school aims is that:

Everyone feels safe, happy and valued in a community that promotes lifelong health and wellbeing.

We achieve this by ensuring that:

- All children at Finton House (including EYFS) feel happy and secure at school.
- Children know how to report any instance of bullying.
- Children enjoy their learning without fear.
- Every child and adult at Finton House is treated with respect and the right not to be a victim of bullying.
- All children and staff report any instances of bullying to a person who can help.

3. Objectives

- To minimise the occurrence of bullying.
- To ensure all pupils, parents and staff have full awareness / understanding of bullying.
- To ensure that all children, parents and staff know and follow the procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying.
- To ensure that children feel safe and believe they will be listened to.

4. What is bullying?

Definition of bullying:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyberbullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. (Source: Preventing and tackling bullying – Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2017).

Bullying can be:

- PHYSICAL Pushing, hitting, kicking, damaging belongings
- VERBAL Name calling, racism, spreading rumours, teasing
- EMOTIONAL Excluding, tormenting (e.g. 'hiding' belongings), being unfriendly or threatening
- RACIST Racial taunts, discriminating statements
- RELIGIOUS Referring to religious affiliation in an exclusive and unpleasant manner.
- CULTURAL Making somebody feel uncomfortable because of their cultural beliefs or practices.
- SEXUAL/SEXIST Sexual innuendos, gestures and sexist comments
- GENDER Disparaging remarks or actions reflecting a person's gender.
- HOMOPHOBIC Disparaging remarks or actions reflecting a person's sexuality.
- DISABILITY Making somebody feel uncomfortable because of a disability.
- CYBER Abuse of any kind via text, email, websites and photos (see below).
- INTELLECTUAL Making someone feel uncomfortable regarding academic, intellectual performance or ability.
- INDIRECT OR Manipulating others to ostracise, marginalise or intimidate individuals.
- MANIPULATIVE Encouraging others to become agents of physical or verbal bullying against someone.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship, which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways; it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone); it may derive from an intellectual imbalance or result from having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating an individual either physically or online.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to a reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and is not acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

Cyberbullying (Please also read Pastoral policy framework for Sanctioning Poor Behaviour and DfE publication, '*Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges*', Updated Sept 2021 2018 & KCSiE, Sept 2023)

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyberbullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content, at a click.

Our school policy is not to allow children to carry mobile phones on any school trip and only Year 6 children are allowed to bring in mobiles to school, if they walk to and from school on their own. The mobile cannot be a Smart phone but has to be a phone with has no access to the internet. It must be left in the school office until going home time.

Each child in the Upper School has their own email address with their own unique username and password, which prevents emails being accessed easily by other children.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to ensure that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff (who has been formally authorised by the Head) they can examine data or files, and delete them, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a child's person's mobile phone.

Action Procedure at Finton House

If the electronic device might contain evidence in relation to an offence:

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that the device contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the Head or DSL who will pass it onto the police, as soon as is reasonably practicable. However, if the Head or DSL is not available the device should be handed into the police by the member of staff e.g. on a school residential trip. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. (Section 62 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 defines prohibited images of children. Section 63 of the Criminal Justice and Immigrations Act 2008 defines extreme pornographic images).

If the electronic device that **does not** contain evidence in relation to an offence:

If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they should still not delete or retain the material but instead consult with the Head or DSL before doing anything. If there is an inappropriate image on an electronic device such as iPad or mobile phone, the device, if possible, should be switched to airport mode, pin protected and shut down. It should not be sent to anyone or saved anywhere. In most cases with regards to the above, the parents will be informed unless it would prejudice the investigation.

For more information on how to respond to cyberbullying, please refer to the Technology and Online Safety policy and for sexual images the Child protection and Safeguarding policy – Appendix 2.

UK Safer Internet Centre: <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/> (0344 381 4772) is particularly useful when a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment includes an online element.

5. Bullying - Prevention

The school's response to bullying does not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. The staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils, which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This might involve talking to pupils about issues either in lessons, or through assemblies.

There is an ethos at Finton House where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. This culture is reflected in all aspects of school life and extends beyond the classroom to the corridors, the dining hall, the playground, and beyond the school gates including travel to and from school. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff. The celebrating of success at assemblies and prize giving is an important way of creating a positive school ethos together with our Finton Goals.

Children feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyberbullying. School is a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination. The Pupils' Council regularly provides opportunity for children to bring up any concerns they may have, children can use a link on the Frog Pastoral page to send an email to the Pastoral Team who will respond as soon as possible and years 5 and 6 have mentor sessions in small mixed groups where they can also discuss any aspect of bullying with a trusted adult.

The Pastoral team and DSLs regularly evaluate and update their approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers. They also review and ensure disciplinary sanctions are implemented. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.

Assemblies, Circle Time, PSHEE, RE, Mentoring Groups in Year 6 & Year 5 and Humanities lessons openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference. The Schools' policy of integrating a number of children with moderate SEN reflects this.

When required, the school will also draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with a proven track record and/or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying to provide effective staff training.

The school is also involved in nationwide events such as Anti-Bullying week and Children's Mental Health week.

Strategies are implemented to raise staff awareness which include shared resources, in house and external training e.g. online bullying. Any other communication is shared as necessary and takes place during staff meetings and via email. Finton staff share anti-bullying resources with parents and pupils on the Frog VLE.

6. Vulnerable pupils

Bullying can happen to all children and it can affect their social, mental and emotional health. There is evidence to suggest that children who are badly bullied in school are more likely to be bullied out of school, for instance, on their way to or from school or through cyberbullying. We also consider contextual safeguarding factors.

Some children are more likely to be the target of bullying because of the attitudes and behaviours other children have towards those who are different from themselves. For example, those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem or those with caring responsibilities may be more likely to experience bullying because of difference. In addition, children who have suffered from bereavement, have SEN siblings, LGBTQ+ (or perceived as LGBTQ+), separated parents are identified on our database so all staff are aware of who these more vulnerable children are. Children in care who are frequently on the move may also be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer.

These children are often the same children who might need greater support to deal with the impact of bullying, for example those who are going through a personal or family crisis. In addition, children with special educational needs or disabilities can often lack the social or communication skills to report such incidents so it is important that staff are alert to the potential bullying this group faces and that their mechanisms for reporting are accessible to all. Any changes in behaviour should not be put down to their disability.

The impact of bullying can be severe because of the nature and extent of the bullying or because it is combined with, other factors such as those mentioned above that also affect the social, mental and emotional health of the pupil.

7. Where bullying has a severe impact

In some circumstances, the consequences of bullying may lead to a child experiencing pronounced social, emotional or mental health difficulties. The school ensures there is appropriate provision for a child's short-term needs, including setting out what actions are being taken when bullying has had a serious impact on a child's ability to learn. The school ensures that it is working completely in partnership with the child's parents. If the bullying leads to persistent, long-lasting difficulties that cause the child to have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age, then the school would consider whether the child would benefit from extra support or even being assessed for special educational needs.

8. Support Information for adults working in the school

WARNING SIGNS:

Any of the following may indicate that a child is being bullied:

- Being frightened or unwilling to go to school
- Beginning to underachieve at school
- Often having clothes or other belongings damaged or "lost"
- Becoming withdrawn
- Not eating or sleeping well
- Having unexplained bruises, scratches etc.
- Becoming disruptive or aggressive
- Showing reluctance or evasiveness in discussing any of the above
- Unexplained obsessive behaviour
- Frequent complaints of illness – tummy aches etc.
- Trying to please too much

VULNERABLE CHILDREN:

The following children may be more vulnerable to bullying than others:

- Children who are "different" in some way e.g. Special Needs
- Children who have recently suffered bereavement
- Children with unpleasant or irritating habits
- Children who are adopted or act as a carer

The following children may be more likely than others to become bullies:

- Children who do not "fit in" with others
- Children who may have been "spoiled"
- Children who have themselves been bullied e.g. by adults or older siblings
- Children under great pressure to succeed
- Children who have no sense of achievement
- Children, who have recently suffered a traumatic event e.g. parental divorce, birth of a new baby, etc.

'DANGER AREAS' WITHIN THE SCHOOL:

Bullying is more likely to occur:

- If children are unsupervised
- Where supervision is more "thinly spread" e.g. playground, Wendy houses

- In places which are "out of sight" - cloakrooms, changing rooms, lavatories, etc.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT:

The following practices are unhelpful and should be avoided:

- Intimidating, threatening or humiliating behaviours of any kind towards children
- Favouritism of any kind
- Using derogatory / insulting / hurtful names or comments when with children
- Over-emphasising achievement (rather than personal development and effort)
- Having marks for work read out publicly (either by child or by teacher)
- Allowing children to constantly "choose" teams, groups, etc.
- Using or allowing disparaging comments re any racial/social group: condoning prejudice

INTERVENTION IN PLACE:

Finton House has adopted the following practices to help prevent and identify any bullying:

- Incidents are recorded on CPOMS.
- Children are made aware of who to talk to if they have a problem.
- Child friendly anti-bullying posters are displayed in all teaching rooms, toilets, cloakrooms etc.
- Regular assemblies discussing bullying encouraging children to 'Tell Someone'
- Circle time covering issues such as anti-bullying
- Visiting speakers e.g. NSPCC and ChildLine, Coram Life Education, It Happens
- Adoption of bullying-related charities by individual Houses
- Information sources and website links available to parents and children on the Pastoral page of Frog Learn
- A link on the Frog Pastoral page so that children can send an email to the Assistant Head of Wellbeing, who will then respond as soon as possible.
- Well-equipped playground with lots of activities on offer
- Staff member to initiate games in break times
- Buddy/friendship bench to be used by those who would like a friend
- Y6/Y5 mentoring groups led by younger members of staff
- Briefing of duty staff and staff duty list on windows facing into playground so handovers work smoothly
- PSHEE lessons
- Regular INSET for staff

SANCTIONS – See Pastoral Care Policy. Also, each member of staff is provided with a copy of the sanction framework.

9. Guidelines for Practice/Procedure

The Finton House guidelines on practice / procedure have been designed to incorporate the following essential features, which enable patterns to be identified and dealt with effectively:

- Reporting - everyone should understand the importance of "telling" about any incidents of bullying and should have a clear line of referral.
- Listening Buddy – Finton House has a named member of staff acting as a 'Listening Buddy', to whom children in every year can confide.
- Each class has a worry box where children can post worries
- Confidence in referral - anyone who reports a problem in this area should know that they will be taken seriously and that positive action will take place. Having unexplained bruises, scratches etc.
- All incidents of bullying should be dealt with promptly, fairly and effectively.

- Approach - all parties involved (including bullies) should be handled in a friendly, sympathetic and understanding way.
- Recording - all instances of bullying, including cyberbullying outside school, are recorded on CPOMS where a copy is automatically forwarded to the class teacher, Assistant Head of Wellbeing and Deputy Head (Pastoral.) They will then decide whether to inform the DSL and Head. Recording all instances of bullying allows the school to identify patterns, evaluate, and monitor approaches. Minor incidents are recorded in a book by the playground and are monitored by the class teacher and Assistant Head of Wellbeing. Pastoral issues such as problems at home, or issues such as eating/self-harm, which are not considered incidents, are recorded on CPOMS and copied to the appropriate member of staff. The termly pastoral report to the Board of Governors makes them aware of any incidences.
- Record keeping and review of incidents. The Deputy Head Pastoral and Assistant Head Wellbeing meet weekly to discuss any pastoral issues which might include playground incidents or bullying incidents. They have a clear picture of bullying incidents. Phase leaders meet with Deputy Head Pastoral and Assistant Head Wellbeing termly to discuss Behaviour across the school and focus on how to deal with any emerging patterns of trends.

10. Procedure for dealing with bullying

STAFF If you see bullying or a problem is reported or referred to you:

On learning about an incident (within 24 hours)

- Make it clear that the bullying behaviour and threats of bullying must stop immediately.
- Find out the facts - talk to the bullies and the victims individually.
- Get the bully to apologise; reconcile the pupils if possible; anything, which has been taken, should be returned or replaced and any damage done should be made good.
- Class Teachers normally record the incident on CPOMS. However, if you are not the Class Teacher of the children involved and a problem arises e.g. in the playground or in your lesson, you should take the appropriate action at the time and record it on the incident tab on the School's data base which will automatically inform the Assistant Head of Wellbeing and Deputy Head (Pastoral.)

After learning about an incident of bullying

- Make an attempt to help the bully change his/her behaviour. When talking to bullies, be firm, but be careful not to use bullying techniques yourself (i.e. do not threaten or humiliate).
- Take any practical measures, which you believe are necessary, e.g. change eating arrangements, allocations to different groups, etc. Liaise with the Pastoral team to make changes together.
- If bullying is about a particular issue, then raise and discuss it with the class, using peer pressure to stop the bullying.
- In simple cases, nothing more may be required, but if the problem is serious / involved, you must refer it personally to the Class Teacher, who will then deal with the problem.
- The Deputy Head/Head must be informed of any problems mentioned by parents to staff.
- In all cases where you wish to involve parents, you must discuss the matter with the Assistant Head of Wellbeing or Deputy Head/Head.
- Children who have been the perpetrator or victim of bullying at any time during their school career are highlighted on the child's profile page on the school's database.
- All staff are notified in the weekly staff meetings of any incidences of bullying. Governors are informed termly of any updates on incidents / trends.

CHILDREN

- Children who are victims of bullying should deal with the immediate problem if they can (using techniques / strategies taught by the school) - but in any case, they should tell someone: this may be a friend, teacher, Listening Buddy, parent or the Head, Childline or NSPCC. They should know that whomever they tell about the problem would then do something to help.

- Children who know bullying is happening should always tell an adult (the Listening Buddy, a teacher, Assistant Head of Wellbeing, Deputy Head, Head or a parent) who will then do something about the problem.
- Children who see bullying taking place should immediately intervene if this is sensible, or tell an adult the details of the incident as soon as possible – See Pastoral Care Policy for details of the Pastoral Care team.

PARENTS

The School involves parents as much as possible to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. It is essential that parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child. They are encouraged to reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.

- Parents who suspect that a child is either the victim or the perpetrator of bullying including cyberbullying should discuss the matter with the child / Class Teacher / Pastoral Team as appropriate, in order to establish a true picture. It may be that no further action is needed, but if it becomes clear that bullying is, taking place parents should work with the school to deal effectively with the problem.
- Parents who are sure that a child is involved in either bullying or being bullied should discuss the problem with the Class Teacher or with the Assistant Head of Wellbeing or Deputy Head (Pastoral.)

EXTERNAL AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident will be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. (*Please see Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.*)

However, external support can be given to children whether or not it is deemed a child protection concern. Even where safeguarding is not considered an issue, the school draw on a range of external services to support the child who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue, which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying. This may include support from the Schools' peripatetic counsellor. Full details can be found in *Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children, Sept 2019*. For Wandsworth children we would complete an Early Help Assessment form.

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If the Head felt that an offence might have been committed, they would seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, any person who sends an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient. (*Please also see Technology and Online Safety policy.*)

LIMITS OF INVOLVEMENT:

The limits of involvement are implied by the guidelines but are summarised as follows:

- For Pupil:** (victim) dealing with immediate problem or telling an adult. (Observer) intervening to discourage.
- For Class Teacher:** dealing with persistent bullying in own class whilst referring to Assistant Head Wellbeing. The Deputy Head may be referred to for advice and support and parents involved.

For Assistant Head Wellbeing: dealing with persistent or serious case of bullying, but with the full knowledge and support of the Head/Deputy Head.

Deputy Head/DSL: to be made aware of all serious and ongoing cases of bullying and will involve parents and the Head.

Head: dealing directly with a serious one-off case, thereafter refer to Head of Pastoral or if deemed more serious SMT.

11. Bullying which occurs outside school premises

School staff members have the power to discipline children for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. There may be occasions when the Head would need to consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or the anti-social behaviour coordinator of the local authority where the child lives of the action taken against the child. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police would always be informed.

While school staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

More detailed advice on teachers' powers to discipline, including their power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour that occurs outside school, is included in *'Behaviour and discipline in Schools - Advice for Headteachers and School staff', Jan 2016*.

12. Listening buddy

- School Listening Buddy is named on school posters

Responsibilities of Listening Buddy:

- To maintain own awareness in this area, by means of training courses, literature etc.
- To make themselves available to the children at all times.
- To promote awareness, prevention training etc. within the school.
- To maintain resources as needed and to ensure availability / distribution.
- To liaise with other members of staff regarding relevant components of the curriculum.

13. Training

Staff will receive training and attend professional courses on how to prevent bullying including cyberbullying e.g. Educare on line training. Advice is regularly shared with colleagues in staff meetings. Discussions in these meetings are invited from staff to talk about children and their welfare and how to manage and improve behaviour.

14. Behaviour Generally

Please refer to the Pastoral Care Policy for full details about Rewards and Sanctions. Whenever any member of staff deals with bullying they should follow the instructions contained therein. The Head may use a full range of sanctions to ensure that bullying stops (strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying).

