

## **I. Bullying Definition**

### **A. What is bullying?**

Bullying takes many forms. It can be defined as a systematic and repeated abuse of power leading to domination of, or hurt to, others, leading to feelings of oppression, helplessness and humiliation. It may relate to a person's race, religion or cultural background; appearance or health; sexual orientation; family or home circumstances; sexual harassment; learning needs or disabilities.

- **Physical bullying :**  
Is when a person or group of people use physical action to bully, such as pushing, deliberate tripping, poking, hair-pulling, hitting, etc. Repeated intentional damage to personal property also constitutes physical bullying.
- **Verbal bullying :**  
Repeated name-calling, verbal abuse, racist remarks, insults, taunting, spreading rumours, mockery.
- **Covert bullying :**  
Deliberately excluding a person from a group or class, spreading rumours, lying about a person, repeatedly playing tricks with the collusion of others, attempts to make a person feel humiliated and isolated.
- **Psychological bullying :**  
Manipulation, threats, stalking.
- **Cyber bullying**  
Using technology to bully verbally, psychologically or socially through such avenues as email, chat rooms, mobile phone networks and social networking sites such as Facebook, including use of flaming techniques [using aggressive or vulgar messages], insulting messages or photographs, gossip denigrating a person with a view to damaging reputation or friendships, or making public embarrassing information or secrets online.  
  
Also includes deliberately excluding someone from an online group with the intention to isolate them from their peers
- **Cyber stalking**  
Repeated harassment that may contain threats or creates fear and feelings of helplessness.

### **B. Bullying Myths**

- "It's just harmless fun."
- It is the fault of the person being bullied.
- Children "just have to put up with it."
- Victims eventually toughen up.
- Adults getting involved makes things worse.
- "It's part of human nature."
- It's inevitable.
- Bullies need to be hurt.
- "It's all part of growing up."
- It is mainly physical.
- Children can sort it out themselves.
- Children "need to learn to fight their own battles."

### **C. Symptoms of bullying**

The student being bullied may display some, or all, of the following symptoms:

- a sudden preference to spend time with adults rather than their peers
- regularly left out when groups or teams are formed
- schoolwork deteriorates without obvious cause
- non-attendance or erratic attendance at school
- mockery or remarks made by peers when student responds in lessons
- unaccountable loss of, or damage to, student's property
- previously extrovert students become withdrawn
- student becomes isolated
- student feigns illness, or attempts to avoid school attendance

## II. School Position on Bullying

LTPSS aims to provide a safe, supportive and positive learning environment for all students. The School is opposed to any form of bullying, and is committed to promoting learning and personal growth within a culture of inclusion.

We believe every student has the right to feel safe and secure at school, both physically and emotionally.

We believe we should face up to any incidents of bullying and intervene immediately to prevent problems escalating.

We believe that:

*Students have a right to be heard.*

*Students should know how to report bullying and how to get help.*

*Students and Parents must be confident in the school's ability to deal with any incidences of bullying.*

*Steps must be taken to help students feel safe and to rebuild their confidence and resilience after any incidence of bullying may occur.*

Cultural diversity should be celebrated within the school community.

- Students should: Show **Care** for their community and fellow students, be **Courteous** and **Considerate** towards every member of the school, students, teachers and non-teaching staff. They should be aware of the steps to take if and when incidents of bullying occur, and report any such incidents immediately.
- Teachers should: Be aware of the school policy on bullying, and follow each and every report of such incidents according to the strategy laid out by the school. Written records should be kept, including follow-up reports. Teachers should be vigilant and monitor changes in patterns of behaviour in pupils.
- Parents should: support their children by encouraging a positive attitude towards the school and its policies, and support the school by agreeing to take part in any action plan devised for their children when necessary. They should be aware of the appropriate action and procedures to use if they are concerned about their child. They should have confidence that the school will take seriously, and investigate, any complaint of bullying.

**NB** A School/Student/Parent contract covering Bullying and the School Policy on this should be signed by all.

### **III. Policy / Ethos of the school community**

#### **A. LTPSS will**

- Establish a clear anti-bullying policy.
- Create a caring, respectful, inclusive and supportive school culture.
- Follow clearly-defined procedures to respond appropriately to any reported incidents of bullying.
- Include programmes in the curriculum promoting personal development, social skills, coping strategies, recognition of motives for bullying and being effective and responsible bystanders.
- Provide professional development to assist all school staff to understand the anti-bullying policy, implement measures to deal with any instances of reported bullying, and provide support for students at high risk times and in high risk settings.
- Consult regularly with the Student Association and Prefects on their roles as effective bystanders and examples of setting peer examples.
- Create safe physical environments within the school and develop staff supervision practice to limit incidences of bullying, with special emphasis on cyber-bullying.
- Engage and support family involvement by maintaining regular communication and awareness-raising programmes for parents and the wider community.
- Regularly review this policy.

#### **B. Role of students**

- Students should actively demonstrate positive behaviour, and support for their peers.
- Students can help promote an honest and open policy which secures whole-school support for the anti-bullying policy.
- Given support and training, students from each year group can act as ‘first responders’, giving other students the opportunity to discuss their problems initially with peers. These students would then suggest appropriate actions, and support the student being bullied in taking the next steps.
- Students must be encouraged to be ‘positive bystanders’ i.e. to take a role in the prevention of escalating problems within their peer group.
- The Student Association and Prefects could take a leading role in setting up events such as bullying Awareness days, or an Anti-Bullying Week each year. The School would support these initiatives by providing speakers or workshop facilities for students.

#### **C. Role of Bystanders**

Bystanders are witnesses to bullying who take on negative roles : they may have often previously been bullied themselves but have now been ‘accepted’ into the bully’s hierarchy and act as ‘assistants’ or ‘helpers’, or simply adopted a passive, non-interventionist role.

- ‘Insider’ or ‘supporter’ bystanders are frequently grateful to be given a supporting role. They are not in themselves confident enough to be leaders and do not initiate action, but they are nonetheless equally guilty of bullying.
- ‘Outsider’ bystanders do not participate in the bullying, but also take no action. They observe, but distance themselves. Safety for them lies in feeling part of the larger group, they do not want to draw attention to themselves by helping those bullied.

Bystanders need help to release themselves from their roles as supporters of bullying, and to become active members of healthy peer groups. Active students tend to be more confident and self-assured, whilst passive students may lack the social skills and confidence to combat victimisation or to sustain strong friendships themselves.

Students must be encouraged to take an active part in the school community and participate in what is going on around them. This can help them to move away from being ‘bystanders’ to being active protagonists for a safe and inclusive school culture. Without a supportive audience, bullies are unable to operate. Students who feel secure at school and enjoy being actively engaged throughout the day are more likely to be involved with combating bullying and helping to create a better school environment for all.

*Students need to learn to accept personal responsibility for any wrongdoing, and to find ways to make amends, with the support of the school.*

#### **D. Role of Teachers**

Teachers are active listeners and action takers in all reported cases of bullying. They take every report seriously and take necessary steps to prevent, investigate, intervene, counsel or refer the case to other professionals.

On the preventive side, teachers promote a restorative school ethos, model positive relationships, conduct life education lessons and assemblies and promote study circles to enhance positive relationships among students.

Teachers at different levels will work closely to turn bullying cases into educational opportunities which would help those involved grow and learn more about positive relationships among people. The bullied will learn to understand and forgive, the bully will face their consequence stipulated by the school rule if not the local law and restore positive relationship with others, bystanders will understand and take their responsibility as a member of a positive loving community. Positive bystanders will be applauded.

#### **E. Role of Parents**

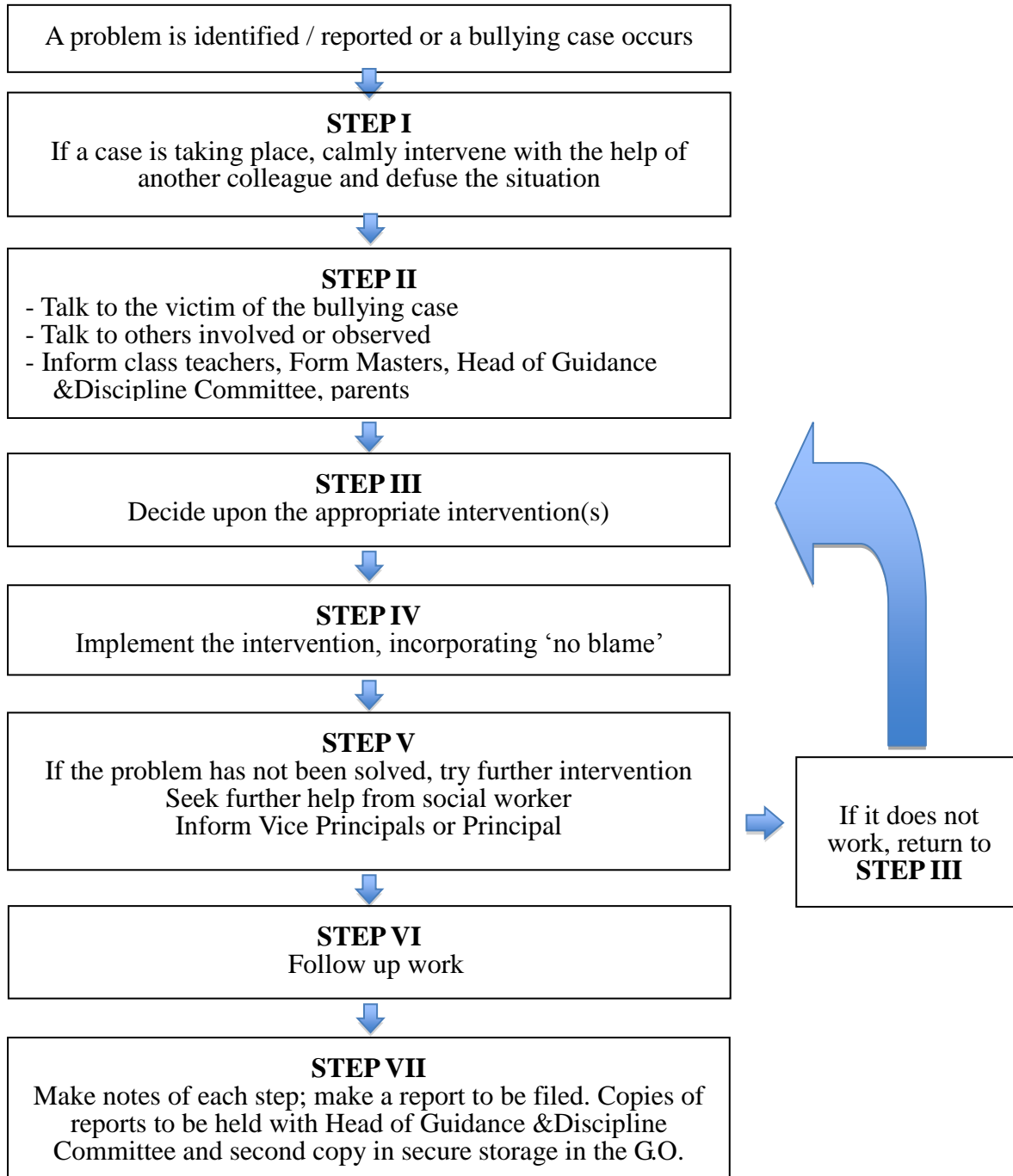
Parents are care-takers of those involved in any bullying case, including the bullied, the bully and the bystanders. They will co-operate with the school and teachers in investigating and intervening in cases of bullying.

## IV. When Bullying Happens

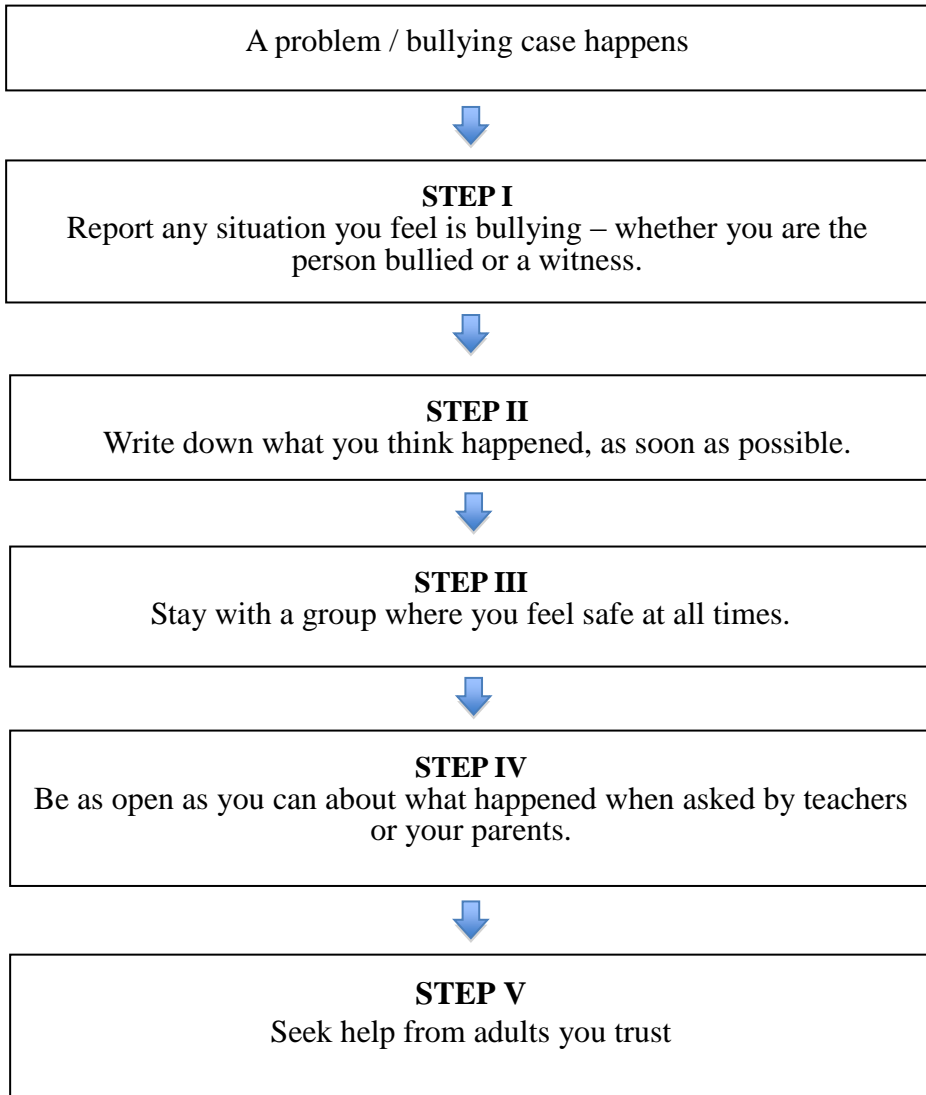
Students and parents should be aware that there is a designated group of people within the school community to whom a first approach should be made. This group will include student 'first responders' and a variety of staff at all levels throughout the school, including the General Office [G.O.] Members of this group will then take appropriate action according to the 'flow chart' procedures. Senior Management will be kept informed at all times.

All incidents of bullying behaviour and actions that follow should be recorded. If serious or longstanding cases occur, senior Management might consider instigating a 'Cause for concern' register.

### A. A Guide to Teacher Handling Bullying Case



## B A Guide to Students



### C. A Guide to Parents

Before bullying is confirmed: Be aware of behavior changes in your child. Take notice of signs such as sudden unwillingness to go to school, sudden claims of sickness, serious damage to clothing or equipment etc.



**STEP I**  
If your child reports being bullied: Stay calm and try to find out the details, and understand from all perspectives.



**STEP II**  
Contact your child's class teacher or Head of Guidance & Discipline Committee



**STEP III**  
Discuss necessary action to protect the safety of your child with the school.



**STEP IV**  
Co-operate with the school in all intervention matters.



Cooperate with the school in the intervention measures



#### **D. Consequences of Bullying**

- Detention – different levels according to the severity of each case; lunchtime, after school, Saturday morning.
- Internal suspension – student removed from lessons/contact with other students, to work in isolation/under supervision.
- Exclusion – in cases of gross misconduct, parents will be asked to remove their child from school.
- Individual Behaviour Monitoring and Reporting.
- Customised student and parent contract with school.

## **V. Proactive and Preventive Measures**

- Set up 'Cause for Concern' file where teachers and other staff may flag up possible students at risk.
- Include bullying and student behaviour guidance in 'Curriculum and Life Education' planning.
- Have trained 'Anti-Bullying Companions' around the campus during recess, lunchtime and after school [if possible] to look out for potential cases of bullying, and be available as peer 'first-responders'.
- Provide professional development opportunities for all staff, including the G.O. and janitorial staff, to raise awareness of bullying symptoms.
- Promote this Anti-bullying Policy by means of a variety of activities and competitions for students.



*LTPSS*

*Caring Campus Pledge*

*We all respect each other,*

*We all care for each other,*

*We all show love for every member of the LTPSS community.*