

Tanfield Lea Road
Stanley
Co. Durham
DH9 8AY

TANFIELD SCHOOL

Specialist College of Science and Engineering



Tel. 01207 232881
Fax. 01207 282922

Headteacher
Mr S Clough BSC Hons. NPQH

27th September 2018

Dear Parent/Carer,

Bullying affects lots of young people and happens in many schools, but it is the way it is dealt with which makes the difference.

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it is usually defined as repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically, and is often aimed at certain people because of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or any other aspect such as appearance or disability. Bullying can take many forms including: physical assault, repeated teasing, making threats, repeated name calling or cyber bullying.

No child deserves to be bullied – it is unacceptable behaviour and will not be tolerated in Tanfield school. It is for this reason Tanfield School is embarking on the All Together anti-bullying programme provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA). ABA is a charity that works to reduce bullying in schools and it is based at the National Children's Bureau (NCB). In order to make sure that we improve the support we offer, we want to find out the levels of bullying in our school and to find out how our students feel about school. For this reason, we are inviting all students to complete an anonymous survey. We will then ask students to complete the survey again in the summer term of 2019 to make sure we have made improvements in our school. The following information is important since it will explain about the survey and how the information gathered will be used.

Why we are writing to parents/carers

We are asking for your permission for your child to be invited to complete the survey. If you are happy for your child to be invited to do this, then you do not have to do anything. However, if you do not want your child to complete the survey then please let us know by Friday 5th October 2018. If we do not hear from you, we will assume you are happy for your child to be invited. Please be reassured that you or your child choosing not to take part in the survey will not disadvantage you or your child in any way.

Why has my child been asked to take part and what will they do?

The survey has been specially designed by the Anti-Bullying Alliance for all students in years 3 and above. It is an online survey which should take about 15 minutes to complete. The answers your child gives to the questionnaire will not be seen by their friends, teachers or you unless your child chooses an adult to help them complete the survey.

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What are the downsides of taking part?

The survey has been very carefully designed so that it will be easy for children to answer. If there are questions they don't like, they can leave these out. They will also be able to stop answering the survey questions at any time if they wish. Completing the survey should not cause them any distress, however, if they should become upset, school staff will be on hand to offer support. Information will also be provided about other sources of advice and help – e.g. about talking to their family, calling Childline and so on.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

One advantage is that your child will help shape the approaches we use as a school when trying to prevent and tackle bullying, for example, it will help us to make sure that the school's anti-bullying policy covers all the important areas that concern children in our school. By asking these questions, students will also know we take incidents of bullying seriously as a school and that we care about our students' wellbeing.

What will happen with the information that your child gives us?

As I have said, the information from the survey will help our school to improve its work to tackle bullying. All information collected will be kept confidential and will be carefully stored on a secure system held by the Anti-Bullying Alliance in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Schools will not have access to individual completed surveys and whole year group reports will be sent back to them anonymously. Some of the headline results may be shared with key people, like the school's governors and Ofsted. Again this information will be anonymised and it will not be possible to identify any individual students.

What we need parents/carers to do:

We hope that you have found this information useful and that you will be happy for your child to be invited to take part in this survey. However, as explained at the start of this letter, if you do not want your child to participate in this survey, you need to contact the school by Friday 5th October, to let us know.

If you decide you would like your child to take part you are still free to withdraw your child at any time and without giving a reason; simply let us know that you do not wish them to participate. If you are unsure about whether you would like your child to take part and you have some questions about the survey, you are welcome to contact school.

If you suspect your child is being bullied, please don't ignore it. Find a quiet time to talk to your child. Explain that bullying is unacceptable and that no one should have to put up with it. Promise to do all you can to stop it.

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Make an appointment to see your child's Year manager as soon as possible. Useful tips for the meeting:

- Decide what you want to say and what you'd like to achieve from the meeting before you go.
- Try to stay calm even though you may feel angry and emotional.
- Don't blame the staff in school - they may be unaware of the bullying.
- Give specific examples of how your child is being bullied.
- Discuss what action will take be taken.
- Arrange to meet again within two weeks to discuss progress.

If you're unhappy with the way the school deals with the situation - either at the meeting or after the school has taken action – please inform or make an appointment to see the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher and go through the same process described above. If you are still unhappy with the response, please contact our Vice-Chair of Governors Mr Clive Smith who is the designated governor with responsibility for anti-bullying. Mr Smith can be contacted via the school main office.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Jones', written over a light blue circular watermark.

Mr C Jones
Deputy Headteacher.

Mr C Smith
Vice-Chair Governors

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Forms to be returned to your child's Year manager by Friday 5th October 2018

If you are happy for your child to take part you don't need to do anything.

You only need to complete this slip if you do not wish your child to complete the wellbeing questionnaire.

I wish to withdraw my child from completing the questionnaire:

Child's name: _____

Parent/carer's signature: _____

Date: _____