



THE BUCKINGHAM SCHOOL

A SPECIALIST SPORTS COLLEGE

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Headteacher: Mr A McGinnes

22 January 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

I promised before Christmas that I would write in January, but I am delaying the planned letter after events last week. I am sure that most of the community saw the posts on Facebook, or at least heard about them.

There are two ways I could view the dialogue:

Firstly, defensively. I know that many of the posts were by former students and parents, regarding incidents in the past. As far as twenty years in the past in some cases. How can that be relevant to what is happening now? And it isn't really fair to not make that clear. Many other posts were in support of the school. A large proportion were questioning whether the original poster has actually followed the school's own complaints procedure, before encouraging the community to attack the school, far and wide. To be clear, to date the original poster has declined to meet with me, and has not made a formal complaint. I could also mention the students who have contacted the Mayor (administrator of the forum), as I did, arguing that the posts do not represent free speech: the school has no real right of reply, because it cannot break confidentiality.

Alternatively, the Headteacher could – and did – lie awake, pondering the question... "What if some of the postings were true? What if some students are not sure how to raise bullying issues, and there is more going on than we know about?" Not worth the risk, is it? Therefore, a refreshed whole-school anti-bullying initiative launches on Monday, 4 February. Watch this space – the ambition will be to ensure that the entire community is 100% clear about what bullying is, the harm it does, what can be done to stop it, and the different ways of reporting it.

Everyone should be clear about the lengths that the school can and will go to, to ensure that bullying is not tolerated. We have an absolute zero tolerance to bullying. No student should be excused for damaging the well-being or education of another. As a school we will redouble our efforts, to make sure that we do everything possible to find out about every single case of bullying in our school.

In the meantime, we have tried to identify every current parent who expressed concerns. We have tried to contact these parents to ensure that we are aware of everything that we would want to know as a school.

If you have concerns about the way the school has handled a case of bullying, please do not hesitate to contact me. We would also like to thank those members of the community who posted in support of the school – we truly value your contribution.

Cont'd...

The Buckingham School is concerned that every student should have the opportunity to attend school activities/obtain equipment, regardless of their financial circumstances. As such, it may be possible to subsidise those students who would otherwise be unable to attend trips/purchase items. Please feel free to write in confidence to Mrs S Gallagher or Mrs K Bones at office@buckinghamschool.org, if you wish to seek assistance, or obtain more information about Pupil Premium funding.



Finally, I have taken the opportunity to provide important links to the school's Anti-Bullying and Complaints & Resolution policies. Alternatively, both policies are published on the school's website www.buckinghamschool.org and can be found under 'About Us' section.

Anti-Bullying Policy

https://www.buckinghamschool.org/_site/data/files/files/Anti%20Bullying%20Policy%20-%20Next%20Review%20Dec%202019.pdf

Complaints & Resolutions Policy

https://www.buckinghamschool.org/_site/data/files/files/Complaints%20%20Resolutions%20Policy%20-%20Next%20Review%20Sep%20202019.pdf

With best wishes,



Mr A McGinnes
Headteacher

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