



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Author / Owner:	School Community Board
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STATEMENT OF INTENT

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied, and that staff are free from fear of bullying by pupils.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at schools. Throughout this policy the term 'parent' is used to mean a pupil's parent, carer or guardian.

Unfortunately bullying is something that happens in all walks of life. In spite of our best efforts bullying does still happen in schools, including ours.

It is in the nature of bullying that it can take place in secret or without adult knowledge. In our school we have many approaches which provide children with opportunities to bring these problems out into the open. These include prefects, 'ask it baskets' and the School's Ambassadors as well as more traditional routes such as talking to Class Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Mealtime Assistants.

We take the issue of bullying very seriously and it is important that we know exactly what we mean by bullying.

Children come to school to learn about many things. One area in which they often have much to discover is how to get along with others. In this, as in all areas of children's learning, they will not always get it right first time and it is from the mistakes they make that they will learn and become more mature in their relationships. It is important that children should have the freedom to explore these issues and that their less successful attempts should not be misinterpreted as bullying.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

- All School Community Board Representatives, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All School Community Board Representatives and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Statutory Duties of Schools

Head Teachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils. Under the Education Inspections Bill 2006 the duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside school, where it is reasonable to do so. Schools also have a duty to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils' (Education Act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004).

Government guidance advises that the policy should also address the bullying of staff by pupils ('Safe to learn' DCSF 2007).

Scope of this policy and links to other policies

This policy includes:

- bullying of pupils by pupils within school
- bullying of and/or by pupils outside of school, where the school is aware of it
- bullying of staff by pupils within or outside school
- allegations about bullying of pupils by staff will be dealt with under the school's Safeguarding Policy.

This policy has links to the following school policies and procedures:

- equality and diversity policy
- behaviour policy
- acceptable use policy (internet safety)
- safeguarding (child protection) policy
- complaints procedure

What is bullying?

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- is meant to hurt – the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it.
- happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a 'one off' incident.
- involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

It can be:

- Physical, e.g. kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings
- Verbal, e.g. name calling, taunting, threats, offensive remarks
- Relational, e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups
- Cyber, e.g. texts, e-mails, picture/video clip bullying, Instant Messaging (IM)

Where individuals or groups bully different people, this will be seen as a pattern of bullying behaviour and treated as such."

This school recognises that bullying which is motivated by prejudice is a particular concern, for example racist, sexist and homophobic bullying and bullying related to perceptions about disability and/or special educational needs. All staff will be provided with appropriate training in equality and diversity, so that they are equipped to tackle these issues on a wider scale as well as in relation to bullying.

Bullying is not falling out with friends – this happens all the time and is a normal part of school life.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- 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 school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

Identifying and reporting concerns about bullying

All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

Pupils who are being bullied may not report it. However, there may be changes in their behaviour, such as those. School teaching and support staff will be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.

Pupils who are bullying others also need support to help them understand and change their behaviour.

Pupils who are aware of bullying ('bystanders') can be a powerful force in helping to address it and will be encouraged to do so in a safe way.

All pupils will be encouraged to report bullying by:-

- talking to a member of staff of their choice
- placing a concern in the class 'worry' box
- contacting local and national support agencies for advice/support
- Staff who are being bullied will be encouraged to report it to a colleague of their choice.

Parents will be encouraged to report concerns about bullying and to support the school in tackling it. Trying to resolve bullying directly with pupils or their families can lead to problems escalating.

RESPONDING TO REPORTS ABOUT BULLYING

School

The school will take the following steps when dealing with concerns about bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, it will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been made aware of it and in accordance with the School's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.
- A clear account of the concern will be recorded on CPOMS and the DSL and DDSLs alerted.

- An appropriate person will be designated to interview everyone involved and keep a detailed record.
- Class Teachers will be kept informed.
- Parents and other relevant adults will be kept informed.
- Where bullying occurs outside school, any other relevant schools or agencies will be informed about the concerns and any actions taken.
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties involved and in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy.

Pupils and staff

Pupils and staff who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- providing reassurance that the bullying will be addressed.
- offering continuous support through pastoral counselling where appropriate.
- the use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. educational psychology, where appropriate.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- informing parents to help change the attitude of the pupil
- the use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies where appropriate

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- official warnings to cease offending
- detention
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- confiscation of mobile phones, in line with our Acceptable Use (internet safety) policy

- fixed-term suspension
- permanent exclusion

Parents

Most concerns about bullying will be resolved through discussion between home and school. However, where a parent feels their concerns have not been resolved, they are invited to use the formal Complaints Procedure.

Where a pupil is involved in bullying others outside school, e.g. in the street or through the use of the internet at home, parents will be asked to work with the school in addressing their child's behaviour, for example:

- restricting/monitoring their use of the internet or mobile phone
- referral of the family to external support agencies will be made where appropriate

Preventative measures

The school will raise awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, family group time, assemblies, subject areas and informal discussion, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

A senior member of the school staff will be identified to lead on the implementation of the policy and act as the link person with the Board of Trustees.

An annual report will be made to the Board of Trustees, including statistics about:

- the number of reported concerns
 - monitoring information about the pupils involved
 - motivations for bullying
 - actions taken and outcomes
- Statistical information will be provided to the local authority as required.

The school will review the policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.