

Anti-Bullying Policy Version 2

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our aim is to maintain an environment characterised by warmth, co-operation, respect and mutual support. Diversity is celebrated and all members of the school should flourish without fear. We seek to create an ethos of good behaviour where all members of our school community treat one another with respect, recognising that this is the right way to behave. Bullying of any kind is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Every pupil (and every member of staff) has the right to be safe and happy in School and to be protected when feeling vulnerable.

INTRODUCTION

The school regards bullying as a very serious issue. It can cause serious psychological damage. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, threatening behaviour and malicious communications. These include the *Protection from Harassment Act, 1997*, the *Malicious Communications Act, 1988*, the *Communications Act, 2003* and the *Public Order Act, 1986*. If the Prep Head believes that an offence may have been committed, assistance from the police will be sought.

We understand that bullying can be fuelled by prejudice including: racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, disability. Bullying can be related to appearance, a health condition, special educational needs or because a child is adopted or is a career. Pupils who are perceived to be different in some way can be vulnerable. It may occur directly or through cyber technology such as social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email. The school takes an active approach to prevent bullying and to promote respect for others.

The Anti Bullying policy will be communicated to parents on the website and in the Pastoral Handbook. Parents are requested to contact their child's class teacher if they have any concerns about bullying. The Head is also available to discuss these issues.

Our policy has regard to the DCSF publication *Safe to Learn-Embedding Anti-Bullying work in Schools* and *Preventing and Tackling Bullying*, DFE 2011. (www.education.gov.uk).

All staff meet regularly, enabling patterns of bullying to be identified and addressed. The approach to bullying is regularly evaluated, for example taking into account developments in technology.

Staff are familiarised with the Anti Bullying Policy during their Induction. Training is provided for the whole staff in the CPD programme.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING: WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is behaviour that is repeated over time. It intentionally hurts another person or group of people physically or emotionally, making them feel uncomfortable, miserable, or threatened. Bullying includes:

Any form of physical contact that intends to harm or cause distress – eg, hitting, tripping, pushing, kicking.

Sexual or sexist harassment, racial, religious, cultural or homophobic abuse, unkind references to a disability, special educational needs, persistent or malicious name calling – eg, teasing, insulting, threatening, swearing.

Behaviour that is deliberately unfriendly, and makes other people feel uncomfortable, humiliated or excluded – eg, spreading rumours, graffiti, tormenting, intimidating glances or gestures.

Hiding, removing or damaging property or borrowing without the owner's permission.

Offensive telephone calls/text messages, hurtful or defamatory e-mail or other electronic messages/images. Malicious references to members of the School community on the internet are also seen as being in the School's area of concern. This type of bullying is referred to as cyber-bullying.

Although this policy is primarily concerned with behaviour in School and offsite activities, action will be taken against bullying wherever it occurs.

PREVENTION OF BULLYING

Measures taken by staff to prevent bullying include:

- Anti-bullying lessons in PSHE
- Addressing the issue in assemblies
- Addressing the issue through lessons – ICT, RE, PHSE
- Low profile, but frequent, patrolling of areas where bullying may occur: such as lunch queue, play areas, corridors
- Being aware of vulnerable pupils and supporting them in class to avoid isolation and humiliation; highlighting the value of cooperation so that positive peer pressure reduces the potential for

bullying to occur. Group work has the potential to encourage a collaborative ethos

RECOGNISING SIGNS OF DISTRESS IN THE VICTIM

People react differently and the level of a person's distress or hurt is not always evident. They may initially be unwilling to discuss the situation, or may even deny that there is a problem. Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, withdrawn, feigning illness or clinging to adults. They may show changes in their work patterns, may lack concentration or even truant from school. They may isolate themselves both inside and outside the classroom.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO TALK

The victim of bullying should feel able to talk directly to a trusted teacher. To facilitate this, staff must create the right climate by being available, listening objectively, reassuring the pupil that what they say is being taken seriously.

Staff must communicate clearly the message that keeping silent only protects the person(s) responsible for the bullying.

PROCEDURES FOR STAFF

Upon receipt of a complaint of bullying, the Member of Staff should consult the Head.

Pupils involved could be asked to make a written report, if appropriate. When it is clear that bullying has taken place make it clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate and to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress. If appropriate, those involved in the bullying incident are brought together to discuss the situation with a view to reconciliation and fostering a positive relationship.

The Head will make a decision about appropriate punishment or whether other action is necessary eg, an apology is to be made, restitution of property etc. Bullies will have to apologise and make amends.

Punishments vary according to the offence and in line with our Disciplinary Scale.

The incident will be recorded. Records of all bullying incidents are kept by the Head and enable patterns of bullying to be identified and addressed.

In serious cases parents will be informed by the Head.

In the worst cases a bully will be suspended or excluded.

Support is available for victims and also for bullies, so they can change their behaviour. If appropriate, assessment by a qualified professional and counselling can be arranged. The Head has contact details for referrals. When the allegations involve bullying by a teacher, the reporting procedures laid down in the Safeguarding Policy should be followed.

Reviewed January 2017

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

The Behaviour Policy dovetails with the Anti-Bullying Policy. It sets out expectations for pupils to respect each other and the school community. It provides further explanation about sanctions.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

Safe to Learn – Embedding Anti Bullying work in schools (DCSF Guidance)
Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2011 (Department for Education)

Monitoring & Review

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure the implementation of this policy and to review it every two years.