

Anti-bullying policy

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1. Aims

We recognise that in all schools and organisations bullying can happen and will cause great stress to pupils or employees. We all have a responsibility to ensure that we do not behave in a bullying or threatening manner whatever the circumstances. This policy is for every member of the school community – pupils and members of staff.

In school we focus on pupils' emotional development and encourage them to use their voice in a constructive and assertive manner. Some of our pupils find themselves in situations at home or in their local area where they experience hostility and bullying because they are physically challenged.

We are a TELLING school and encourage anyone who experiences bullying to tell a trusted adult.

2. What is bullying?

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gesture
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber across all areas of the internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse; mobile threats by text messaging & calls; misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.

3. 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.

4. Objectives of this policy

All trustees, teaching and support staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is. All trustees, 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.

5. 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:

- Doesn't want to go on the school bus
- Changes their usual routine
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Withdraws communication
- Attempts or threatens suicide or self-harm
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning; Is anxious about personal care
- Begins to do poorly in their school work
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- 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.

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

6. Procedures

Reporting

- Report and report bullying incidents via CPOMS
- In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the issue. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

Outcomes

- The bully/bullies may be asked to genuinely apologise.
- Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or exclusion will be considered.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.

- After the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Social services – Disabled Children Team will be informed about sibling bullying.

7. Implementation

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a class teacher or member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the pupil
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Pupils who have been bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with support from a Speech & Language Therapist and social stories if necessary
- Discovering why the pupil became involved
- Establishing the wrongdoing and the need to change
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- Official warnings to cease offending
- Internal exclusion
- Fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

8. Prevention

The school council has an anti-bullying code.

Strategies to deal with bullying include:

- Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- Making up role-plays
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters
- Talking to young people about how to report and deal with disability discrimination
- Ensuring that all personal care is conducted with sensitivity and always with two adults
- Ensuring that pupils will very rarely be on their own in a 1:1 situation

9. Help organisations

Advisory Centre for Education 0300 0115 142

Contact a Family (Mon-Fri, 9:30-5) 0808 808 3555

Child Law Advice Service, Family Law 0300 330 5480

Child Law Advice Service, Education Law 0300 330 5485

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 020 8772 9900