Anti-Bullying Policy

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Contents

1.School statement on bullying

This school is a place where every person has the right to be themselves and to be included in a safe and happy environment. Everyone at our school is equal and should be treated with respect.

2. Aims and purposes of the policy

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school. At our school the safety, welfare and well-being of all students and staff is a key priority. We take all incidences of bullying seriously and it is our duty as a whole school community to take measures to prevent and tackle any bullying, harassment or discrimination. We actively promote values of respect and equality and work to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated across the whole school community. We want to enable our students to become responsible citizens and to prepare them for life in 21st Century Britain. These values reflect those that will be expected of our students by society when they leave school and enter the world of work or further study. We are committed to improving our school's approach to tackling bullying by regularly monitoring, reviewing and assessing the impact of our preventative measures.

3. Definition of bullying

Bullying is hurtful or unkind behaviour which is deliberate and repeated. Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group of people towards another individual or group, where the bully or bullies hold more power than those being bullied.

This definition is not helpful when considering pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs and autism as most pupils with these conditions have little understanding of how their actions impact on the way other people feel and it is almost impossible to be sure that the behaviour was 'intentionally hurtful'. For example, pupil A may shout at pupil B not because he/she wants to upset him but because he/she enjoys watching pupil B's reactions. However, a pupil with autism may sometimes 'target' another pupil with teasing, taunting, physical aggression, and/or unwanted attention, etc. Even though the pupil may not be intending to bully, his/her actions are correctly described as bullying type behaviour and should not be tolerated. These behaviours need to be addressed so the young person learns about the impact of their remarks/behaviour and how to interact more appropriately.

The target pupil may not realise that he/she is being bullied; there are instances of pupils with autism in schools being regularly relieved of their lunch money by other pupils that they describe as their 'friends'. Children and young people on the autism spectrum have difficulty 'reading' social situations and knowing how to engage in ever-changing social contexts. They find it hard to predict other people's behaviour and to interpret their body language and expression to guess what they are thinking or feeling. This makes it difficult for children and young people on the autism spectrum to understand other people's intentions and makes them an easy target for bullies.

40% of parents who have a child on the autism spectrum say their child has been bullied. Bullying is often under-reported. In addition, people on the autism spectrum can have difficulty communicating. Staff should therefore treat increased anxiety or not wanting to participate as potential indicators of bullying. People on the autism spectrum are often more able at logical tasks including ICT than they are at understanding social situations. This can leave people on the autism spectrum at risk of cyberbullying through mobile phones and social networks.

Some examples of bullying behaviours that are more commonly seen in pupils with social emotional and mental health needs and/or autism:

- Hitting, kicking and any display of aggressive behaviour that is often directed towards a specific pupil.
- Persistently imitating the behaviours of another pupil.
- Persistently interrupting or obstructing another pupil thereby preventing them taking part in activities.
- Persistently taking possessions from another pupil without permission.
- Persistently uttering remarks and comments that another pupil finds hurtful.

Signs that a young person is being bullied:

An individual who is being bullied may display some of the following common responses:

- Increased anxiety (displayed through increasingly obsessive behaviours; hand movements, repetitive questioning and statements or short temper)
- Withdrawal
- Aggression
- Seeming over-sensitive or over-reacting to minor occurrences (being 'onedge')
- Seeking revenge
- Repeatedly exposing him/herself to the same kind of bullying situation. Although the pupil may know it as a negative interaction, they may still consider it better than no interaction at all. It becomes a scenario they are familiar with and which follows a predictable sequence.

The nature of bullying can be:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online /cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion.
- Indirect - Can include the exploitation of individuals such as false friendships, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation and radicalization.

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'. Bullying can take place between young people, young people and staff, between staff and individuals or group.

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- Race (racist bullying)
- Religion or belief
- Culture or class
- Gender (sexist bullying)
- Sexual orientation (homophobic or biphobic bullying)
- Gender identity (transphobic bullying)
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disability
- Appearance or health conditions
- Related to home or other personal situation

No form of bullying will be tolerated and all incidents will be taken seriously.

4. Reporting bullying

If a pupil is being bullied they are encouraged to not retaliate but to tell someone they trust about it such as a friend, family member or trusted adult. They are also encouraged to report any bullying incidents in school:

- Report to a teacher
- Report to other school staff
- Report to a friend
- Call ChildLine 0800 1111

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Headteacher

The Senior Leadership Team and the headteacher have overall responsibility for ensuring that the anti-bullying policy is followed by all members of staff and that the school upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all young people. In addition to the designated safeguarding lead is the Senior Leader responsible for anti-bullying.

4.2 Staff

All school staff, both teaching and non-teaching (for example midday supervisors, caretakers,) have a duty to report bullying, to be vigilant to the signs of bullying and to play an active role in the school's efforts to prevent bullying. If staff are aware of bullying, they should reassure the students involved and inform the designated safeguarding lead.

4.3 Parents/carers

Parents and carers should look out for potential signs of bullying such as distress, lack of concentration, feigning illness or other unusual behaviour. Parents and carers should tell their child not to retaliate and support and encourage them to report the bullying. Parents and carers can report an incident of bullying to the school either in person, or by phoning or emailing the school office or a member of staff.

4.3 Pupils

Pupils should not take part in any kind of bullying and should watch out for potential signs of bullying among their peers. They should never be bystanders to incidents of bullying. If students witness bullying they should support the victim, encourage them to report the bullying and, if possible, accompany them to tell a trusted adult.

5. Responding to bullying

When bullying has been reported, the following actions will be taken:

- Staff will record the bullying on an incident reporting form.

- Designated school staff will monitor incident reporting forms, analysing and evaluating the results.

- Designated school staff will produce monthlyreports summarising the information, which the head teacher will report to directors.

- Support will be offered to those who are the target of bullying in school through the use of restorative justice or other programmes.

- Staff will pro-actively respond to the bully through the use of restorative justice programmes.

- Staff will assess whether parents and carers need to be involved.

- Staff will assess whether any other authorities (such as police or the local authority) need to be involved, particularly where actions take place outside of school.

6. Bullying outside of school

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of school. Bullying can take place on the way to and from school, before or after school hours, at the weekends or during the holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of cyber bullying in particular means that it can impact on students' well-being beyond the school day. Staff, parents and carers, and students must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according to their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.

7. Derogatory language

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and recorded. Follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for students and staff found using any such language. Staff are also encouraged to record the casual use of derogatory language using informal mechanisms such as a classroom log.

8. Prejudice-based incidents

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school, with the headteacher regularly reporting incidents to directors. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti-bullying interventions.

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are perceived to be different in some way or their friends, family members or

their parents/carers are perceived to be different. Dismissing such language as banter is not helpful as it is being used to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

9. Hate crime

There is no legal definition of a hate crime. However, the police and the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) have an agreed definition of hate crime as:

"*Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.*"

There is a distinction between a hate crime and a hate incident.

"*A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.*"

However, a hate incident does not necessarily break the law. Where a hate incident amounts to a criminal offence, and is based on one of the five protected characteristics, it is known as a hate crime.

Any concerns about hate incidents/crimes should be discussed with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Information on how to report a hate crime can be found at:

https://www.report-it.org.uk/home

Children can report any crime anonymously at:

https://www.fearless.org/

10. Behaviours associated with bullying

Baiting

Baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonise those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretively to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get into trouble.

Banter

The dictionary describes banter as: 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks' Bullying is often justified as being just banter. It may start as banter, but some types of banter are bullying and need to be addressed as bullying.

Types of Banter

- Friendly Banter- There's no intention to hurt and everyone knows its limits.

- Ignorant Banter- crosses the line with no intention to hurt, will often say sorry.

- Malicious Banter- Done to humiliate a person-often in public.

Peer on Peer Abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)

- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.

- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.

- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.

- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.

- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

We will challenge and respond to any concerns related to the above. For more information, see our safeguarding and child protection policy. This behaviour is considered to violate a child's dignity and /or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and /or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Again, this needs to be considered by cross referencing with the safeguarding and child protection policy, but the initial response from staff will be the same as any reported bullying incident and dealt with in a contextual way.

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of hate crime related bullying and cyberbullying and peer on peer abuse. If the target or alleged perpetrator might be in danger, then intervention is urgently required including a safeguarding referral.

11. School initiatives to prevent and tackle bullying

- The PSHE programme of study includes opportunities for students to understand about different types of bullying and what they can do to respond and prevent bullying.
- Tutor time provides regular opportunities to discuss issues that may arise in class and for form tutors to target specific interventions.
- Difference and diversity are celebrated across the school through diverse displays, books and images.
- The whole school participates in events including Anti-bullying week, Black History Month and LGBT History Month
- The school values of equality and respect are embedded across the curriculum to ensure that it is as inclusive as possible.
- Stereotypes are challenged by staff and students across the school.

- Restorative justice programmes provide support to targets of bullying and those who show bullying behaviour
- Students are continually involved in developing school-wide anti-bullying initiatives through consultation with groups and through the anti-bullying survey.
- Working with parents and carers, and in partnership with community organisations, to tackle bullying where appropriate.

12. Training

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that all school staff, both teaching and receive regular training on all aspects of the anti-bullying policy.

13. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by directors.