

Anti-Bullying Policy

Aspire Learning



Reviewed by:	Headteacher	Date: September 2023
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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 modern 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 targeted pupil may not realise that he/she is being bullied. 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 behavior or to interpret body language and facial expression. This makes it difficult for children and young people on the autism spectrum to understand other people's intentions and can make them an easy target for bullies.

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 'on edge')
- 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 – such as hitting or physically intimidating someone or using inappropriate or unwanted physical contact towards someone.
- Attacking property – such as damaging, stealing, or hiding someone's possessions.
- Verbal – such as name calling, spreading rumours about someone, using derogatory or offensive language, or threatening someone.
- Psychological – such as deliberately excluding or ignoring people.
- Cyber – such as using text, email, or other social media to write or say hurtful things about someone.

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 situations.

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, 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 be supported to watch out for potential signs of bullying among their peers.

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 for trends or patterns.
- Designated school staff will produce regular reports summarising the information, which the head teacher will report to directors.
- Support will be offered to those who are the victims of bullying in school through the use of restorative justice or other programmes.
- Staff will proactively 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 the 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.

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 Horizon SLT. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti-bullying interventions.

9. School initiatives to prevent and tackle bullying

- The PSHE programme of study, Jigsaw, 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 as part of PHSE and SMSC programmes of study.

- The 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.

10. Training

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

11. 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 Horizon SLT.