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# **Antibullying Policy guidance for Schools 2022**

# This document can be used as a basis for your school anti bullying policy.

It is important that policies address your school ethos, prevention of bullying, reporting of bullying, response and interventions when bullying takes place and how you will monitor incidents.

Schools will need to ensure that the policy reflects current practice in their school and consider how parents, pupils and staff can be involved in discussing and developing the policy.

School’s Anti-bullying Policy

(Sample front cover)

………………………………………………………………… School

This policy has been developed and implemented in consultation with the whole school community including pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors and partner agencies.

……..school promotes values which reject bullying behaviour and promote co-operative behaviour. Tackling bullying matters.

This policy links with our policies on School Improvement, Equality and Diversity, Teaching and Learning and Behaviour and Safeguarding

###### Approved and adopted …………

#### Review Date ……………….

#### SIGNATURES

**Pupils**

**via the School Council** ……………………

##### Senior member of staff with responsibility for **Anti-bullying**

##### Governor with **Responsibility for** Anti-bullying

**Headteacher** ……………………

**School ethos**

In this section outline how your school ethos/ values supports positive relationships and encourages pupils to have respect for others.

**What is bullying?**

We recognise that conflict can happen in relationships between children or young people and as a school we are committed to developing empathy and problem solving skills to help our pupils manage relationships in a peaceful way that does not harm others.

In our school we have a shared definition of bullying which we use in with all staff, pupils and parents to ensure a common understanding of what we mean by bullying and which distinguishes bullying from other types of conflict. Bullying is:-

***“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”***

There is also close relationship between bullying and wider child on child abuse. Child on child abuse occurs when a child or young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age both inside and outside of school and online and it includes violence, sexual violence and online abuse that can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. Some child on child abuse will amount to bullying.

**Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

In our school community:

* Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.
* Everybody has the right to feel happy and safe.
* No-one deserves to be a target of bullying.
* Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving.

There is considerable evidence to show that bullying has both short term and longer term impact on pupils. Bullying impacts on pupils wellbeing, can impact on attendance and become a significant barrier to learning. Bullying is associated with lower levels of school engagement and achievement both in primary and secondary schools and can lead to mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression.

**Bullying is unacceptable. Our school will respond promptly and effectively to reported incidents of bullying.**

**Types of bullying behaviour**

Bullying can take many forms:

* Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening behaviour
* Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
* Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
* Extortion - demanding money/goods with threats
* Online – use of social media, messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology e.g photos and videos.

# **Prejudice Related bullying**

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist bullying includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling 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 different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers.

We do not accept the use of of sexist, racist, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language and will always challenge pupils use of discriminatory language.

Persistent use of prejudice related language targeted at individual or groups will be dealt in line with other form of bullying.

Whilst there is no hierarchy of bullying we are keenly aware of national research which shows

that some groups of pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying. These include pupils with SEND, children who are looked after, pupils from minority ethnic groups or faiths, young carers, LGBT pupils and those perceived to be LGBT.

**Where can bullying happen?**

Bullying is not confined to the school premises. It can also happen outside of school – on the journey to and from school or in the local community.

The school acknowledges its responsibility to support our pupils if bullying occurs off the premises.

**Online Bullying**

Online bullying is when someone bullies others using electronic means, this might involve social media and messaging services on the internet, accessed on a mobile phone, tablet or gaming platform. The behaviour is usually repeated. There is a strong link between 'traditional' face to face bullying and online bullying. Most bullying is face-to-face – with online used as a modern tool to supplement traditional forms. Online bullying can occur outside of school, at weekends, evenings or during school holidays. This can be particularly difficult for those being targeted as it can feel relentless.

**Preventing Bullying**

We foster a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is unacceptable. We believe that preventing bullying is the responsibility of our whole school community and when there are incidents of bullying we will work together to deal with the situation and to learn from what has happened.

In our school we do this by:

* Involving the school community in developing our policy including a child/ pupil friendly version of our policy.
* Using assemblies and circle time in class to ensure that pupils understand the differences between relational conflict and bullying.
* Building a positive ethos based on respecting and celebrating all types of difference in our school.
* Creating a safe and happy environment, with consequent positive relationships that have an impact on learning and achievement.
* Having a positive behaviour policy that all pupils, staff and parents understand.
* Developing empathy, social skills and peaceful problem solving amongst our pupils through PSHE, , circle time, peer mediation and playground buddies.
* Valuing diversity and ensuring everyone is included in our school.
* Establishing “safe spaces” or “brave spaces” where pupils can explore diversity and equality issues.
* Listening to our pupils about their concerns so that we continue to learn and improve as a school
* Using assemblies and circle time in class to ensure that pupils understand the differences between relational conflict and bullying.
* Encouraging children to use social media and technology responsibly and carefully through PSHE and Computing lessons.
* Focussed work with individual and groups of pupils where required to support understanding and development of social skills e.g. restorative approaches, circle of friends and social skills groups, Lego Therapy,
* Ensuring playground and midday staff are trained and we have a range of activities at lunchtime to promote positive play.
* Offering training to all school staff around bullying.

**Reporting bullying**

In our school pupils are encouraged to talk to staff when they are unhappy or have concerns. Pupils are taught to report any incidence of bullying to an adult within school, and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report this to a member of staff. We regular remind pupils that it is the collective responsibility of the whole school community to do whatever they can to stop bullying. We teach pupils in our school to understand that they have a right to feel and be safe and a responsibility to support others to feel and be safe.

We define the different roles included in bullying for pupil: namely that of *the target, the person who has bullied ,the reinforce ,the bystander and the* and encourage our pupils to be *defenders* whenever possible.

Pupils can report bullying in a number of ways. These include:

* to any trusted adult or agreed named adult for our more vulnerable pupils
* to their Class teacher/ form tutor or a Teaching Assistant or learning metor
* anonymously through “Worry boxes” or online systems

We remind pupils that they should report all incidences of bullying online as they would face to face incidents.

Parents should also report concerns and bullying to the class teacher or a member of the leadership team.

**Responding to Bullying**

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by staff members. A record will be kept of bullying incidents on the serious incident form as well as in the behaviour management module of SIMs.

These are passed onto a member of the senior leadership team (typically the Deputy Headteacher in the first instance) to investigate further. The adult will use open ended questioning to encourage all involved to explain what happened from their perspective. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on establishing facts, finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

* Think about any safeguarding concern and report concerns to DSL if appropriate.
* Provide assurances to child that concerns have been listened to and action will be taken
* Consider who else is involved and what roles they have taken.
* Send clear message that the bullying must stop
* Report incident to parents of those involved
* Work with the target of the bullying and their parents to find solutions. Identify the most effective way of preventing re-occurrence and any consequences.
* Restorative approaches can be applied if all parties agree to participate in a restorative meeting. If this approach is used, any consequence will be determined as part of this meeting with the pupils.
* Reflect and learn from bullying episodes –consider what needs to happen next to prevent future bullying e.g whole class lesson or circle time, training etc.
* It is important to review on a regular basis any measures or agreements that have been put in place.
* “safe spaces” or “brave spaces” can provide an opportunity for pupils who have experienced prejudice based bullying to determine next steps and actions to reduce the likelihood of the behaviour being repeated.

The parents of pupils who display bullying behaviour and their targets will always be informed of bullying incidents. We will agree with them the actions to be taken and will ask them to support any strategies proposed to tackle the problem.

Where necessary we have and will call on outside resources such as the Merton Virtual Behaviour Service, Jigsaw4U and the Polka Theatre to support our action.

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**Monitoring Bullying and reviewing our policy**

We monitor all bullying incidents and regularly review to determine any patterns, or trends that may require further action.

On a regular basis we give pupils the opportunity to feed back on how safe and happy they feel at school, we do this through pupil questionnaires, online tools such as PASS, and pupil focus groups.

We review our Anti Bullying policy yearly.

Our Anti Bullying policy is always shared with new members of staff when they join our school.

**For parents or carers**

If you are interested in learning more about bullying, you can access the **free, interactive online anti-bullying information tool for parents and carers through the Anti-Bullying Alliance.** You can follow the sections that are of particular interest to you or browse the whole site. The site includes information on:

* What bullying is
* Types of bullying
* Fall outs
* Bullying as a group behaviour
* What to do if your child is or you think they are being bullied
* How to respond if you think your child is bullying others
* What schools should and must do about bullying
* Bullying and the Police
* Cyberbullying
* Where parents and carers can get further support and advice

To visit the Information Tool please go to: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/parenttool](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/parenttool)

**Links to other school policies:**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour and Relationships policy, safeguarding policy, and equalities policy.