

William Gilpin C.E. V.A. Primary School

Anti-bullying Policy

1. AIMS OF THE POLICY

To set out the school's position on bullying, the legal requirements, the strategies that will be employed and the procedures to be followed should there be an allegation of bullying.

2. INTRODUCTION

The school has a duty of care towards its pupils in that the Headteacher and staff stand *in loco parentis* (in place of the parents). This includes protecting pupils from harm from bullying. The underlying principle is that all children are listened to sensitively and objectively and all incidences and allegations of bullying are taken seriously. Everyone has the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from fear and all of us have a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others.

This policy takes full account of the school's legal obligations under the Education Act of 1986 to:

- Have a policy to address all forms of bullying amongst pupils.
- To make a written copy of the anti-bullying policy available on request.
- To set out the strategies to be followed with a system to implement them and a mechanism for monitoring and reviewing their effectiveness.

3. DEFINITION & EXAMPLES OF BULLYING

a. Definition

Bullying can be defined in a number of ways. We follow Department for Education guidance which defines bullying as follows:

“Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online”.

(DfE September 2013)

Bullying can be described as:

- Repeated name calling.
- Teasing.
- Physical abuse e.g. hitting, pushing, pinching or kicking.
- Having personal possessions taken or damaged e.g. bag or mobile phone.

- Receiving abusive text messages or e-mails or social media.
- Being forced to hand over money.
- Being forced to do things they don't want to do.
- Being ignored or left out.
- Being attacked in any way due to religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance or racial or ethnic origin

b. Specific examples

Racist Bullying

An incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

This can be in the form of:

- Verbal abuse, name calling, racist jokes, offensive mimicry.
- Physical threats or attacks.
- Inciting others to behave in a racist way.
- Racist graffiti or other written or digital insults, even against food, music, dress or customs.

Sexual Bullying

An incident which is perceived to be sexual bullying by the victim or any other person.

This can be in the form of:

- Abusive name calling.
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, gender, emerging puberty.
- Deliberate inappropriate exposure and touching.

Cyber Bullying

An incident where digital devices are used to wilfully and repeatedly harm a person in the form of:

- Making adverse comments about another person on a social networking site.
- Sending false, cruel, vicious messages.
- Posting a picture without their permission and not removing it when asked.
- Creating websites that have, for example, stories, cartoons, pictures, and jokes ridiculing others.
- Breaking into an email account and sending vicious or embarrassing materials to others.
- Engaging someone in digital media, tricking that person into revealing sensitive personal information and forwarding that information to others.

Bullying of vulnerable, SEN and disabled pupils

These pupils are often at greater risk of bullying. This can be characterised by:

- Name calling.
- Comments on appearance.
- Comments with regard to perceived ability and achievement levels or personal/family circumstances.

4. SCHOOL STATEMENT OF INTENT

This school believes that:

- Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Pupils should be made aware of what bullying is, its impact and what they should do if they are a victim or suspect it is happening to someone else.
- We all have a duty to work together to protect all individuals from bullying and other forms of abuse.
- Seeking help and openness are regarded as signs of strength not weakness.
- All members of the school community will be listened to and taken seriously.

- Young people should be aware that they can talk in confidence to an adult if they are worried about bullying and have a right to expect that their concerns will be listened to and treated seriously and they will be considered in the decision-making process.
- By seeking to prevent low-level unkindness we reduce the risk of bullying developing.

5. STRATEGIES TO PREVENT BULLYING

The school employs a range of strategies to prevent, eradicate and raise awareness of bullying and support victims and bullies. Including:

- Co-operative group work.
- The support group approach/no blame approach.
- Peer mediation/conflict resolution.
- Buddy systems.
- PSHE/P4C programmes.
- Anti-bullying Week.
- Emotional Literacy Support from the school ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant).
- Playground leaders.
- Anti-bullying reps.

Measures are in place to enable everyone to feel safe while at school and encourage pupils to report incidences of bullying.

- All bullying will be dealt with effectively and immediately
- Victims of bullying will be supported and protected, and made aware that they will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Recognised bullies will be supported and helped to change their attitudes as well as their behaviour and to understand why it needs to change.
- Parents, governors and other appropriate members of the school community will be informed of incidences of bullying.
- All members of the school community will be made aware of their responsibility to combat bullying.
- Children are made aware of who they can talk to and when this might be appropriate, and staff are expected to be receptive to children who need to talk.
- All staff and supervisory adults will be expected to deal with or report incidents of bullying effectively and promptly.
- Parents and the wider school community will be informed effectively on the subject of bullying.
- All incidents of bullying will be recorded and stored in the HT's office. Behaviour or actions that cause concern and allegations of bullying will be recorded by the Class Teacher so that trends can be identified and addressed. The information may only be shared with other organisations if deemed appropriate by the HT or SENCo.
- Supervisory adults must act sensitively in relevant instances, e.g. when grouping children, marking children's work, sharing of results and assessment arrangements, as well as using appropriate language when addressing pupils.

6. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS

a. Guidance for Parents

If you suspect that your child has been/ is being bullied:

- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experiences.
- Make a note of what your child says including who was involved, how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what happened.
- Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying.
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to a teacher immediately.

- Make an urgent appointment to see your child's teacher to explain the problems your child is experiencing.

Digital bullying:

- Ensure your child is careful to whom they give their mobile phone number and e-mail address.
- Digital messages may form evidence required to carry out any action to be taken to resolve the issue. You should remove the phone from the child to ensure the messages are not deleted.

During your appointment with the class teacher:

- Try to stay calm and bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school.
- Stay in touch with the school and let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

If you suspect your child is bullying others:

- Talk with your child and explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy.
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- Show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying.
- Make an appointment to see your child's teacher and explain the problems your child is experiencing as well as discussing how you can work together to stop him/her bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he/she is co-operative or kind to other people.

b. Guidance for pupils who feel they are being bullying

If you feel you are being bullied:

- Tell an adult or somebody you trust what has happened straight away.
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible.
- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can.
- Be firm and clear ~ look them in the eye and, if possible, tell them to stop and tell them how you feel.
- If you experience bullying by mobile phone text messages or e-mail tell a friend, parent or teacher and make a note of exactly when a threatening message was sent.
- Be careful who you give your mobile phone number or e-mail address to and who you befriend on social media.

After you have been bullied:

- Tell a teacher or another adult you trust within school.
- Tell your family.
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you.
- Keep on speaking until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying.
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened.
- Do not delete any offending texts or images.

When you are talking to an adult about bullying be clear about:

- What has happened to you.
- How often it has happened.
- Who was involved.
- Who saw what was happening.
- Where it happened.
- What you have done about it already.

c. The school will:

If the class teacher has dealt with the presenting issues and the situation has not improved:

- The Assistant HT or HT will listen to the child who has been bullied and record what has been said.
- The Assistant HT or HT will discuss and agree the next steps with the child.
- If this has not made a difference, the Assistant HT or HT will inform the bully's parents and agree steps for expected behaviour.
- Appropriate sanctions will be agreed. This will be monitored and followed up with parents.
- If such measures fail, the matter will be brought formally to the Safeguarding Governor with a view to suspension or exclusion.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT with regard to school behaviour and relationships within the school community

We recognise that all adults in the school are role models for the students and as such should show exemplary behaviour to demonstrate positive role modelling. Therefore, as adults we must:

- Show respect for every student and other colleagues within the school community as individuals.
- Be aware of vulnerable students.
- Criticise the behaviour rather than the student.
- Avoid favouritism and build a rapport with all students.
- Be seen to be fair.
- Avoid labelling.
- Have high expectations of students.
- Never give students ammunition to use against each other.
- Actively promote a praise culture within the school.

Young people also have a responsibility to be role models of appropriate behaviour towards their peers. We believe that all students must:

- Show respect for their fellow students and adults working within the school community.
- Support and be sensitive to others when they may be feeling vulnerable.
- Actively seek to develop a praise culture within the school.
- Actively support the school Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Take responsibility for their own behaviour.

Equal Opportunities

Every member of the school community is entitled to expect equal treatment and protection from bullying.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff must make this clear to pupils. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made.

It is very rare for a pupil to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement whether or not a third party needs to be informed.

This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the pupil may be experiencing.
- The pupil's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.

Where it is clear that a pupil would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek the pupil's consent to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the pupil. Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/guardian.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be evaluated and updated, using the views of pupils and staff to make changes and improvements, during the Summer Term of 2018 or before in light of new legislation.

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Date: November 2015