

Percy Hedley Education Services

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(To be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy)

*September 2016
Review cycle - Annual*

Definition

There is no legal definition of bullying.

However, bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, e.g. because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (e.g. email, social networks and instant messenger)

The Law

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include:

- violence or assault
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, e.g. name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages
- hate crimes

Call 999 if you or someone else is in immediate danger.

Schools and the Law

By law, all state (not private) schools must have a behaviour policy in place that includes measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils.

This policy is decided by the school and must be communicated to all staff, pupils and parents.

Anti-Discrimination Law

Schools must also follow anti-discrimination law. This means staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school.

Principles and Values

We take bullying and its impact seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to. Bullying will not be tolerated. The school will seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within school or in the local community. The ethos of our schools fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour and we will consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is
- All governors and 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.

All of us have encountered bullying at some point in our lives, but we all deal with it differently. The aim of this policy is to work together to ensure that our school is a safe place for children and adults to be; whether the school community is directly or indirectly affected by bullying or not.

Perpetrators and Victims

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another.

This can be achieved by:

- The size of the individual,
- The strength of the individual,
- The numbers or group size involved,
- Anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc.

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying behaviours and approach this in the same way as any other category of Child Abuse; that is, do not wait to be told before you raise concerns or deal directly with the matter. Children within our services may not be aware that they are being bullied due to their level of Special Educational Needs which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them.

Staff must also be highly aware of the vulnerability of our pupils; those coming from troubled families, or those responding to emotional problems or mental health issues

which may bring about a propensity to be unkind to others, or may make them more likely to fall victim to the behaviour of others.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts and is damaging to those affected by it. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving and, wherever possible, accept responsibility for their actions and understand these actions are unacceptable.

Signs and Symptoms For Parents and Staff

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:

- is frightened of walking to attend school,
- feigns illness to avoid events or school attendance,
- changes their usual routine,
- begins to truant,
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence,
- starts stammering,
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away,
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares,
- feels ill in the morning,
- begins to do make less effort with school work than previously,
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged,
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing",
- asks for money or starts stealing money,
- has personal belonging continually "lost",
- has unexplained cuts or bruises,
- comes home distressed, withdrawn, listless or anxious,
- 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,
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone,
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received,
- lack of eye contact,
- becoming short tempered,
- change in attitude to people at home.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Outcomes

All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by the class teams or by a senior member of staff.

Parents of the perpetrator may also be questioned about any incidents or about any concerns that they may be having.

The child displaying unacceptable behaviour, may be asked to genuinely apologise (as appropriate to the child's age and level of understanding) and other consequences may also take place; e.g. a parent being informed about their child's behaviour and a request that the parents support the school with any sanctions that it takes (See Behaviour Policy). Wherever possible, the pupils will be reconciled.

In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with a child continually demonstrating unacceptable behaviour towards others; e.g. police, counsellor.

In serious cases (this is defined as children displaying an on-going lack of response to sanctions, that is, no change in behaviour of the perpetrator and an unwillingness to alter their behaviour choices), support from behaviour outreach, counselling, reduced timetables, or even fixed or permanent exclusion will be considered.

During and after the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be investigated and monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

The Safeguarding Governors will be informed of any incidents recorded in CPOMS along with incidents, sanctions and reconciliation.

Prevention

Within Percy Hedley Education Services we use a variety of methods to support children in preventing and understanding the consequences of bullying through:

- class assemblies,
- PSHE and Citizenship lessons,
- SMSC Curriculum,
- School Vision,
- Collective Worship Themes,
- Educational Psychology support,

- OT/therapy interventions,
- Family Liaison Officer support,
- Anti-bullying week,
- e-safety approach,
- Worry box,
- Pupil and parent consultations,
- A continued focus on safeguarding and wellbeing.

The ethos and working philosophy of the Foundation means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Good and kind/polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded.

Staff will regularly discuss bullying, this will inform children that we are serious about dealing with bullying and leads to open conversations and increased confidence in children to want to discuss bullying and report any incidents and concerns about other children's behaviour.

Staff will reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular theme in line with our vision and our learning expectations.

Staff follow the equality policy; supporting every child in our school. Staff must be careful not to highlight differences of children or an individual child, even if this is done in jest. This gives other children advocacy to use this difference to begin calling names or teasing.

Staff must be vigilant regarding groups of friends together. Friendship groups may bring about the imbalance of power and must be led towards welcoming others to join them and not excluding others from their group.

Staff must reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings and be kind to each other.

Students are, where appropriate, involved in the prevention of bullying; these may include:

- writing a set of school or class rules,
- agreeing a personal pledge or promise against bullying,
- expressing ideas and concerns through 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 about what to do through scenarios of bullying,
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters that children who use unacceptable behaviour towards others are dealt with quickly,

- children are encouraged to seek advice,
- tell a friend,
- tell your School Council rep,
- tell a teacher or adult whom you feel you can trust,
- write your concern and post it in the 'worry box',
- tell a parent or adult at home whom you feel you can trust,
- discuss it as part of PSHE time,
- ring Childline and follow the advice given.

When an incident of bullying has taken place, staff must record and report each incident.

In the case of racist bullying, this must be reported to the Executive Headteacher/Head of School who will take appropriate action which will involve parents and may involve a report to the LA and/or Social Care team. Bullying must be recorded following Child Protection procedures. Senior staff should advise on actions in support of all involved. All incidents of bullying will be discussed with all relevant staff and parents of the children involved, in order that everyone can be vigilant and that further incidents by the same child(ren) may be prevented from happening in the future.

Incidents of bullying will be reported to the Governing Body (Safeguarding Governors).

Advice to Parents

As the parent of a child whom you suspect is being bullied:

1. Report bullying incidents to the class teacher, senior manager, Associate Director or Head of School.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff and the Associate Director/ Head of school may consider multi agency support.
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the child using unacceptable behaviour towards others, to change their behaviour.

Do Not:

1. Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child or by speaking to their parents.
2. Encourage your child to be 'a bully' back.

Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

- Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 020 7354 8321
- Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345
- KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204
- Parent line Plus 0808 800 2222
- Youth Access 020 8772 9900
- Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk

Visit the Kidscape website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.

For a copy of Kidscape's free booklets "Stop Bullying", "Preventing Bullying" and "You Can Beat Bullying", send a large (A4) self-addressed envelope (marked "Bully Pack") with 6 first class stamps to:

Kidscape
2 Grosvenor Gardens
London SW1W 0DH

Policy Links:

- Child Protection
- Behavioural management
- PHSCE
- Exclusion