

Anti-Bullying Strategy

Pioneer House
High School
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(This policy has regard to DfE guidance, 'Preventing and tackling bullying' 2014)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

Context

Safeguarding and bullying

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff will report their concerns to the local authority children's social care.

Criminal Law and Bullying

Bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, however the Trust will bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they will seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

Bullying outside school premises

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The head teacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying the teacher can only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member.

Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. Teachers can tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones (Education Act 2011). Separate advice on teachers' powers to search (including statutory guidance on dealing with electronic devices) is available within the Behaviour Policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the anti-discriminatory policies of Prospere Learning Trust which take account of:

- Culture including race and skin colour
- Ethnic or national origin
- Nationality including citizenship
- Age
- Gender
- Disability
- Social class
- Marital status
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity and
- Prospere Learning Trust's British values Policy.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is defined behaviour by an individual or a 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. The school's first priority is to stop any violence and ensure immediate physical safety. Emotional

bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Bullying often 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.

Types of bullying might be:

- **physical** (hitting, kicking, theft)
- **verbal** (name calling, racist remarks)
- **emotional** (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)
- **cyber bullying** (any form of bullying using a mobile phone or the internet, chat rooms, social networking sites, instant messaging or email)
- **Prejudice Related Language** 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 transsexual, 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. In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, they are using the terms 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.

This policy acknowledges that bullying can occur against pupils, staff and students. Pupil focused bullying in schools impacts on the emotional health of young people, which may affect attainment, attendance, truancy, and criminal activity within local communities. It is therefore recognised that preventing bullying is considered a priority for all pupils, students and staff at school. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The Trust seeks to ensure that all members of the school community work and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All issues of bullying are addressed so that all are able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

Anti-Bullying Strategy

Strategic Priorities

We aim to:

- To reduce any incidents of bullying and harassment
- To promote children and young people’s voices with regard to bullying and harassment, through school council
- Through the anti-bullying strategy, ensure that agencies and organisations are aware of their responsibilities and work in partnership to tackle bullying.
- To support the development of positive emotional health and wellbeing in children and young people.
- To promote the achievement of an accredited Anti Bullying Award
- To promote hate crime/incident reporting
- To support a range of training opportunities.
- To provide advice and guidance on issues relating to bullying

Within the Trust, a school’s response to bullying does not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. School staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. The PSHE and wider SMSC curriculum includes planned opportunities talking to pupils about issues of difference, through lessons, dedicated events or projects, or through assemblies. Staff themselves will determine what will work best for their pupils, depending on the particular issues they need to address.

Schools within the Trust create an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of learning, and a clear understanding of how actions affect others are embedded in the core values of the Trust and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

Schools also involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. The school seeks to ensure that parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce

the value of good behaviour at home. Through specific PSHE and SEAL modules on anti-bullying all pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

In lessons pupils are encouraged openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, or sexuality. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. Children are taught that using any prejudice-based language is unacceptable.

Schools within the Trust regularly evaluate and update their approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers. The skills and understanding of internet safety are taught within the Computing curriculum and embedded in curriculum delivery.

Pupils and staff are encouraged to report bullying in school. Staff ensure that pupils are able to approach them so that they feel confident to report all bullying, knowing that it will be dealt with immediately. Staff are advised to be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

Effective training, included in induction for all staff, supports school staff to understand the principles and purpose of the school's Preventing Bullying policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support.

Bullying is a whole school issue.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS

The governing body supports the head teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the governing body does not allow any identified bullying to continue in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The governors require the head teacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

The governing body responds as per the school communication strategy to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the head

teacher and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

THE ROLE OF THE HEAD TEACHER

It is the responsibility of the head teacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The head teacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The head teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The head teacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the head teacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.

The head teacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The head teacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

THE ROLE OF ADULTS/SUPPORT STAFF/LUNCHTIME ORGANISERS

All adults in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They records incidents of significant concerns on IRIS and report to the class teacher, headteacher and behaviour manager.

If adults witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. Teaching Assistants, Lunchtime Organisers and other adults inform class teachers of any concerns. Teachers will consult the head teacher, who will inform the child's parents.

Incidents which are considered to be of a bullying nature are recorded on IRIS. Where Parents contact school to make allegations of bullying, a Parent Interview is completed with a senior leader to record the conversation and actions to be taken.

These are monitored by the Headteacher and Behaviour Manager.

If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for child being bullied, and sanctions for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the head teacher/Behaviour manager. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the head teacher may contact external support agencies such as the Social Services.

Adults routinely attend training, which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

By involving Governors, Teachers, Education Support Staff, Parents, Pupil Councillors and Pupils, people become aware of the school policy on bullying and that we are serious about tackling the problem. Publicity is one area that can help and could include:

Posters: Pupils and teachers can both become involved in creating posters to display around school.

Childline telephone helpline number will be displayed.

Childline – 0800 1111 (open 24hrs)

Leaflets: these can be displayed around the school and/or sent home.

Anti-Bullying Week

By focusing on bullying for a week each year we keep the subject in the open and give opportunities for children and Parents to understand what bullying is and how to report concerns.

Intervention

Schools within the Trust will intervene with pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong, applying disciplinary measures as appropriate to the needs and understanding of the pupil. Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of the needs or disabilities that the pupils have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. The schools will consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case, it is acknowledged that the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents:

- if bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- a clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the appropriate member of the senior leadership team
- SLT will interview all concerned and will record the incident offering a restorative approach
- The Head Teacher, safeguarding lead and pupil's tutor will be kept informed
- Parents will be informed
- Other professionals will be kept informed, as appropriate.

Pupils:

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported and helped by:

- The offer of an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor or member of staff of their choice
- Reassurance
- The offer of on-going, appropriate support
- Help to restore self-esteem and confidence
- The opportunity to acknowledge the impact of bullying through restorative approaches

Appropriate steps will be taken towards dealing with the perpetrator in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Staff (Please read this in conjunction with the Whistle Blowing Policy)

Bullying at work may be an abuse of power, position, or co-worker abuse. Bullies often use persistent, vindictive, cruel, or humiliating behaviour to undermine, criticise, condemn, or humiliate an individual. This can impact on emotional health, performance, and attendance.

Procedure:

Staff are advised to:

- avoid becoming isolated, and to seek immediate support and advice from peers or a member of the SLT
- raise concerns with senior staff so that they are aware of the situation
- keep a record of all incidents which cause you distress or are undermining - log dates and details and write down your feelings after each such occurrence together with your own response
- avoid situations where you are alone with the bully
- keep your complaint as objective as possible so that you can't be accused of filing the complaint out of malice or ambition
- talk to friends and family for emotional support