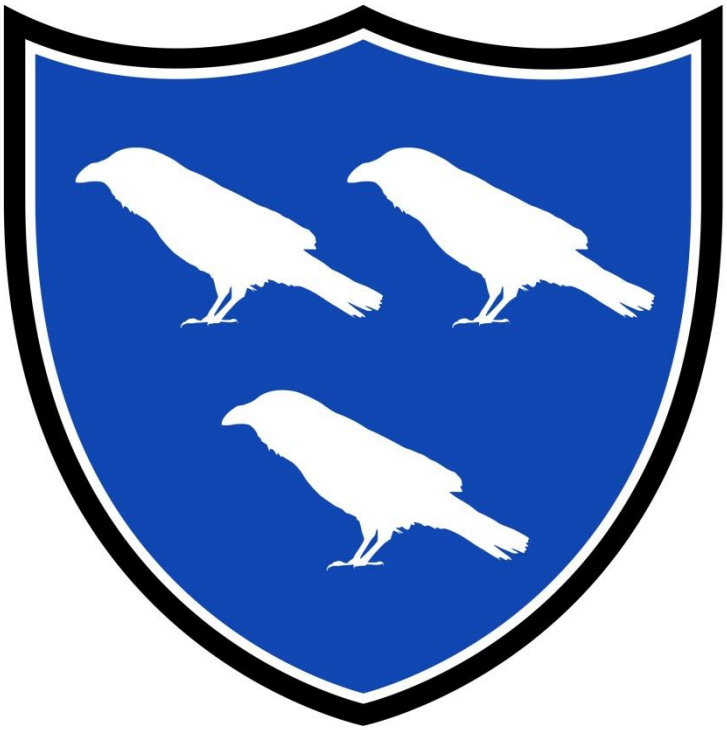
Valley Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Updated: March 2021

Review Date: March 2023

Aims

This policy outlines what Valley Primary School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. Valley is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults and children is not tolerated in any form.

Legislation

This policy is based on DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" July 2017 and supporting documents. It also takes into account the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2021. The school has read Childnet's "Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools".
There are a number of pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (if *appropriate*)
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

Responsibilities

Head Teacher

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.

Governors

School Governors take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.

Staff

All staff, including: Governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff and staff who run extra-curricular activities to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.

Parents and Children

Parents and carers have a responsibility to support their children and work in partnership with the school as outlined by the Home-School Agreement and Working Together document, and pupils must follow the policy and other associated policies including the Appropriate Use of Technology contracts and Home-School Agreement.

Definition of Bullying

- Bullying is "Behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally". (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017)

- Bullying can include: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; prolonged gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

- Bullying can be a form of peer on peer abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.

- Incidents that are connected to bullying may occur on the school premises; during off-site educational visits or sporting events or on the way to and from school. The school will act upon incidents of cyber bullying, regardless of whether messages have been sent on or off the school premises.

Bullying **is not** a one-off incident. Isolated incidents do not meet the definition of bullying.

Forms of bullying covered by this policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion, nationality or culture
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability)
- Bullying related to appearance, clothing, belongings
- Bullying related to physical health conditions
- Bullying related to mental health conditions
- Bullying related to financial situation of families
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying)
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying

Preventing, Identifying and Responding to Bullying

The Valley community recognises that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for emotional wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, the school can help to create safe, disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

To do this effectively, we will:

- monitor and review our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis
- Report incidences of bullying to the Governing Body termly
- support staff to promote positive relationships including the restorative justice approach, to help prevent bullying

- recognise that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required
- intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly
- ensure our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively so that everyone can feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy
- require all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy
- report back to the parents / carers regarding concerns on bullying, dealing promptly with complaints.
- ensure the SCARF PSHE curriculum is taught comprehensively, covering 'Me and My Relationships', 'Valuing Difference' and 'Keeping Myself Safe'
- use outcomes from Wellbeing surveys to identify pupils or staff who may feel unsafe or bullied and investigate further
- take part in the annual anti-bullying week
- use pupil voice, such as school council meetings, to review the effectiveness of our policy and procedures

What does the School do to try and eliminate bullying?

The School takes bullying very seriously and thoroughly investigates all reported incidents. We continually promote our expectation of high standards of behaviour by:

- being good role models and building positive relationships, as set out in the Behaviour Policy
- positive class teaching, providing opportunities within the curriculum to discuss bullying issues e.g. using improvisation and drama to explore the issue
- using assemblies to promote and foster a positive, inclusive school ethos
- giving children the opportunity to talk about incidents of bullying, aggressive behaviour or ostracism during Circle Time and PSHE lessons
- Participation in National events such as Anti-Bullying Week, e-safety Day, Black History Month
- commanding appropriate behaviour and showing disapproval of unacceptable behaviour
- teaching pupils how to talk through their disputes using the restorative justice approach, rather than using aggression or bullying
- teaching children about bullying, why it is damaging and where children can get help
- supporting people who do bully to change their behaviour patterns
- helping people to build positive self- images
- providing a range of avenues for communication; recognizing that not all pupils will feel confident to speak out. These include Worry Boxes / Worry Monsters in classrooms, and pupil and staff wellbeing surveys
- educating pupils about the role of a bystander within bullying incidents and encouraging pupils to support each other and speak out.

How do we support the victims of bullying?

Initially, we feel it is important to listen carefully to, and believe the recipient's perception of what has happened, to reassure them that they have acted correctly by telling an adult. The recipient will be asked to explain fully what has happened and asked questions in a non-judgemental way so they are not made to feel that they are responsible for the behaviour, or that their complaint is trivial or time wasting.
The alleged perpetrator(s) will be questioned and listened to along with any reliable witnesses. Having listened to both accounts, if it is felt that further action is necessary the parents of both children will be contacted. If the recipient is happy to do so, a restorative conference will be held. Through this process the recipient can express what they want to happen to help put things right and express what changes they need to happen. The perpetrator is held to account for their actions and required to acknowledge the impact of their behaviour. The participants agree to a contract, where the boundaries of future behaviour

are made clear. Agreements are monitored. If the recipient does not wish to attend a restorative conference; they are given the opportunity to express their ideas for the contract to a member of staff, who can then represent them in a meeting with the perpetrator.

Children who have been the victim of bullying can expect support in the following ways:

- by letting them know that the school fully supports them
- by reassuring them that the behaviour will be dealt with and that the victim's wishes for the future are taken into consideration
- by asking them what they would like from the perpetrator in order to help put things right, which will often take the form of an apology
- being able to draw a line under the past events and move forward
- Being part of the restorative process and contributing to the written agreement, and know that this agreement will be monitored
- by asking what support they would like to move forward, which may include giving them support to re-build their confidence and assertiveness
- by providing children with a 'safe haven' during break times, when necessary, where they can feel secure and comfortable

How does the school deal with perpetrators of bullying?

We believe that education and awareness-raising is the most effective way of dealing with children who have learned bullying. Our aim is to get the person who has been using bullying behaviour to feel concern for the victim. The parents of children who have been accused of bullying will be contacted straight away and made fully aware of the allegations. Perpetrators of bullying will have to account for their actions and apologise to their victims if this is agreeable with the victim. A restorative approach will be used to try to resolve any conflict and repair relationships. We focus on the behaviour and actions from the perpetrator that have caused harm; teaching them that it is within their power to change these. We recognise that linking the harmful behaviours to the pupil as a person is detrimental to changing those behaviour patterns and enabling all involved to move forward positively.

The School may impose consequences, proportionate and reasonable actions, as set out in the Behaviour Policy for any incident of bullying that is confirmed. Sanctions will be imposed for bullying actions that have taken place both on and off school premises; for example, when using transport or online, etc. Clear targets for the preparator's conduct will set using the Red Stage Intervention process and this will be monitored. Consequences will be tailored to the age of the pupil and the nature of the incident, but may include a fixed period off the playground; withdrawal of privileges such as membership of a school team; missed Golden Time and playtimes, with the time used to do community pay-back task such as tidying the playground. In serious cases proportionate and reasonable action could include suspension or even internal and external exclusion. This policy is an extension of the CSAT Behaviour Policy.

What will we do to try to prevent bullying?

The whole school community will:

- create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all
- Continually promote the school's Core Values of Care, Learn Together, Aim High, Be Honest and Look After What We have along with the school's behaviour mantra of Are we Ready, Kind and Considerate, Safe?
- recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse)

- openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, or appearance related difference. Also children with different family situations, such as children looked after or those with caring responsibilities
- challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others
- be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media positively and responsibly
- work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying
- actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people
- celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos

The school's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy sets out the support that will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in cases of peer on peer abuse and incidences of sexual harassment or sexual violence.

What we will do to Involve Parents and Carers?

- make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers
- ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying
- ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline
- ensure all parents / carers know about our complaints procedure and Working Together document and how to use these effectively to raise concerns in an appropriate manner

<u>Cyberbullying</u>

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:

  -identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;

  -contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary

- work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include: support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
- confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and DfE Guidance.
- ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.

- provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
  - -advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
  - -providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
  - -helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied
- Maintain a log of bullying incidents, actions taken and monitoring procedures
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning
- The Head Teacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate
- The Head Teacher will report on a regular basis to the Governing Body on incidents of bullying.

Links with other school policies and practices

This policy links with a number of other school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour policy
- Relationships policy
- Health and Sex Education Policy
- SCARF PSHE curriculum map and lesson plans
- Complaints policy
- Child protection policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Online safety and Acceptable use policies (AUP)