

Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

"We are a zero tolerance school"

Our definition of Bullying:

Bullying is any form of deliberate act, by an individual or group, repeated over time which intentionally causes hurt, physically or emotionally to another individual or group. Bullying has many forms – e.g. physical, verbal, emotional, homophobic, racist or electronic (cyber-bullying). A bully is someone who targets others and makes them unhappy or frightened over a period of time. They may do this by:

- Threatening behaviour (psychological, intimidation)
- Using physical violence
- Using unpleasant words – insulting comments, mocking verbal abuse
- Homophobic comments
- Racist Language or comments
- Stealing property, taking or demanding money
- Deliberately upsetting people
- Sending unpleasant text messages/images
- Using the internet/MSN/Facebook/Whatsapp/Twitter/technology to spread unpleasant rumours (cyber bullying) or abuse directly.

As a school we have a zero tolerance stance towards any form of bullying. We are aware that bullying can happen anywhere, but we strongly believe that wherever pupils are they have the right to be safe. Nobody has the right to make anyone unhappy.

Single, one-off incidents are not usually bullying, but if they are repeated, they must be reported and will be dealt with by the school accordingly.

Our policy and the Law

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 section 89:

- Provides that every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and **prevent all forms of bullying** amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents;
- Gives head teachers the ability to ensure that pupils behave when they are not on school premises or under the lawful control of school staff.

Yorkmead School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all children and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The Equality Act 2010 and its relevance

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and also covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Duty has three aims.

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

It is important to understand the relevance of this act in relation to the policy as it ensures that school is aligned with government policy and expectations for its community.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

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 likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, school staff should report their concerns as per the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures (to the DSL).

Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

Bullying Outside School Premises

Head teachers have specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education Act 2006 gives head teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff.

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 town or village centre.

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Even when incidents occur outside school, they should be reported to school staff and investigated. The head teacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of actions taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

Aims and Objectives of our Policy

- To ensure that all pupils, parents and staff are aware of the definition of bullying and the distressing effect it has on its victims.
- To ensure that all pupils, parents and staff are fully aware of the referral procedures for reporting bullying incidents and the strategies adopted for supporting those involved in these incidents.
- To establish a climate in which pupils who are bullied, or think another pupil is being bullied, can speak to a member of school staff in the knowledge that they will be listened to and receive an appropriate and sensitive response.
- To create a school community where bullying is unacceptable and where all pupils can feel valued, secure and happy.

Our stated commitment is that when a young person speaks out about bullying:

- They will be listened to.
- Their concerns will be taken seriously.
- The matters will be investigated.
- Together we will find a way to tackle it.
- Someone will be there to help and support the young person.

Anti-bullying Procedures

All pupils are encouraged to feel it is right to tell someone if they are being bullied or if someone they know is being bullied. Incidents of bullying will be referred to a member of SLT and the matter dealt with quickly and appropriately.

Whilst it is the responsibility of all staff within the school to reinforce the anti-bullying strategy and support the victims of bullying, it is recognised that not all staff have the capacity (due to the commitments of their job) to carry out a swift and thorough investigation. Therefore incidents of bullying should be referred to either the Head or Deputy Head teacher who has the experience and capacity to respond swiftly and effectively to incidents as they occur.

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Signs and Symptoms

It can be hard for adults, including parents, to know whether or not a child is being bullied. A child might not tell anyone because they're scared the bullying will get worse. They might think that they deserve to be bullied, or that it's their fault.

You can't always see the signs of bullying and no one sign indicates for certain that a child is being bullied. But you should look out for:

- Belongings getting "lost" or damaged
- Physical injuries such as unexplained bruises
- Being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- Not doing as well at school
- Asking for, or stealing, money (to give to a bully)
- Being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- Problems with eating or sleeping
- Bullying others.

Things you may notice

If you're worried that a child is being abused, watch out for any unusual behaviour:

- withdrawn
- suddenly behaves differently
- anxious
- clingy
- depressed
- aggressive
- problems sleeping
- eating disorders
- wets the bed
- soils clothes
- takes risks
- misses school
- changes in eating habits
- obsessive behaviour
- nightmares
- drugs
- alcohol
- self-harm
- thoughts about suicide

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If you notice any of these indicators then you should speak to the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or member of SLT.

The role of Governors:

The governing body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body fully supports the implementation of the National curriculum and in particular the PSHE element where bullying in all its forms and types is learnt about, discussed and understood by pupils at an age appropriate and sensitive level.

The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the Headteacher 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 (see behaviour books, green parent forms etc).

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter. The governing body should respond within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Headteacher, and asks her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

The role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher 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 identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request. The Headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff; receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying. The Headteacher 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 the teacher and support staff

All the staff in our school; take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.

- Teachers record all the significant incidents that involve pupils from their class in the behaviour book for that class. The behaviour books are kept in the Deputy Head's office and follow the class through the school.

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- If teachers witness or suspect an act of bullying, they initially investigate it themselves, then; refer it to either the Head or Deputy. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If there is any suspicion of bullying or intimidating behaviour then school immediately contacts parents/carers and meets with them to discuss the situation and what the next steps will be to stop and support all the individuals involved.
- "One off" incidents are dealt with in school.
- When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim, and punishment for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. It may be appropriate that the pupil receives an exclusion; as punishment for their behaviour.
- If a child is involved in bullying, we inform the Headteacher, Beco and Inclusion manager. We then invite the child's parents or carers into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies, such as the Children's Services.
- All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.
- Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal PSHE curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, to address issues highlighted and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers 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. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Headteacher or Deputy. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed in the school Prospectus and on the school website. Parents and carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

The role of pupils

Yorkmead School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all children and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.

Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, during their termly Assertive Mentoring meetings with their class teacher.

Our School Council has developed its own anti-bullying code and has prepared a statement endorsing this policy.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored regularly by the Headteacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. They should do this by examining the school's Behaviour Books, where incidents of bullying are recorded, and by discussion with the Head and Deputy Headteacher. Governors in conjunction with SLT analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities, special educational needs or homophobic bullying. This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if necessary.

School Council's Statement:

The school council will encourage everyone to join the Anti-Bullying Policy. We will reinforce the idea that bullying will always be wrong and that school is a place people should feel and be safe in!

Signed:

Date:

Ratified:

Date: