


ANTI – BULLYING POLICY

Policy Details			
Written by (signed, role)	Checked by (signed, role)	Date	Review due
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Mary Elliot and Old Hall are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our pupils to allow them to learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Everybody within our schools has the right to feel safe, valued, protected, and to be treated with respect. At both schools, we acknowledge that bullying may happen from time to time however, if bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy.

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable and that a safe and secure environment is created in which everyone can learn and work. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy. This will happen in the following ways:

The school will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.

- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that pupils stay safe as stated in The Pupil and Family Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2014.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc.) and proactive teaching strategies.
- Personal, Health & Social Education (PSHE) lessons, circle time etc. will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.
- Bullying and cyber bullying will not be tolerated. It is our responsibility to ensure that if it occurs, any incidents of bullying is dealt with in line with this policy.
- Prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour

What Is Bullying?

Bullying including peer on peer abuse is unacceptable behaviour used by an individual or group, usually repeated over time and that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time.

Bullying can be:-

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding toys, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing objects at another, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence, taking or hiding someone's things
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Homophobic language or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone
- Cyber bullying - sending offensive text messages/emails, internet chat on social media including misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities, iPad, games consoles
- Disability discrimination - unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs

The pupils at Mary Elliot and Old Hall have a wide range of complex needs. As a school community we understand that bullying in this context can have additional subtleties and raise issues that are in themselves complicated to resolve. Not all pupils will recognise bullying behaviour if they experience it; equally not all pupils would recognise their own behaviour as bullying towards another individual. It is therefore our responsibility to teach pupils in a meaningful way, how to behave appropriately and treat each other.

Reasons for being a victim may be related to:-

- Race/religion/culture
- Gender
- Disability or special educational needs
- Being a timid pupil on the edge or outside of a group
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances, including young carers and poverty
- Sexual orientation

Reasons for being a bully may be:-

- A victim of violence
- Bullied at home
- Enjoyment of power
- Enjoyment of creating fear
- Not allowed to show feelings
- Copying behaviour at home or on TV
- Unhappy
- Insecure
- Self-hating

Pupils and adults from all backgrounds, cultures, races and sexes can be involved in bullying others.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose. Pupils sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying however it is our responsibility to recognise such situations and support our pupils in developing social skills and to repair relationships to reduce the risk of escalation.

Where does bullying happen?

We recognise that bullying can happen anywhere in school, on the journey to and from school and through social media. In such cases, a senior leader is empowered by law to deal with such incidents but must do so in accordance with the school's policy.

At both schools, we are concerned with our pupil's conduct and welfare outside as well as inside school and we will do what we can to address any bullying issues that occur off the school premises.

The following steps may be taken:

- Talk to the local Community Police Officer
- Talk to the transport companies about bullying on school buses and in school taxis
- Talk to the senior leaders of other schools whose pupils may be involved in bullying off the premises
- Discuss coping strategies with parents
- Talk to the pupil about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the school premises
- Discuss on-line safety, including how to report and deal with bullying or negative behaviour on-line

Signs and Symptoms for Parents and Staff

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour such as, becoming shy, nervous, feigning sickness, refusing to come to school, clinging to adults, refusing to remain in class or increase of/unprovoked aggressive behaviour. It is important that all staff investigate the changes in behaviours and get to the root cause of the behaviour, taking appropriate action to support all of those concerned.

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

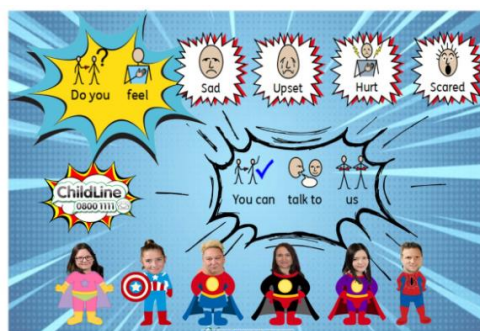
What should a pupil do if they are being bullied ?

Wherever pupils are in school, they have the right to feel safe. Nobody has the right to make anyone feel unhappy. If someone is bullying, it is important to remember that it is not their fault and there are people who can help.

Posters are displayed throughout the school and in every classroom. Pupils are taught on a regular basis how to use the poster to ask for help.

Each class shows a powerpoint presentation every morning to identify the Safeguarding Team and those in the posters below who can help them. Pupils are reminded who they can speak to and why.

It is crucial for staff to observe the behaviour of non-verbal pupils, to identify any changes in behaviour and raise any early concerns in regards to bullying.



Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents.

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at both schools. They will be taken seriously by all staff and will be dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all pupils involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

- Report all bullying allegations and incidents to staff.
- Staff will make sure the victim is and feels safe.
- Staff will listen and speak to all pupils involved about the incident separately where appropriate.
- The problem will be identified, and possible solutions suggested.
- Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
- Staff will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our schools.
- An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully understand and change his/her behaviour.
- The bully may be asked to genuinely apologise, as appropriate to the pupil's age and level of understanding. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- All cases of serious bullying will be recorded by staff on the standard Incident Recording System 'Behaviour Watch'. Any behaviours with a safeguarding concern will also be recorded on 'My Concern'.
- Parents will be informed and may be invited to come into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Bullying incidents will be discussed at staff meetings.
- The DSL and Behaviour Lead will present termly reports on serious bullying incidents to the Governors.
- If necessary and appropriate, Walsall Children's Services or Police will be consulted.

Sanctions from the Behaviour Policy may be used:

Sanctions for bullying should be appropriate to the developmental level of the pupil. Due to the complex needs of pupils at both schools, the focus should be on teaching our pupils the correct way to behave or respond to emotions rather than punishments for behaviour that they do not necessarily understand as bullying.

- A conversation with the pupil reminder then about what behaviour is required.

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- Time out offered or may need to be directed where necessary
 - Speaking to the pupil and listening to them in order to understand the underlying problem
 - Show of disapproval by change of face/ or voice
 - Warning, reminder of the rules and consequences - individualised to each department e.g 'It's good to be green'
 - Missed playtime (Only for those who understand why?)
 - Direct the pupil from the environment in order to reduce anxiety
 - Withdraw of positive reinforcement/ praise for a short time
 - Pupil to work in a less stimulating environment where they are able to regulate better
 - Use of social story to understand about the unwanted behaviour / bullying

Action to be taken to support the victim:

- Environmental changes will be made if necessary – classroom, playground to ensure that the pupil feels more secure.
- Staff must communicate with other staff and record, where relevant, any incidents or concerns
- The situation will continue to be monitored by all staff to ensure no repetition.
 - Key friends identified by the pupil will be asked for extra support.
- Lessons, one to one sessions, mentoring will aim to tackle bullying, unwanted behaviours and promote positive relationships.
- The pupil will nominate an adult or a preferred adult will be identified with whom the pupil can trust and feel they can talk to.
- The pupil will be made aware of the importance of immediate reporting of any further incidents.
- Parents may be invited into school so that action taken can be shared.

Action to be taken to support the bully:

Type and method of support will depend on individual needs, age and maturity of the pupil.

- It may be suggested that the pupil(s) involved meet with the support of their class teachers.
- It will be made clear to the pupil(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable because of the effect that it is having on the other pupil(s).
- The pupil(s) will be reminded that they are responsible for their behaviour and there are consequences for poor behaviour.
- Following the implementation of a behaviour plan, if the behaviour persists, then outside agency support may be requested to address the needs of the pupil, with the permission of parents.
- Adaptation to the environment , supportive resources, symbolised communication reminders.

Role of Parents

Parents have an important part to play in our anti-bullying policy. We ask parents to:

- Look out for unusual behaviour in their child – for example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly.
- Always take an active role in their child's education. If they feel their child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, to inform school. Their complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- If they feel their child has been bullied by another pupil, we ask them to not approach that pupil or the pupil's parent on school property, but to inform school immediately
- Not to advise their child to fight back. This will only make the problem much harder to solve.

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- Tell their child that it is not their fault that they are being bullied.
 - Reinforce the school's policy concerning bullying and make sure their pupil is not afraid to ask for help.

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

These will include:

- All staff aware of the anti-bullying and behaviour policies
- Group sessions where we discuss bullying issues, this is done where appropriate based on our pupils needs and understanding
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help pupils be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- Reinforcement of a general message that pupils do not have to be friends with everyone, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings and be kind to each other.

This policy will be reviewed on an bi-annual basis by the Senior Leadership Team