



# Anti-Bullying and Cyber-Bullying Policy

Date policy last reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of governors Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Respectful, Kind, Curious and Ambitious*

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the School Vision Statement, Aims and Values, the Behaviour Policy, the Equality and Diversity Policy, the RSHE Policy and the Online-Safety and Computing-related policies.**

We believe that everyone is equal and we treat each other with dignity and respect. Our school is a place where everyone should be able to flourish in a loving and hospitable community.

Our school vision is at the heart of everything we do and ensures that all members of the school community are revered and respected as members of our community and the wider world.

### **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

Bullying is hurtful, unkind or threatening behaviour which is deliberate and repeated. Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group of people towards another individual or group, where the bully or bullies hold more power than those being bullied. If bullying is allowed, it harms the perpetrator, the target and the whole school community and its secure and happy environment.

The nature of bullying can include, physical, verbal, cyber, emotional, visual, damage to property threat with a weapon, theft or extortion, persistent bullying.

Bullying that is carried out through an internet service, such as email, internet, social media, discussion group or instant messaging or through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS) is cyber bullying. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated at any level, and consequences exist for students who choose to bully others in any way.

In school, victims of bullying are often perceived by the other children as 'different' from them. This might be because they are very able or they have special educational needs, it might be because they wear glasses or are overweight or thin, it might be because their parents are seen by the other children as unusual; they could be in single-sex relationships, or have a negative image locally, it could be because of their gender, it might be because of their religion, sometimes it might be because of the colour of the victim's skin or their ethnicity, or because they don't fit into the social norms.

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed above. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored on the school cpoms system and follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken in line with this policy.

A prejudice based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored, with the headteacher reporting incidents to the governing body.

It is our belief that children who behave as bullies are expressing personal difficulties or anxieties, or a lack of self-esteem through their behaviour. We need to support them alongside our support for the victims of bullying, whilst making it absolutely clear that bullying is not acceptable and that this behaviour has to change. They need to know that they will be supported to make that change, however, it is always made clear that bullying in any form is unacceptable.

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## **THE AIM OF OUR POLICY**

It is our aim to build a school community where everyone respects and supports everyone else, and where we value everyone's contributions and celebrate people's differences. To ensure a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment, discrimination or any type of bullying behaviour. In such a community, bullying will be rare, and the community itself will be well equipped to deal with it.

Our community will be safe for everyone, and when incidents of bullying arise, children and adults alike will feel confident in their ability to resolve them together.

It is our aim to create an environment where all are treated with dignity and respect, where stereotypes are challenged and where all members of the school community understand that bullying is not acceptable.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach to preventing, challenging and responding to incidents of bullying that occur. It also serves to inform children and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership which helps to maintain a bullying-free environment.

This policy demonstrates the school's commitment to continuously improving our approach to tackling bullying by regularly monitoring and reviewing the impact of our preventative measures.

## **POLICY INTO PRACTICE**

### **THE CHILDREN**

It is our belief that the children should be at the heart of our anti-bullying work. They are the ones who know where they do and don't feel safe, and why. We speak to the children often about how they feel and what we can do to make them feel safe, especially in assemblies and circle times, as well as through our school PSHE teaching.

Anti-bullying and forming and maintaining positive relationships is taught explicitly in our curriculum within the PSHE cycle of learning; which covers relationships and personal safety for each year group. Through a variety of planned activities and time across the curriculum children are given the opportunity to gain self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions. Jigsaw provides regular opportunities to discuss issues that may arise in class and for teachers to target specific interventions. Assemblies explore the importance of inclusivity, dignity and respect as well as other themes that play a part in challenging bullying.

We impress upon the children the importance of telling an adult if they, or anyone else, are the victims of bullying. We ensure that the children know what bullying is and that children should come to school expecting to have a good day, free from criticism or harm, and that this is their right.

### **THE ADULTS**

All our policies are shared by all adults who work within the school, and our systems for reporting and responding to bullying are understood by all children and adults. Regular training as well as appropriate induction is provided by the Senior Leadership Team.

- All staff are involved in reporting and investigating bullying incidents;
- The headteacher (or a senior member of staff) will plan and monitor the support plans for victims and perpetrator;

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- All staff and children may be involved in implementing the anti-bullying support plan;
- A report on bullying goes to the full governing body termly.

### **PARENTS AND CARERS**

When joining our school, parents or carers agree to the expectations and guidelines highlighted within this policy.

We ask parents and carers to keep us informed of bullying incidents involving their own children or those that they have witnessed.

Parents and carers concerned about bullying will be seen as soon as possible by the headteacher or a senior member of staff and their concerns will always be taken seriously. They will be kept informed of any action that is taken to support their children and helped to support them further at home.

In most cases, parents of children whose bullying behaviour is causing concern will be contacted and their support sought.

### **BULLYING OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL**

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of school. Bullying can take place on the way to and from school, before or after school hours, at the weekend or during school holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of certain types of bullying, e.g. cyber-bullying in particular, means that it can impact on pupils well-being beyond the school day. Staff, parents and carers and children must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according to their responsibilities outlined in this policy.

### **REPORTING BULLYING**

- Any report of bullying by a child will always be listened to and taken seriously by every adult in the school;
- The adult who has heard the allegation will record the details of this within the child's record in cpoms;
- The adult who has heard the allegation will either investigate it themselves, or will ask a another member of staff to do so immediately, and make sure the victim knows who is going to talk to them about it;
- If it is clear that this is a bullying incident, a record of this will be made and placed in the pupil's record on cpoms. The headteacher or a senior member of staff will then deal with the matter;
- If the incident does not involve bullying, the appropriate adult will take time to explain this to the 'victim' and will help him/her to deal with the problem in appropriate ways;
- The senior leadership team will monitor cpoms regularly and analyse the results; feeding into future provision and practice;
- The headteacher will produce a termly report which includes this information which will be reported to the governing body.

### **ACTION AGAINST BULLYING**

- The victims will be taken to a safe and private place and encouraged to report everything that has happened to them and this will be written down by an adult;
- Immediate action will be taken to ensure their safety;

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- A support plan will then be set up for both the victims and the children carrying out the bullying;
- The incident may warrant more serious disciplinary intervention, in which case parents and carers of both children or groups of children would be contacted;
- Children who continue to bully others in spite of all the support offered, or whose actions threaten the safety of others in school may be suspended or excluded from school.

### **INTERVENTION STRATEGIES (SEE ALSO THE BEHAVIOUR POLICY)**

All the strategies that are used in the implementation of the Behaviour Policy will be appropriate to use in some bullying cases.

The clear message we receive from the children is that the best strategies are often those they implement themselves. Hence, we try to use friendship circles, peer mentoring and buddy systems as often as possible, with regular and consistent support for the children involved from a member of staff to ensure their success.

Such programmes are monitored by the senior member of staff who has set them in process, and outcomes are monitored closely over several weeks. Intervention should never be withdrawn until the adult supervising the process is sure that there is no danger of any recurrence. This step by step process should be recorded in detail.

Further support for the victim or perpetrator, such as work to develop self-esteem, anger management, or peer group relationships, may be sought through the assistant headteacher for inclusion within Individual Behaviour Plans (IBPs)/individual risk assessments.

Staff will assess in each individual case, whether any other authorities need to be involved, particularly where actions take place outside of school.

### **CYBER-BULLYING (SEE ALSO ONLINE-SAFETY POLICY AND RELATED DOCUMENTS)**

Cyber-bullying is the use of technology to bully a person or group. Bullying is repeated behaviour by an individual or group with the intent to harm another person or group.

Cyber-bullying can involve social, psychological and even, in extreme cases, physical harm. It can cause shame, guilt, fear, withdrawal, loneliness and depression.

Because children and young people are often online it can be hard for them to escape cyber-bullying. Nasty messages, videos and gossip can spread fast online and are hard to delete. Sometimes the attackers can be anonymous and hard to stop. This can make it harder for adults to see and manage. Children also do not always know that teachers and school staff can help – they see it as being outside school hours therefore not to do with school. This is not the case. Any cyber-bullying will be dealt with in the same way that other forms of bullying are dealt with as we have a duty of care to the children in our charge.

The school will do regular work to ensure that children know this.

### **HOW ADULTS CAN HELP**

Research shows children often don't tell adults about bullying, in particular cyber-bullying. They fear we will disconnect them from supportive friends and family and may overreact and make the situation

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worse. There are some signs you might be able to pick up at school that indicate a child may be the target of bullying and cyber-bullying or struggling for other reasons.

*Look for:*

- changes in personality, e.g. more withdrawn, anxious, sad or angry, tears;
- appearing more lonely or distressed;
- unexpected changes in friendship groups;
- less interaction with other children at school;
- possible peer rejection;
- decline in school work;
- excessive sleepiness or lack of focus;
- higher levels of absenteeism;
- increased negative self-perception;
- a decline in physical health;
- suicidal thoughts — this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the parents/carers immediately for appropriate action.

### **RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND CYBER-BULLYING**

If you notice a child in your class or the school playground showing any of the above signs, or other worrying and out of character behaviours, tell them you are worried and want to help. If they won't open up to you, recruit others to talk to them (another teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead). Keep a close eye on their interactions and ask other relevant staff to do the same, particularly at playtimes and lunchtime.

**Interventions or sanctions for any form of bullying might include:**

| <b>For the Victim</b>                                 | <b>For the Perpetrator</b>                                 |
|---|--|
| Play inside at break with chosen group of friends     | Miss playtime / lunchtime                                  |
| Place/group changed within class                      | Stay in with and adult – restorative conversation          |
| Adult monitors playtime to ensure victim is not alone | Stay in by themselves                                      |
| Playtime buddy system                                 | Adult monitors playtime                                    |
| Advice/support from class in PSHE activities          | Place / group changed in class                             |
| Named adult for on-going monitoring and support       | Change of class  |
|   | Seek advice of peers during PSHE activities                |
|   | County support is sought for offering support to the bully |
|   | As a last resort, suspension/exclusion from school         |

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This list is not intended to be exhaustive. It is crucial that the adult implementing the anti-bullying intervention responds to each individual case and supports the victim / perpetrator **according to their needs**.