



BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

The Nature of Bullying

Bullying can be

- Physical
- Verbal
- Indirect (e.g. by marginalising someone socially, or by spreading malicious rumour. Increasingly, in all parts of society, bullies use e-mail, texts or some other electronic medium.)

Bullying

- is normally deliberately hurtful
- may be repeated, or can be a single incident
- is difficult for the bullied person to defend against

Motivation may be

- merely on the basis of one pupil's personal dislike for another
- racially derived – (this is the subject of a separate policy)
- based on a variety of prejudices or preferences, (e.g.) 'as a result of a child's appearance, behaviour, disability or special educational needs, or related to sexual orientation.'

The Nature of Harassment

The effects of harassment in the DCSF “Safe to Learn” definition that follows have similarities with those of bullying: “Unwarranted conduct which violates a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or humiliating environment”

The Scope of Bullying

The school accepts that it is unrealistic to believe that any educational establishment could be immune from bullying and recognises the absolute centrality of bullying as an issue to address. The health of the school as a place of learning and development depends on the control of bullying and harassment as a vital and central issue.

Bullying is seen as a complex set of problems for a school to sort out.

In response, the school seeks to foster a harmonious atmosphere, and to counter types of behaviour that lead to disharmony and to the marginalising of individuals within the community. The school is aware that bullying can affect a pupil's work and their social or emotional development.

Who is involved in protecting pupils against bullying?

The school accepts the view that: 'All teaching and non-teaching staff, including lunchtime supervisors, should be alert to signs of bullying and act

promptly and firmly'

The focus for working through problems over bullying may indeed be the Class Teacher; but this does not relieve any member of staff from the responsibility to notice bullying when it occurs and to play his or her part in resolving bullying situations. The senior leadership team will be actively involved in dealing with bullying.

The Wider Rôle of Staff.

Creation of a Positive Atmosphere: trust and inclusion:

As a prime requirement, the school aims to establish trust between pupils and staff. This tends to assist in the identifying of bullying, in the sensible discussion of the question of bullying, and the giving of confidence to pupils who may wish to talk to staff about being bullied.

Above all, staff will demonstrate that they do not distinguish between pupils on the basis of some quality or other. Some children may be naturally likeable; others naturally gifted; socially comfortable with staff yet easily relating to their peers, too. Others, by contrast, may be 'difficult', very distant, or on the other hand, embarrassingly forward towards staff in a manner that annoys other pupils. All these latter types may easily become 'natural' victims of bullying, and staff will not form judgments, or downgrade individuals, in a manner that gives a 'signal' to children that others are of lesser importance, and therefore 'fair game' to bully. The emphasis, in staff's dealing with all pupils is thus one of inclusion.

The school will at all times seek to introduce positive experiences and attitudes. The system of reward, for example through House Points, contributes towards this, by showing that pupils of whatever abilities can see the school as a place to achieve positive things, in work or in contributing towards the community. Staff seek to offer praise wherever possible, not necessarily for excellence, but also for striving towards excellence at whatever level.

Monitoring School Anti-Bullying Policy

- The school accepts that bullying incidents may occur. The headteacher working with individual teachers and other parties, ensure that these incidents are dealt with, and record incidents in writing. This gives an overview of the number of episodes occurring, and of what type they are.
- At staff meetings, staff discuss these issues, noting individual events and discussing the steps that should be taken in each case.
- The school's policy on bullying is regularly reviewed by Headteacher, and revisions of the Policy are brought to the attention of all staff through Staff meetings .
- The views of Senior Leaders and the Governing Body also help to shape the final form in which anti-bullying policy, like all policy relating to behaviour and discipline, is stated.
- Parents, too, are aware of the school's stance.

The Staff's Role in Explaining

All staff, especially but not exclusively class teachers have an educational job to do - explaining to bullies what their activities might result in, what the effect of bullying is on other pupils, and how it tends to destroy the community atmosphere of the school. All staff are required to listen, to take time and to be observant; and to show pupils, by the overall caring approaches that are their normal practice, that they can be trusted, and that pupils can talk to them about problems of being bullied. PSHE lessons and circle times explore

Strategies and Sanctions

Whilst the school does not subscribe uncritically to so-called 'No-Blame' approaches to bullies, it is nonetheless true that sanctions do not always take the form of 'punishment'. Negotiation may often be a more effective method of sorting problems out.

Sanctions, however, may take many different forms, including in extreme cases, exclusion.

The key is that Senior leaders discuss all issues with class teachers and other teachers involved, in order to come to conclusions on the most appropriate course of action in each case and the most appropriate form of support for all parties.

The key to dealing with problems of bullying lies in demonstrating to all pupils that staff are concerned with the issue, will act on information received about bullying, and are seeking at all times to build a community in which pupils and staff can trust each other to talk about the issues - being jointly opposed to disharmony, cruelty and harassment.

At the same time, bullies must be persuaded that re-offending will be seen as a very serious offence; and the victim must be persuaded that all members of staff have the moral strength and authority to protect them from the bully.

Parents and Communication

As already implied, the school accepts that it has a responsibility to communicate with parents about bullying, and to re-assure parents that bullying is indeed an important issue, that is taken very seriously and is constantly under review. This involvement may not be in the form of large-scale mailings to all parents; but will more probably be the patient working-through with parents, by staff, of any episode that occurs.

Without being patronising, staff must persuade parents not to advise their child that the solution is to "sort the bully out."

The school actively seeks parental co-operation in advising and helping to develop school policy on bullying, as on other issues.

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