Progress School

Anti-Bullying Policy



Aspris Together we raise potential

Impact of Autism

Most of the students at Progress School have a diagnosis of autism which affects the way they interact with the world. Our students are individuals with different abilities, strengths, and interests but they share a common set of impairments in their sensory processing, social understanding and interactions, communication and their ability to think flexibly and solve problems.

In addition to their autism, all students at Progress School have a severe learning disability and challenging behaviours and many have co-morbid conditions including ADHD, epilepsy and mental health conditions.

Aim

The aim of the anti-bulling policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied and where mutual respect for others thrives.
Bullying is wrong; it is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone directly or indirectly. It is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

As a school we aim to provide a safe and secure environment where everyone can learn without anxiety with measures in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

Statutory Duties Of Schools

Headteachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents/carers and pupils. Schools have a duty to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils' and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination.

Links to other policies

Safeguarding Policy
Aspris Countering Bullying Policy ACS03

This policy includes:

- Bullying of pupils by pupils within school
- Bullying of and/or by pupils outside of school, where the school is aware of it
- Bullying of staff by pupils within or outside school

Allegations about bullying of pupils by staff will be dealt with under the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

This policy has links to the following school policies and procedures:

- Behaviour policy
- Aspris Countering Bullying Policy ACS03
  Safeguarding Children and Young People policy 2023
- Health and Safety Policy

Attention should also be paid to The Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 Statutory Guidance - which identifies the risks of Child on Child Abuse

Definition

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- Is meant to hurt – the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it.
- Happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a 'one-off' incident.
- Involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it hard to defend themselves.
- When a person or group of people has been made aware of the effects of their behaviour on another person and they continue to behave in the same manner.

It can be:

- Physical – kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings
- Verbal – name calling, taunting, threats, offensive remarks
- Emotional – spending nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups
- Sexual – involving coersion, intimidation, threats or sharing images
- Cyber – texts, e-mails, picture/video clip bullying
- Identity based eg homophobic, racist, gender based.

Identifying and reporting concerns about bullying

All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
Pupils who are being bullied may not report it. However, there may be changes in their behaviour

Signs to look for:

- Becoming withdrawn
- Decline in work/loss of interest
- Unexplained secretiveness
- Loss of appetite
- Overly shy
- Clinging to adults
- Lack of concentration
- Unwillingness to attend
- Reluctance to travel on school transport
- Unusual outbursts of temper
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Change in child's usual personality, behaviour or attitude
- Bruising on the body
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Missing belongings
- Persistent stomach aches/head aches
- Having nightmares

All school staff need to be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy. Pupils who are bullying others also need support to help them understand and change their behaviour.

Pupils who are aware of bullying (Bystanders) can be a powerful force in helping to address it and will be encouraged to do so in a safe way.
At Progress School we give our pupils many opportunities to discuss relationships and feelings in PSHE/ RSHE lessons, all pupils will be encouraged to report bullying by:

- Communicating to a member of staff of their choice
- Using the safe environment of these lessons to discuss any issues they may be having

Parents/Carers will be encouraged to report concerns about bullying and to support the school in tackling it. Trying to resolve bullying directly with pupils or their families can lead to problems escalating.

Strategies

If you suspect a child is involved in bullying others:

- Encourage the child to talk about the situation
- Do not overreact – keep calm
- Establish what the child really thinks is happening
- Ask the child how she/he thinks the harmed is feeling
- Make it clear that standing up for one's rights is commendable but bullying behaviour is wrong
- Encourage an environment where problems are dealt with by talking negotiating, not by any hint of force or violence

Remember: ***A bully is also in need of help***

If you suspect a child is being bullied:

- Encourage the child to talk about the problem
- Listen calmly, do not overreact
- Encourage confidence and trust
- Aim to ascertain the facts: where and when bullying is taking place
- Assess whether there is a pattern to the incidents

Strategies for an Anti-Bullying Atmosphere

- The promotion of a good school ethos
- Be Progress values (based around British Values)
- Staff alert to signs
- Ensure the bully does not gain kudos from the situation
- Action based upon on a clear set of rules backed up by appropriate consequences and systems to protect and support
- Effective supervision
- Routines, which provide a structure for encouraging positive relationships to be initiated and maintained
- Coping strategies developed for pupils against teasing and bullying
- Encourage the harmed to talk to a member of staff of their choice. Do not promise confidentiality.
- Awareness of areas that are conducive to bullying e.g. toilets, hidden areas.

Responding to reports about bullying

The leadership team 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 school will take the following steps when dealing with concerns about bullying: Taken from the Countering Bullying Policy ACS03

Stage One

(a) Colleagues should talk to the victim about the incident and their feelings
(b) The alleged perpetrator and any witnesses should be seen separately
(c) Colleagues should talk to the perpetrator about how the victim maybe/is feeling
(d) No blame should be attributed but colleagues/carers should emphasise the perpetrators responsibility for their behaviour
(e) All children/young people involved should be asked for suggestions to make the alleged victim feel happier
(f) If appropriate facilitate a reconciliation meeting
(g) Colleagues/carers should meet with the child involved at an agreed future time to review progress
(h) If, after a week, things have improved, no further formal action may be required but colleagues/carers should continue to monitor the situation
(j) If things have not improved, colleagues should move to Stage Two
(k) If the incident appears to be Peer on Peer Abuse this should be dealt with as a safeguarding incident.

Stage Two:

(a) If bullying is continuing, a meeting should be convened and is likely to include children/young people involved and their advocates/keyworkers/link workers to discuss resolution
(b) An action plan should be drawn up, which should include direct work with the children/young people involved and strategies to improve the situation.

The situation should be monitored to assess progress. If, after a week, the situation has not improved, Stage Three should be implemented.

Stage Three:

Where Stages One and Two have proved ineffective and continuing bullying is having an adverse effect on children and young people, the site leader should, in liaison with their regional lead, consider calling a professionals meeting to review the situation. This may involve specialists such as teaching, therapy and social work colleagues.

Record Keeping

All incidents of bullying and actions taken will be kept in the school Anti Bullying Log book and in the pupils individual behaviour logs.
Serious and persistent bullying will be considered an incident and should be recorded onto Engage (Aspris' recording system)

Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Providing reassurance that the bullying will be addressed.
- Offering continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. Educational Psychologist, where appropriate.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the pupil became involved.
- Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude of the pupil.
- The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies where appropriate.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- Warnings
- Withdrawal of privileges

Parents/Carers

Most concerns about bullying will be resolved through discussion between home and school. However, where a parent/carer feels their concerns have not been resolved, they are encouraged to use the formal Complaints Procedure.
Referral of the family to external support agencies will be made where appropriate.

Preventative Measures

Throughout the school the issue of bullying will be raised through:

- Raising awareness of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, RSHE, Computing curriculum and other subject areas and informal discussion.
- Participation in National and Local initiatives such as Anti Bullying Week, Safer Internet Day
- Progress School Council.
- Appropriate staff training.
- Periodic and as appropriate, questionnaires to parents/carers and pupils.

Monitoring and review

The policy is monitored by the Headteacher .
This policy will be reviewed annually.

Original September 2022
Reviewed annually ; Last review Sept 2026
Next Review due Sept 2027.