

Procedure for	Anti-Bullying Local Procedure		
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Philosophy

Bullying is a serious issue in all schools and students deserve to come to school in the knowledge that we will keep them safe in all ways.

The occasions when bullying occurs in very small highly staffed schools are infrequent, however at Sketchley and Forest House we believe it is important to have guidance in the event of any incidences.

This policy is written in reference to the following DFE documents,

- Keeping children safe in Education DFe00129/2023
- The use and effectiveness of anti bullying strategies in schools,
- Preventing and tackling bullying DFE 2102

Principles

“A ‘one size fits all approach’ is unhelpful when supporting children with a range of SEN and disabilities who experience bullying.”
(DCSF Safe to Learn September 2008)

Parents may be concerned about their child being bullied at school. It is clearly detailed in this policy how the school intends to prevent bullying from occurring.

At Sketchley School we recognise that some of our students may:

- Find it difficult to resist bullies.
- Be more isolated, not have typical friendships.
- Not understand that what is happening is bullying.
- Have difficulties telling people about bullying.
- Make statements to others that may be hurtful but be based on literal thinking.

What is bullying?

There are many definitions of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour.

- It is repeated often over a period of time.
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can take many forms but three types are:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, and taking belongings.
- Verbal - name-calling, insulting, hurtful or racist remarks.
- Indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups.

Why challenge bullying?

No school can claim with confidence that bullying does not occur in their environment but we must respond positively and effectively to reduce and challenge bullying. We need to minimise bullying in order to ensure:

- The safety and happiness of pupils is maintained.
- Educational achievement is not hampered.
- Pupils feel safe and protected within the school environment.
- Pupils feel supported by adults in authority.

In school there is an ethos that does not tolerate the oppression of one person by another. Each school provides short and long-term strategies, which permeate the school organisation and curriculum. Advice and guidance is provided for all young people, parents, carers and school staff. Specialist support and guidance is offered to everyone involved in a situation of bullying, including the young people's parents (carers).

All staff involved in the care and education of young people are constantly watchful, observing social relationships between young people, in class, social situations, the dining room and the residential accommodation. If a situation does occur staff are able to offer each young person immediate support. They are also able to instantly indicate to the bully, the unacceptable nature of their behaviour, and the consequences of any repetition. Any incident observed triggers the school procedure for bullying.

If pupils observe bullying behaviour going unchallenged, others may learn that bullying is an effective way of getting what they want.

Procedures and Practice

Bullying is never acceptable

All staff should:

- Be aware of what constitutes bullying and help pupils to understand what is meant by it.
- Listen carefully to any student who feels they are being bullied.
- Be aware of pupils who cannot speak for themselves and the interaction that occurs around them.
- Think about times of the day, parts of the building etc. where bullying may occur.
- Stop play fights, mock kicking etc.
- Deal with incidents of bullying promptly.
- Report any bullying episode to the Principal / Senior Management.

Pupils should be encouraged to:

- Include others in their games and groups.
- Not laugh if someone is upset.
- Tell staff if they see bullying.
- Never join in with bullying.

All positive aspects of social interaction are encouraged at Sketchley School and the promotion of an enjoyable learning environment is at the core of school belief. The PSHE curriculum includes units of work on friendship and good social interaction. Teaching about bullying and why this is unacceptable is included in several sections in the scheme of work.

If a pupil bullies we will:

- Try to help them understand the effect their behaviour is having on another child.
- Help them think of ways to make amends.
- Give an appropriate sanction.
- Support the child who is being bullied.
- As a last resort exclusion will be considered

Responding to Young persons' Learning Difficulties and Disabilities - Aspris Education Services recognises that there are factors that mean at times their schools are required to take a slightly different stance to the behaviours associated with bullying. These factors include the level of young persons' cognitive development, their learning difficulties, the very specific nature of their difficulties in perceiving someone else's viewpoint or experience, and additional difficulties they have in the recognition and management of their emotions.

Some behaviour that young people exhibit may be intentional; however, there are times when the young person is unaware that their behaviour has the same impact as deliberate bullying although this was not their intention. Aspris schools recognise it is important that this distinction is recognised, and staff do not automatically address incidents through a disciplinary route, rather than an educative one.

Some young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, and other learning difficulties may resort to bullying. Indeed, the nature of their difficulties sometimes makes them more likely to perceive themselves as victims. For example, misinterpretation and over-sensitivities are intrinsic to young people with ASD. Even allowing for this, all Aspris schools staff take accusations of bullying incidents seriously.

Where it is evident that a young person is insufficiently equipped to manage their own behaviour the school takes responsibility to assume effective management to ensure that bullying does not occur.

The procedure for staff reporting is as follows:

- A member of staff witnesses or is made aware by a student about an act of bullying
- A bullying report needs to be logged on CPOMS to include the bullying type.
- The manager will implement the relevant action and organise meetings as per the Four stage anti-bullying process. The manager will notify the relevant people who need to attend level

one, two, three or four meetings. The manager will also work with staff to put in place an action plan which will be shared.

- Some students may not respond to this plan and if the manager feels that they have exhausted the current processes this will be passed to the Head, who will put in place an alternative plan of mentoring. This will then be shared with relevant staff

Take the following steps:

If appropriate for the specific students involved, the following steps are actioned. These provide a record of all incidents of bullying. This formal recording of incidents conveys to all concerned how seriously the school regards bullying behaviour.

All incidents of bullying will be categorised into 4 levels. It is possible for a pupil to begin at level 2 or 3 if the incident has sufficient severity.

Level 1 – Initial chat about bullying

Level 2 –

- Repeatedly targeting particular students by calling them (students or staff members) names
- repeatedly being rude to other students or staff
- Teasing other students or staff
- Sending rude or abusive messages via mobile phone or social media
- Social Exclusion
- Spreading rumours about other students

Any actions from level 1 will be reported to the teacher. A meeting will be arranged which the pupil will need to attend. An Agreement will be made with the pupil. The pupil will need to meet the terms of the agreement and STOP bullying.

Level 3 –

- Putting down or humiliate other students or members of staff
- Being threatening or intimidating towards other students or members of staff
- Pushing and pulling about other students or members of staff
- Using text messaging and social media to threaten or intimidate
- Continuing bullying from level 1 without any changes

Any actions from level 2 will be reported to the teacher and a member of the senior management team. A formal meeting will be arranged with the SLT which the pupil will need to attend. A warning

letter will be sent to the pupil from SLT and a copy will be sent to parents/carers. The letter will include action points agreed with the pupil during the meeting. The Pupil will need to meet the terms of the agreement and STOP bullying.

Level 4 –

- Repeatedly hitting, kicking or physically hurting another student or a member of staff
- Repeatedly making racial/homophobic/sexist comments towards other student or members of staff
- Continuing bullying from level 2 without any changes

Any actions from level 3 will be reported to the Head. A formal meeting will be arranged with the Head, which the pupil will need to attend. The pupils parents/carers will need to attend to. A final warning letter will be sent to the pupil and a copy will be sent to parents/carers. The letter will include action points agreed with the pupil during the meeting. The Pupil will need to meet the terms of the agreement and STOP bullying. The school placement may be at risk if the pupil will not make any changes to bullying behaviour.

For any meeting with a pupil

- The students involved are encouraged to talk through the incident separately with their teacher or teaching assistant (at a level appropriate to their ability, taking into account their preferred means of communication).
- The teacher and/or a senior staff member should record their discussions with both the target and the bully. Following these discussions, the Headteacher should be involved as appropriate.
- The parents/carers of the students involved are sent or given copies of all reports, and the reports are placed in the respective student's confidential files for a specified period – currently agreed to be for 12 months.
- The parents/carers of the students are asked to respond to the reports outlined above in writing, within 5 working days.
- The Head will interview all students concerned and give warnings to each student as appropriate. This is reinforced by the SLT sending letters or emails to the students' parents telling them what has happened but not identifying the target.
- The bullied student is encouraged to record, at once, the events in writing, or by drawing or by the selection of pictures or symbols, depending on the child's most effective method of communication.
- The bullied student needs to be supported to feel that the situation has been redressed and that they are safe going forward. Formal processes may need to be implemented to allow the student to continue to feel safe

Use of homophobic language

A school culture that permits casual use of homophobic language makes it all the easier for pupils to suffer homophobic name-calling and bullying.

Our policy on the use of homophobic language is in accordance with guidance from Stonewall Education Guide 2007. Recommendations for tackling homophobic language in schools are:-

1. Teachers and school staff MUST challenge homophobic language every time they hear it. This is to send the message that homophobic language is unacceptable
2. Make sure that students understand what homophobic language is offensive. Pupils will be less likely to use homophobic language when, like racist language, they understand the implications of what they understand the implications of what they are saying
3. The use of homophobic language needs to be included in antibullying policies and procedures
4. The SLT should be informed of all incidents that include homophobic language
5. Parents should be notified when homophobic language is used
6. The Personal Development curriculum should make students aware of the LGBT community to reduce homophobic behaviour
7. As part the British Values Agenda staff should include examples from the LGBT community under the headings of Equality and Tolerance
8. Use of Assembly time should address problems or promote positive messages about gay and trans-people for example during LGBT History Month.
9. A posters and poster display board should communicate positive messages of the LGBT community and to address homophobic language and bullying.
10. Involve pupils with initiatives to tackle the problems of homophobia. Students want schools to be safe and welcoming. We should consult with students about how they feel about LGBT issues.

The Curriculum

The curriculum approach at Sketchley Hall, Forest House and Progression House promote an ethos of respect for each other; it actively fosters empathy between students and promotes the forging of positive relationships.

Class teachers and teaching assistants will create a caring and co-operative ethos through personal, social and citizenship education and by using cross-curricular themes. Social behaviour is taught by drawing on incidents as they occur; social skills are 'taught' in a conscious and systematic way.

Advice to Parents

As part of our approach at Sketchley Hall, Forest House and Progression House we encourage parents to take an active interest in their child's social life at school and online activities outside of school, including discussing their friendships and the activities they take part in.

Please telephone the school immediately if you feel your child is unhappy. We can then consider whether there is a possibility of bullying or whether there is some other cause.

If you think your child is being bullied inform the school immediately and ask for a meeting with the SLT.

In the unlikely event that the bullying persists, keep a written record: it will be painful, but it will provide supporting information to help us determine the circumstances regarding who, what, where and when.

Social interaction can be difficult for children with Autism, but discussing friendships with them will reinforce how important tolerance and positive relationships are. With your child's class, staff devise strategies that will help your child and provide her/him with support inside and outside school.

If you still have concerns, we invite you to discuss this with the SLT, and if this does not resolve the situation you can inform the Regional Director.

Evaluation

Evaluation of this policy will be conducted on an annual basis.

In order to determine the schools effectiveness in dealing with any incidents of bullying staff will draw on:

- A random sample of views from parents, students and staff.
- Will examine the bullying records held within the school.

The outcomes of this evaluation will generate recommendations for further development or improvements in procedure and interventions.

