



LANSDOWNE:

A DE FERRERS TRUST ACADEMY

Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2018

Review date: September 2020

Rationale

We want to make our school a place where as a person you feel included, valued and supported; and where everyone is recognised as being positively different.

Bullying prevents this because it can make a person feel:

- Different from others, alone, unimportant and/or unvalued
- Physically and/or mentally hurt or distressed
- Unsafe and/or frightened
- Unable to do well and achieve
- Unable to see a positive future

Bullying is a highly emotive issue, which is encountered by many people at some stage in their lives. It can leave permanent scars on an individual, with long-term consequences detrimental to adult life.

Lansdowne: a de Ferrers Trust Academy will not tolerate any form of bullying. We believe that pupils and staff have the right to learn in an affirming and safe environment which promotes positive personal growth and self-esteem for all.

What is bullying?

Bullying is an abuse of power. It is a repeated, deliberate act of aggression which causes embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another. It takes many forms and may include physical attacks, verbal insults, extortion and theft, threatening and obscene gestures, spreading malicious rumours or deliberately excluding people from a group or activity. Children, young people and adults can instigate bullying.

Bullying behaviour is normally characterised by:

- **Deliberate aggression** - where someone wilfully seeks to harm another
- **A perceived imbalance of power** - where those being harmed feel powerless
- **Aggression that leads to pain and distress** - pain that can be physical and/or emotional
- **Action that takes place over a period of time** - a single, isolated incident of aggression would not normally be described as bullying. We do not consider that it is bullying when two children fall out, or when two children of the same strength have the odd fight or quarrel.

Examples of bullying can include:

- Writing offensive things about someone using graffiti, notes, letters, use of text, e-mail or social networking sites
- Verbally abusing someone by name calling, making threats, using sarcasm etc
- Physically hurting someone by pushing, shoving, tripping etc
- Damaging personal property by tearing clothes, ripping books etc
- Excluding someone by making sure they are isolated from their friends and peers
- Inciting others to bully
- Using technology such as text messages, email, social networking ie: Facebook
- Humiliating someone because they are seen to be 'different' eg: different clothes, different culture, different value system, disability, different religion, homophobia etc

We recognise that the nature of bullying is changing and evolving as technology develops.

Signs or symptoms

Bullying is harmful to all involved, not just the bullied, and can lead to self-doubt, lack of confidence, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, self-harm and sometimes even suicide.

Often pupils may be unwilling to report bullying, out of fear of reprisals from the bully, or because of fear that they may be seen to be 'telling tales'. It is essential therefore, that all staff, are vigilant for signs of bullying. These may include:

- Uncharacteristic behaviour from the victim
- Reluctance to come to school, beginning to truant
- Reluctance to walk to and from school
- The bully being in possession of unlikely items
- Possessions become damaged or 'go missing'
- Unlikely friendships
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Nervous and jumpy
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Stops eating
- Attempts or threatens suicide
- Academic work begins to suffer
- Afraid to use the computer, internet or mobile phone
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

It is hoped that pupils would be willing to discuss bullying with a familiar adult (eg: the class teacher/ nurture staff) however should they be unhappy to do this a system exists within school where children can report acts of bullying anonymously. The 'bully box' is situated in the corridor and is emptied daily by a member of the Nurture staff. Children are invited to post a letter detailing the incident. All letters are dealt with promptly and all allegations are treated seriously, thus being investigated fully. This is also true of all allegations made verbally by children, parents or staff.

Incidents of bullying are logged by the member of staff investigating. The Principal is informed.

Children are encouraged to write a letter of apology and post this into the apology box. This is located next to the bully box in the corridor.

Procedures

Ethos

All staff strive to develop a positive anti-bullying ethos.

- Promoting equality and nurturing a sense of belonging and identity for all
- Encouraging achievement and having high expectations of all pupils
- Celebrating success
- Promoting positive behaviour
- Encouraging the active participation of pupils in decision making and school life
- Working in partnership with parents/carers and the wider community
- Adhere to and promote the Anti-bullying pledge

When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly, caring and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be a part of their behaviour.

Dealing with incidents

Investigation should be carried out by interviewing both the victim and the bully separately. The interviewer should be the person to whom the disclosure has been made, as this is likely to be the person with whom the victim feels most comfortable. A senior member of staff may also be included in the interviews should the interviewer consider this to be necessary. A log of the interview should be kept, including times and dates of incidents if possible. The log should be recorded on the 'blue' School Bullying log. A record of discussion with parents should also be kept. Records should be handed to the Principal.

Decisions about further action and/or punishments should be discussed with the Principal. Action might include: use of the school's behaviour and discipline policy, informing parents of both parties, or in extreme cases exclusion (to be decided by the Principal). These should also be recorded on the 'blue' School Bullying log.

Support

Pupils have the right to feel secure in school at all times. They have the right to expect protection from adults in positions of care and responsibility.

When bullying takes place, there is a clear need for support and counselling of the victim. This may take the form of:

- Ensuring that the pupil knows that they are being watched and protected
- Ensuring that the pupil is given regular opportunities to discuss their feelings or concerns
- Opportunities to discuss concerns in a written form via the 'bully box'
- Building self-esteem and assertiveness
- Positive efforts to integrate the pupils with appropriate peers
- Peer support
- Regular discussion with parents about the child's time at school
- Liaison between home and school via a 'bully log'
- Time with Nurture Staff
- Referring to a specialist counsellor/ psychologist through other professional agencies

The bully may also require support. This could also follow many of the above forms. However other options may also be considered:

- Placing on the Special Needs Register
- Referring to SENSS/ Behaviour support/ CAMHS
- Positive rewards to highlight good behaviour
- Internal exclusion
- Exclusion
- Pastoral support plan
- Access to Hope

Our main interest is always the best interests of both victim and bully. It is vital that these interests are not submerged by the strong emotions engendered by bullying.

Inclusion

Bullying will inhibit pupil participation and cannot be tolerated. Victims may be reluctant to attend school, participate in events or to achieve their potential.

We acknowledge that pupils who have learning or physical disabilities are amongst the most vulnerable.

Anything regarded as a racial incident or comment must be reported to the Principal. This can be reported by the victim or a bystander. The matter is to be investigated by the Principal who will consider if the incident is a form of racial abuse. A log of the incident is kept by the Principal. There is no longer a requirement to report this to the LA.

Education

The PSHCE scheme of work, along with the SEAL materials, identify several opportunities throughout Key Stage 2 to teach children about anti-bullying (see PSHCE policy and LTP) Guidance to prevent and tackle incidences of homophobic bullying are included in appendix 1.

Involving Parents/Carers

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or suspect that their child may be a perpetrator of bullying should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

We will inform parents/carers of any incidents of bullying we are investigating. After an incident of bullying has been confirmed we will ensure that parents/carers know:

- The steps that will be taken to resolve the incident
- The progress towards a satisfactory conclusion

The role of governors

- The governing body supports the Principal in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the school.
- The governors work with the school to ensure that any incidents of bullying that occur are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.
- The governors monitor the incidents of bullying that occur and review the effectiveness of the school policy annually.
- The governors require the Principal to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and report this to them on request.
- The governing body responds within 10 days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Principal and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

The role of the Principal

- It is the responsibility of the Principal to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Principal reports this to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.
- The Principal ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school.
- The Principal ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.