

(ANTI-) BULLYING - PUPILS

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone in the school community. It limits everyone's opportunities to learn and thrive and we therefore aim, by means of this policy, to prevent bullying occurring at Fyling Hall School. In preparing this policy reference has been made to the DCFS guidance "Bullying: don't suffer in silence". The advice given on the website www.kidscape.org.uk is also gratefully acknowledged. Regard has also been given to the DCSF Guidance *Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools*.

Aims and Objectives

- to make it clearly understood that bullying will not be tolerated
- to prevent as far as is possible bullying taking place
- to respond effectively to particular incidents
- through the curriculum, and associated activities e.g. assembly, form time, circle time, buddy system, to raise awareness about bullying behaviour, challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help to build an anti-bullying ethos in the school

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

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| • Emotional | being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures) |
| • Physical | pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence |
| • Racist | racial taunts, graffiti, gestures |
| • Sexual | unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments |
| • Homophobic | because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality |
| • Verbal | name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing |
| • Cyber | all areas of internet, such as social websites, photographs & email; mobile threats by text messaging & calls; misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities |

Children can also be bullied because of the following:

- Disability
- Religious Beliefs
- Culture
- Gender
- Special Educational Need

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. As a school we have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. The school recognises the seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

Signs and Symptoms

The signs and symptoms of bullying are numerous. However, the following may indicate that a child is being bullied:

- doesn't want to go on the school bus
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- begins to do poorly in school work
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

Pupils must be encouraged to report bullying, either to a member of staff, to a school prefect, to the school nurse or to one of the support agencies / mentors promoted within the school. Pupils may wish to have their identity protected if they are reporting bullying to a member of staff – this request should be respected whenever possible.

All staff and pupils must be alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy. Pupils are actively encouraged to report it.

Procedures

The following steps should be taken when dealing with an incident:

- all suspected or reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and treated sensitively by the member of staff who has been approached.
- if bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- a clear account of the incident must be recorded and given to the Headmaster who will maintain a register of allegations of bullying. This will allow the Headmaster to spot any patterns which might be developing. Support should be offered to the pupils involved to produce a written report.
- an appointed member of the SMT, will interview all concerned and will record the incident outlining the action to be taken and any outcomes.
- form tutors and the pupils concerned will be kept informed and the appropriate subject staff advised.
- parents of all parties will be notified and kept informed.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor or member of staff of their choice
- reassuring the pupil
- offering continuous support with a designated member of staff
- restoring self-esteem and self-confidence
- referral to a counsellor
- offering continuous support and advice to parents

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change
- informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- detentions, with work set that addresses some of the issues around bullying, control and power
- pupils may be sent home pending the outcome of the investigation
- exclusion from certain areas of the school premises
- weekend gating
- minor fixed term exclusion
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- referral to Anger Management training if appropriate
- permanent exclusion in severe cases

Within the curriculum the school will raise awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHCE, tutor time, assemblies and subject areas as appropriate in an attempt to reduce and raise awareness of such behaviour.

All staff are trained to spot the symptoms of bullying and to report problems. Difficulties between pupils are raised at staff briefings and relationships between pupils are monitored by tutors and members of the SMT. Guidance on the supervision of the pupils explicitly states areas where bullying is most likely to occur and areas which staff are expected to supervise more closely.

This policy should be read in conjunction with a number of other school policies including behaviour and discipline and anti-bullying and anti-harassment in the workplace.

The Role of the Bystander

The whole school community, including pupils, teachers and other members of staff have a responsibility to report any incident of bullying if they witness it or know of its existence.

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