Anti-bullying and Peer on Peer Abuse Policy

This policy was developed in consultation with staff, governors, students and parents and when reviewed it is distributed to the whole school community.

Definition

This is our school community's shared understanding of what bullying is:

When a person's or group of people's behaviour, over a period, leaves someone feeling one or more of the following:

●   Physically and/or mentally hurt or worried.
●   Unsafe and/or frightened.
●   Unable to do well and achieve.
●   "Badly different", alone, unimportant and/or undervalued.
●   Unable to see a happy and exciting future for yourself.

It **could** be bullying.

When a person, or group of people, have been made aware of the effects of their behaviour on another person and they continue to behave in the same manner, this **is** bullying.

If someone is made to feel like this, or if they think someone, they know feels like this, it should be investigated. This should happen straight away as it can take a long time to build up the courage to tell someone. However, lots of things can make people feel bad, sometimes it depends on the situation we are in, and it is not always bullying – so the following definitions are also useful:

1.   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 very hard to defend themselves[1].

2.   "Behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally" [2].

3.   Bullying is not a conflict, an argument, or a fight. Instead, it is a manifestation of a repressive relationship, an abuse of power and strength.

Methods and Practices of bullying

The following are some examples of the many different forms of bullying, but this is not an exhaustive list.

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[1] Adapted from Bullying – A Charter for Action, DCSF

[2] Adapted from DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" 2012

Physical - For example, kicking, hitting, spitting, pushing, taking and damaging belongings, or threatening to do any of these things

Verbal - For example name calling, taunting, threats, offensive or discriminatory remarks, whether about people or objects. This includes discriminatory language, including homophobic language.

Indirect, emotional or relational - For example, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours or nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups, forcing someone to do something against their will, tormenting, "dirty looks", or producing offensive graffiti.

Online - For example, sending offensive text messages, using pictures or video clips, Instant Messaging, emails, social networking sites, gaming platforms or other electronic contact to cause harm, embarrassment or discredit to students or staff of the school. 'Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself'[3]

Prejudice-related - For example, bullying or harassment that is homophobic, gender based, sexist, sexual or transphobic, racist or discriminating against religion, Special Educational Needs, disabilities, health conditions or a person's home circumstances, such as being looked after, or caring for a family member. This includes actions or language that discriminates against people for any of these reasons, or other reasons relating to a person's identity.

Sexual - For example, inappropriate or unwanted physical contact, verbal comments or online messages of a sexual nature.

Bullying includes the above but is not limited to this. It also includes:
● Any form of behaviour which is the result of a specific strategy to make an individual feel miserable.
● Organising others to do any of the above.
● Excluding an individual in such a way that they are made to feel vulnerable and different in a bad way.

In defining bullying the focus is not on the form of bullying, but rather if the actions are **deliberate** and **systematic**.

We reject all the above forms of bullying and will not tolerate them in our school community.

Discriminatory Language

Discriminatory language not only undermines confidence and self-esteem of individuals but reflects negative attitudes towards a wider sub-community or group, and in some cases is illegal. A culture where discriminatory language goes unchallenged is likely to be a culture where bullying is more prevalent.

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[3] Report to the Anti-Bullying Alliance by Goldsmiths School, University of London

Discriminatory language of any kind is not acceptable and will be challenged, whether verbal, written (including graffiti) or electronic. Education about diversity will be delivered through the curriculum, displays, assemblies and tolerance will be modelled by all staff. We will not accept any derogatory language that is:

- Sexual or sexist
- Relating to special educational needs, disabilities or health conditions
- Gender based
- Homophobic
- Transphobic
- Racist
- Relating to religion
- Classist
- Relating to a person's home circumstances

Discriminatory language can sometimes be used without. In this school we challenge all discriminatory language whenever it is used. When responding to discriminatory language, staff will:

- Tell the pupil that discriminatory language is not acceptable in school. Explain that such language is offensive.
- If pupils continue to use the language, explain in more detail the effect that discrimination and discriminatory language have on people.
- If a pupil continues, remove the pupil from the classroom and have a restorative conversation emphasising the impact this can have on others. If it continues, involve senior leaders. The pupil should understand the consequences that will apply if they continue to use discriminatory language.
- If it continues, invite parents in to discuss the incidents further.

How bullying incidents will be dealt with

Bullying will be investigated and dealt with quickly, sensitively, fairly and firmly, using the annexed checklist. Students can report it to any member of staff in the knowledge that it will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively. If a member of staff feels that they are being bullied, they should report it to their line manager or the Head Teacher. Bullying of staff will be dealt with in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council guidelines.

Strategies to support those bullied and bullying

The following strategies are in place to support students and staff who have been bullied:

- 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 such as counselling and training to develop self-esteem, assertiveness and confidence.
- The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. school counsellor, educational psychologist, SAFE! Support for young people affected by crime, where appropriate.
- A "safe place" can be made available, e.g. a classroom, the library, or 'The Willows' room.
- Mentoring support from selected play leaders.

- The opportunity to meet with the person bullying for a restorative meeting if appropriate.

Preventative strategies

Monitoring and Review
The school regularly monitors levels of bullying through the following measures:

- Every bullying incident will be recorded and uploaded onto CPOMs.
- Follow up after each incident to review effectiveness of response
- Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys for the whole school community to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.
- Systematic recording and review of incident forms to inform policy and procedures.
- Weekly internet monitoring.

Spotting bullying early – Advice and guidance for parents
A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. To those who know the child this may simply be a feeling that 'things aren't quite right'. Staff are trained to be aware of these possible signs and will investigate if a child:
- Is frightened of walking to or from school.
- Begs to be driven to school.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to school.
- Begins to truant.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens suicide/self-harm or runs away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Comes home hungry (lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- 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 text message is received.
- Becomes withdrawn and is reluctant to say why.
- Reduces their educational attainment.
- Perceives comments from others as hurtful.
- Displays challenging behaviour, which could be the result of intimidation or enforced isolation from others.

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

Education and information

Education and awareness-raising about diversity, discrimination and bullying is delivered through: .

● The curriculum (Circle time, projects, Family Links sessions, PSHE, health week), where issues surrounding bullying and any ideas to make situations better can be discussed, for example exploring:

○ Diversity, tolerance and discrimination
○ Why do people bully each other?
○ What are the effects of bullying on the bullied, on bullies, and on bystanders?
○ What can we do to stop bullying?
○ How students can constructively manage their relationships with others.

● Assemblies where children will be informed of the school's zero-tolerance policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place.

● Making national anti-bullying week a high-profile event each year.

● Drama - with role play to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations.

● Computing lessons covering e-safety and internet bullying, including a 'safer internet day'.

● Adults model appropriate behaviour towards each other to students.

● Prominently displaying anti bullying posters produced by the children around the school.

Other Prevention Strategies

● Pastoral Team available to listen and support students.

● Each class applying and reinforcing the Give Me 5 Rules

● Use of worry monsters in class where pupils can report their concerns.

● The implementation of OPAL and play leader roles.

● Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour and anti-bullying work by pupils, such as:

○ Class Dojo points
○ Gold Book Awards
○ Post cards home

● Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another.

● Staff will constantly reinforce the message to children that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

● Children who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who have suffered from bullying in the past) will be offered additional support and guidance.

● Extra supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents at particularly vulnerable times such as lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day, and in particularly vulnerable areas around school.

● Children will be encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying which they experience or of which they may be aware.

● An Equality Policy is in operation in the school, covering what is meant by racial, homophobic, disablist, classist, gender-based, sexual, transphobic, religious or other identity-based harassment. It states that such harassment will not be tolerated and specifies how the school will respond to any such incidents.

● Staff use restorative approaches to help resolve issues where appropriate.

● All teachers are trained to deal with issues relating to bullying and violence.

Off-site bullying

We are aware that several areas in and around the school are vulnerable to bullying, including:
●   Outside (the field in particular)
●   In the toilets
●   In the corridor
●   Walking to and from school

The school has an enduring interest in the welfare and conduct of its pupils and will respond positively to any information it receives about bullying outside school, for example in journeys to and from school, in after school activities, or through use of technology such as the internet or mobile phones outside of school hours. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Headteachers the power, "To such an extent as is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site (which is particularly pertinent to regulating cyberbullying)".

For example, the school will intervene if it hears of:
●   Cyberbullying via Social Networking Sites e.g. malicious message on somebody's social media site or profile, creation of a fake profile.
●   Filming on mobile phones and passing on inappropriate material or joining in with this behaviour even if you weren't the original author.
●   Other cyberbullying or off-site bullying

To help prevent and reduce bullying off-site, the school will:
●   Talk to the local community Police Officer about known problems on the streets.
●   Talk to the Headteachers of other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the premises.
●   Discuss coping and preventative strategies with parents, such as alternative travel arrangements.
●   Educate pupils about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the school premises, including cyberbullying and e-safety information.
●   Link with local service providers such as transport providers, youth groups etc. to share knowledge and best practice.
●   Let the parents know of any incidents.

If the school is aware of a bullying incident outside school, staff will:
●   Follow the attached checklist for dealing with an incident as far as possible, depending on the situation, including recording and reporting protocols, and contacting parents/carers.
●   Provide support and advice to the person being bullied, if they are within our school.
●   Support and work with the person bullying, if they are within our school.
●   Investigate and consider the following actions with respect to the person bullying:
○   The involvement of police in any form of on-going bullying, particularly when related to cyber-bullying. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.
●   Inform any other relevant schools or agencies (eg youth clubs, transport providers) about the concerns and any actions taken.

- If information is received that a child is being bullied by a sibling outside school this will initially be discussed with the parents.
- If children are being bullied by pupils of another school the headteacher of that school will be informed and invited to deal with the matter.

For further information and in relation to annexes please see:

- [Anti-bullying policy checklist (doc format, 17Kb)](#)
- [Checklist for managing a bullying incident (pdf format, 176Kb)](#)
- [Cyberbullying toolkit (pdf format, 292Kb)](#)
- [E-safety and Cyberbullying Toolkit](#)

Useful links and information:

- **Childline** – Information and advice on bullying and how to get help.
- **Kidscape:** Helpful advice and information to prevent and tackle bullying
- **Anti-Bullying Alliance:** Provides teachers and other practitioners working with children and young people with a bank of resources for addressing bullying behaviour and discussing bullying and related issues
- **Family Lives** is a national charity providing information and support for parent/carers on a range of issues including bullying. They run a 24 hour free helpline on **0808 800 2222**.