

Swinton Queen Primary School
Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Introduction:

Schools have a duty of care for pupils and staff alike and, to this end Swinton Queen Primary School strives to create a safe and happy environment, believing that all bullying is unacceptable, whether at home, at school, at work, in the local community or when social networking. We believe that school should provide a safe, caring and happy place for young people to learn and for adults to work. If this is achieved, the school will be able to develop teaching and learning, whilst fostering an attitude of responsible behaviour at all times to promote safety, both on the premises and out of school hours.

The policy's primary objective is to ensure that members of the school community are clear about their roles and responsibilities, and how to manage a bullying incident if it occurs. However, bullying is not confined to school and this policy aims to make pupils aware of what action they can take both now and in their adult lives, whether as victims of bullying, or as bystanders.

2. Context:

This policy draws on Department for Education guidance on dealing with bullying, particularly 'Preventing and tackling bullying – Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies' 2017. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour policy which is available on the school website and can be requested from the school office.

3. Roles and Responsibilities:

The Governing Body will regularly review the Behaviour Policy which the head teacher must consider, in determining measures to promote good behaviour and discipline.

The Governing Body may also bring to the Head teacher's attention such further measures as they consider necessary, and offer guidance, as they consider appropriate, to promote safeguarding and the welfare of pupils.

The Head teacher and senior staff have overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation. Cases will be managed according to the circumstances and will be recorded and analysed to see whether patterns emerge from the nature of the bullying or the identity of the perpetrators.

The Governing Body, Head teacher and Staff will ensure that the policy is implemented equally in all cases, without regard to ethnic origin, cultural differences, gender, disability or sexuality issues. They will ensure that pupils are listened to and that their concerns are appropriately addressed.

All staff (teachers, support staff and volunteers) share responsibility for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed, and consistently and fairly applied. Mutual support amongst all staff is essential for creating a high quality and safe learning environment

promoting good behaviour and implementing the agreed policy and procedures consistently.

Parents and Carers will be encouraged to work in partnership with the school in order that high standards of behaviour are maintained both in and out of school, and that pupils respect both similarities and differences between themselves and other members of the school and the wider community.

Pupils will be expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour and will be made fully aware of the school's anti-bullying policy, the procedures arising from cases of bullying and the rationale behind them. All pupils have a collective responsibility to ensure that they are considerate towards one another and respectful of each other's differences.

If the steps prescribed in section 10 have not fully resolved parents' or carers' concerns about bullying, advice on the School Complaints Procedure can be found within the School's Complaints Policy.

4. Definitions of Bullying:

Bullying behaviour can be defined as an action, or number of repeated actions, causing harm to people or relationships. This behaviour could be intentional or unintentional and may be on-going. The definition equally encompasses physical or non-physical actions, therefore the harm could be physical, emotional, or both.

A paper for the Office of the Children's Commissioner (2006) outlined four key characteristics:

- repetitive and persistent
- intentionally harmful
- involving an imbalance of power
- causing feelings of distress, fear, loneliness or lack of confidence

A research review for the NSPCC produced a useful definition for the five essential components of bullying:

- 1. there is an intention to harm e.g. a person teasing another with the intention of deliberately upsetting them**
- 2. there is a harmful outcome: a person or persons are hurt emotionally or physically**
- 3. the act can be direct or indirect e.g. it could involve direct aggression such as kicking someone or it could be an indirect act such as spreading rumours via Social media**
- 4. there is usually repetition from the perpetrator. However, for vulnerable pupils in the school community, who may experience bullying, the repetition may be the repeat of the act by several individuals or groups of people**

5. **there is unequal power. A person or several persons who are (perceived as) more powerful due to, for example, their age or physical strength or size will abuse their power by bullying.**

Bullying behaviour can be direct or indirect, simple or complex.

Direct bullying includes physical threats, verbal insults or taunts and directly contacting a person with obscene or insulting messages by using, for example, a mobile phone.

Indirect bullying includes persistently ignoring a pupil so that they feel socially isolated, spreading malicious rumours, or insults, often via social network sites on the Internet, or writing offensive graffiti.

Cyber-bullying uses technology to harm a person, group of people or a relationship and can happen both inside and outside of school and at any time of the day or night.

Bullying differs from **'friendship fall-out'**, or other aggressive behaviour:

"If two children or young people of about the same strength have the odd fight or quarrel. It is not bullying." (Olweus 1989, 1993, 1999)

Where there is bullying:

- there is normally a power imbalance so that the victim does not feel able to defend him/herself
- it is usually persistent but could be an isolated incident
- it might relate to racism, homophobia, sexism, ageism
- it might relate to a disability or a special educational need (SEN). In these examples, victims may not be aware of being bullied
- there is normally an intention to cause harm, although there may be instances when there is a lack of awareness that the actions are harmful.

All bullying issues, whatever their nature, will be treated with equal importance and the response will be based upon the guidelines in the policy.

5. Signs and Symptoms:

A victim may indicate by **signs** or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. These may include:

- reluctance to attend school
- damage to clothing or possessions
- 'losing' more items than usual
- unexplained bruises/swellings
- deterioration of school work/academic performance

- being afraid to use the Internet
- becoming jittery about receiving text messages
- unkempt uniform
- bullying towards siblings
- taking money without permission

Symptoms may include:

- loss of appetite
- headaches
- stomach aches
- stammering
- sudden changes in behaviour
- lack of confidence
- signs of depression
- nervous/edginess
- difficulty in concentration
- lack of motivation to complete work

These are examples but this list is not exhaustive.

6. Reporting Bullying

Pupils are encouraged to report all forms of bullying, whether carried out by another pupil or by an adult. The hope is that by reporting the problem in the first instance, this will become the first step in empowering the victim to overcome the bullying through the defined stages that will then be put into action. Whenever a pupil experiences bullying, it should be reported, whether by the victim, friends of the victim, bystanders or via parents, who would contact the school. Information can be reported to any member of staff. All staff should first immediately secure the safety of the young person before following the school's procedures.

When a problem occurs outside of school and immediate advice or support is required, Childline, for example, would provide an alternative, particularly if a child did not feel comfortable discussing the matter with a parent, family member or carer. The school would hope that the child would feel able to discuss the matter with a member of staff upon their return to school.

Staff who feel that they are being bullied in the workplace, either by a staff member, parent, carer or by a pupil, can report their concern to their line manager or

Headteacher. If such managers are involved, staff may contact the Chair of the Governing Body or Trust Representative.

7. Responding to Bullying

Swinton Queen Primary School adopts a three-stage approach to dealing with bullying:

Stage 1: Creating a safe learning environment and anti-bullying culture

The first stage is on-going, and involves measures designed to encourage pupils to behave positively towards one another, thereby discouraging bullying.

These measures include:

- Pupil supervision at non-lesson times
- Providing safe places for vulnerable pupils to go at break times and lunchtimes
- Opportunities for pupils to discuss bullying issues such as in Circle Time
- Assemblies
- Thrive screening for all children so that all staff are aware of the vulnerabilities of any child (we are implementing Thrive during this academic year)

Stage 2: If bullying occurs:

The Restorative Approach

This approach encourages the reporting of incidents by reducing the victims' anxieties about repercussions and educating the perpetrators, by increasing their understanding of the difficulties caused by bullying, and encouraging perpetrators to take responsibility for their actions.

It may be appropriate to monitor the situation in the first instance, and work closely with parents and the victim to discuss if any action should be taken. It may be appropriate to hold a Restorative Justice meeting with all those involved. This might mean asking pupils, staff and parents to share their views within a meeting with a facilitator who would ensure that all participants were able to say how they had been affected by the bullying behaviour and what needed to change. As a way forward, if thought appropriate and agreed upon, a contract would be written between the pupils.

There would then be a series of meetings to ensure that the contract was working and that problems had not re-emerged.

Stage 3: If those involved in bullying do not respond to the Restorative Approach

If those involved do not keep to the agreements made at Restorative Justice Meetings, or repeat bullying behaviour towards other individuals, the matter will be treated as defiance. The school would then use a range of sanctions, including loss of break time/lunchtime, after school detentions, internal isolation or in extreme cases, fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Based upon legislation in the Children Act (1989), in serious cases, it may also be appropriate to consider the bullying as a child protection concern if 'there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school must report their concerns to the Local Authority's safeguarding services and may draw on external professionals to support the victim or to tackle issues which have contributed to a child becoming a perpetrator of bullying.

As a last resort, the school may report a bullying issue to the police; particularly if staff feel that the nature of the bullying contravenes the law and other measures have been unsuccessful in preventing its recurrence.

8. Recording bullying and evaluating the policy

When bullying of a pupil has been reported, statements will be taken from all relevant parties and stored on file. When it is believed that bullying has occurred, the member of staff will complete an incident form, indicating the type of bullying and the names of the victim(s) and perpetrator(s). Information from this will be stored on the School Information Management system (Arbor) as well as other communication with pupils and parents such as a meeting or telephone call.

The measures taken and sanctions imposed will be recorded and used to inform senior staff of trends, or to indicate which measures are most successful in ensuring that further bullying is prevented.

This anti-bullying policy will be reviewed and updated annually.

9. Making a parental complaint

If a parent is not satisfied with the way a bullying issue has been addressed, the Headteacher should be contacted to discuss the matter.

However, if the Headteacher is already involved, the parent can ask to speak to the chair of the governing body or make a formal complaint by following the complaints procedure.

10. Strategies for preventing bullying

- PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) and Citizenship lessons
- RSE (Relationships and sex education)
- Parent Information Sessions e.g. Internet Safety
- Anti-Bullying Week in November
- Restorative Justice training
- Circle of Friends

11. Links with other policies

- Behaviour Policy

- RSE Policy
- Acceptable Use policy – Internet Safety
- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

12. Reference documents

'Preventing and tackling bullying – Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies'
Department for Education 2017

'Reducing bullying amongst the worst affected' Department for Education 2012

'Prevalence and incidence in the study of antisocial behaviour: definitions and measurements' Olweus, D. In: Klein, M. W. 'Cross-national research in self-reported crime and delinquency' (1989)

'Bullying involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities' DCSF 00419-2008 (2008)