

ANTI - BULLYING POLICY

Reviewed and updated: September 2018

To be reviewed by full governing board 28 November 2018

(This policy includes EYFS)

Definition and Introduction: Bullying

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. Bullying is repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer – it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social website, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).

Birkdale is committed to creating an anti-bullying culture and it views bullying extremely seriously. What follows is a summary of how we deal with bullying and how you might be involved in helping with the issues. Bullying is not tolerated at school and this is made clear to all who study and work at Birkdale. We take a proactive stance and use the strategies below as both preventatives and responses.

The school recognises the seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage and even suicide (although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, the school recognises there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour).

Perceptions play a great part in these dealings. On the one hand we cannot simply accept that an event may be just the rough and tumble of the playground, yet equally we must not always assume that an interaction between children is bullying. What might be seen as playful teasing by one child may be seen as verbal bullying by another. Equally, all children have the capacity to be unkind to each other and prolonged unkindness can be seen as bullying.

All Staff are aware that bullying tends to take place in situations and at times where adults are not necessarily 'in high profile'. All key areas of the school are, therefore, supervised at all reasonable times in order to prevent the opportunity for bullying. There is a managed rota of duty staff throughout the day. The Staff are aware that good supervision coverage is one of the most efficient and economical strategies used to prevent bullying. The school also makes use of its behaviour policy and pastoral system to monitor such occasions as boys may perceive as 'unstructured' time.

How we try to prevent bullying

- Observation. Staff are vigilant in watching the behaviour of children towards each other, in picking up comments made by other children and in detecting changes in a child's attitude, behaviour or standard of work
- Circle Time, including assertiveness training
- Playground supervision by designated staff (as per notice on boys' notice board)
- Shepherd system for new pupils

- Peer support through trained playground Buddies.
- Sharing of information between staff through Form Meetings, informally and via Pastoral Report Forms
- Bullying is not seen as “part of growing up”
- Boys are encouraged to speak to their form tutor or, indeed, any member of staff with whom they feel confident, about concerns they might have
- Boys are encouraged to use the ‘In Confidence’ postbox outside the Deputy Head’s office if they prefer to communicate in writing
- We ensure that all pupils know they should speak out against bullying; this is not seen as “telling tales”
- We ensure boys know that we care about bullying
- We try, as adults, to act in the way we expect of the boys.
- Programmed training/awareness in every year group through PSHEE/Circle Time in each year group every year.
- Programmed workshops for boys in PP3 upwards from Professional Outside Agency every four years.
- Regular Anti Bullying Training for all school staff.
- We ensure that cyber bullying does not take place through the rigorous enforcement of our “IT user agreement contract”

Advice to boys

If you are the one being bullied:

- **DON’T** just put up with bullying. Not telling is playing by the bully’s rules
- **DON’T** buy off the bully with presents or money
- **DON’T** hit back. This might encourage the bully and gives him an excuse to hurt you
- **DON’T** blame yourself for what has happened
- **DO** look him in the eye and say forcefully “I don’t like you doing that. I want you to stop it NOW”
- **DO** get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- **DO** report the incident to a member of staff straight away
- **DO** tell your family

When you are talking about a bullying incident with an adult, be clear about:

- **What** has happened to you
- **How often** it has happened
- **Who** was involved
- **Who else** saw what was happening
- **Where** it happened

If you see or know about bullying happening:

- **DON'T** smile or laugh or join in
- **DO** tell the bully to stop what he is doing
- **DO** show the bully that you disapprove of what he is doing
- **DO** tell a member of staff immediately
- **DO** invite the victim to join in with your activity or group

How we disseminate our anti-bullying policy within school and keep the policy alive

Within the induction booklet for new staff

Distribution to all existing staff

Posters produced by the boys

Circle Time and assemblies

Annual policy review in February

Advice to parents

Your role as parents is to urge your child to keep us informed of any worries he may have. We cannot guarantee that we will always be able to remove these worries completely but we will take them seriously and investigate and deal with them as well as we are able.

At the same time, we would assume that you encourage your child to treat others with kindness and respect always.

If you have any concern that your child is being bullied at school you should talk to or write to his form tutor, Mr. Leighton or Mr. C. Burch, as soon as you are aware of it. Sometimes parents wonder if their concerns are unimportant, or they do not wish to make a fuss, but at school we are experienced in working with children and are usually able to determine the degree of concern that is appropriate.

We can only act on that which we know about.

Advice concerning Cyber-bullying

At Birkdale Prep School boys are not permitted to carry mobile phones or any such devices. Where a boy has permission to bring such technology into school it must be handed to the office and collected at the end of the day.

“Bullying can be done verbally, in writing or images, **including through communication technology (cyber bullying) e.g.: graffiti, text messaging, e-mail or postings on websites**. It can be done physically, financially (including damage to property) or through social isolation. Verbal bullying is the most common form.

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for ‘virtual’ bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been

formally authorised by the Head of Prep, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

If a bullying incident directed at a child occurs using email or mobile phone technology either inside or outside of school time.

1. Advise the child not to respond to the message
2. Refer to relevant policies including e-safety/acceptable use, anti-bullying and PHSE and apply appropriate sanctions
3. Secure and preserve any evidence
4. Inform the sender's e-mail service provider
5. Notify parents of the children involved
6. Update Parents of a general web-based issue via a parent workshop for the school community
7. Consider informing the police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of offence or using the CEOP 'Thinkuknow' web-based resource
8. Inform the LA e-safety officer

If malicious or threatening comments are posted on an Internet site about a pupil or member of staff.

1. Inform and request the comments be removed if the site is administered externally
2. Secure and preserve any evidence
3. Send all the evidence to CEOP at www.ceop.gov.uk/contact_us.html
4. Endeavour to trace the origin and inform police as appropriate
5. Inform e-safety officer

Children should be confident in a no-blame culture when it comes to reporting inappropriate incidents involving the internet or mobile technology: they must be able to do this without fear.

Cyber-bullying and online safety resources:

ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves. Website specifically includes new cyberbullying guidance and a practical PSHE toolkit for schools.

Digizen: provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.

Internet Matters: provides help to keep children safe in the digital world.

Think U Know: resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has produced a range of resources for schools, colleges and parents about how to keep children safe online, this includes advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of 'sexting.'

Peer on Peer Abuse

What is peer-on-peer abuse?

Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional, financial, and/or coercive control exercised between children and young people; this includes intimate and non-intimate relationships. As with many forms of abuse, it rarely takes place in isolation.

Types of peer-on-peer abuse

When thinking about peer-on-peer abuse the following types of abuse should be considered, as there is not one key definition:

Peer-on-peer abuse often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and victim. This can present itself in a number of ways; it may be in a controlling relationship or 'friendship' group.

Peer-on-peer abuse should be considered if:

- there is a power difference between the children and young people concerned
- the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more children
- there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

Recognising signs that may indicate peer-on-peer abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse can impact children and young people in many ways. The child or young person may think that it is a part of normal friendships or relationships.

As a consequence of peer-on-peer abuse a child or young person may exhibit the following, but it is important to understand that how abuse affects a young person will vary. A child or young person may;

- not attend school
- truant from lessons
- be withdrawn
- be experiencing a breakdown of family relationships
- be anxious
- be aggressive or argumentative
- self-harm
- become involved in alcohol or substance misuse.

These factors rarely occur in isolation. Where a child exhibits any behaviour that is out of character or abnormal for their age, staff should always consider whether an underlying concern is contributing to their behaviour.

What to do when you suspect peer-on-peer abuse

If you suspect a child is in immediate danger, you must report your concerns to your designated safeguarding lead (DSL). They will make a referral to children's social care and/or the police. If the DSL is not available you must not delay in reporting the abuse yourself, but you must inform the DSL as soon as possible.

If you suspect a child is at risk of or experiencing peer-on-peer abuse or that child is abusing their peers, you should discuss your concerns with your DSL so that a course of action can be decided.

A decision should be made on whether to:

- report to social care and/or the police
- undertake an early help assessment
- manage internally with or without external agency support.

When dealing with peer-on-peer abuse it is important that the victim's welfare is of paramount importance.

What we will do if bullying is detected

We take any complaints about bullying seriously and do our best to deal with them as soon as we receive the complaint. At some point, usually early on, we bring together both "bully" and "victim". In our experience, in most cases it turns out that there has not been any bullying but behaviour or misunderstanding between the parties has resulted in one or both being upset. Both parties are helped to move on from the situation.

On the rare occasion when there is a clear case of bullying we will punish the bully and contact the parents of both bully and victim. Where bullying is not proved but behaviour is considered unacceptable, some form of punishment will be given; we try to make this in appropriate and in proportion to the unacceptability of the behaviour. See the section on Rewards and Punishments in this manual. Where an incidence of bullying is determined the school will devise an Action Plan employing a choice of strategies using reactive approaches to restore relationships wherever this is possible.

These processes are time consuming and we make great efforts to get to the bottom of exactly what might be happening. However, we are not perfect and there are times when we feel we are not completely sure that we have the full picture. Similarly, there may be times when we are simply not informed of particular behaviour.

(See diagram below for flow chart of action)

Note: See also: DFE 'Keeping Children safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges' September 2018

