Anti – Bullying Policy

Contents

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We aim to promote an open, honest, and secure environment which enables our pupils to relate to each other in a friendly, supportive way. The school is focused on preparing all children for the next stage of their educational journey, helping all achieve irrespective of individual need and caring for every member of the school community by showing tolerance and respect. However, occasionally intervention is required to ensure the children are protected from any form of bullying.

It is important to realise that there may be times when a bullying concern may become a safeguarding concern and should be treated as such by the school. A bullying incident should be treated as a safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. 'Child on child abuse' in any form should not be tolerated and colleagues should be aware that it may well constitute a safeguarding concern. *Keeping Children safe in Education* makes clear that child on child abuse should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no-one becomes a victim of bullying. Suspicions of bullying should be reported to the Assistant Head (Pastoral).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- IT Equipment and Service Delivery Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

This policy applies to all pupils and staff at the school irrespective of their age and whether or not a pupil is in the care of the school when/if bullying behaviour occurs. While this policy focuses mainly on the bullying of pupils by other pupils, it is recognised that other forms of bullying may occur.

This policy is published on the school's website, is provided to all staff in the staff handbook and is an integral part of the Staff Induction procedures. New parents are directed to the policy through My School Portal and it is also available on request from the school office.

Aims
The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to clarify for pupils and staff that bullying is <u>always</u> <u>unacceptable</u>. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated as banter or having a laugh. We aim to foster an environment where independence is celebrated and individuals can flourish without fear and pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect. Values of respect, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how individual actions affect others permeates the whole school environment and is reinforced by staff and pupils who act as good role models.

Every child has the right to be safe and happy in school, to feel valued and to be protected when they are feeling vulnerable. The school is very vigilant towards pupils with protected characteristics and Special Educational Needs to ensure they feel comfortable and supported within the school community at all times. If bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. Any allegations or suspicions of bullying are treated seriously. Every effort will be made to provide prompt, sensitive and effective support for the victim.

General awareness of bullying

The Anti-Bullying Policy is supported through the use of media resources, films, books and stories and visitors to the school. Pupils are made aware of the contents of the policy through:

- Expectations laid out by a Class Charter at the beginning of each school year
- Form time with the class teacher
- Preventative education in PSHE lessons
- Assemblies
- House meetings
- Carefully chosen class texts which reflect and/or give opportunities to discuss our school values

Definition of bullying

Bullying is any kind of behaviour which shows a lack of respect for another's feelings and seeks to devalue them, whether this is intended or not. The National Bullying Helpline (2020) defines Bullying as, **'any form of unacceptable treatment, or discrimination or behaviour intended to hurt or harm the reputation of another. It is sometimes described as 'abuse of power' but it is in fact a desire in the bully to control or harm another person'.** Bullying includes prejudice and actions that target the protected characteristics of race, disability, sex, age, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity and maternity/pregnancy. Bullying could be:

- physical - hitting, kicking or pushing people around, spitting, or taking, damaging or hiding possessions;
- verbal - name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting or demanding money;
- exclusionary behaviour - intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group;
- general unkindness - spreading rumours or writing unkind notes, phone texts or e-mails; or
- cyberbullying - using the internet, mobile 'phones, social networking sites and gaming to deliberately upset someone else;
- sexting – such actions can cause significant emotional upset for the pupils involved;
- sexual - talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way;
- gender-based bullying – for girls examples might be 'touching' and 'assault', for boys 'hazing' and 'initiations'
- sexist - related to a person's gender or gender reassignment;
- racist, or relating to someone's religion, belief or culture;
- related to a person's sexual orientation;
- related to a person's home or family circumstances; e.g. housing or parenting
- related to a person's disability, special educational needs, health or appearance.

Bullying behaviour is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated at the school because:

- it is harmful to the person who is bullied, to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and those who support them, and can in some cases lead to lasting psychological damage;
- it interferes with a pupil's right to enjoy his learning and leisure time free from intimidation; and
- it is contrary to the aims and values of the school;
- it is contrary to the school's *Behaviour Policy;*
- it is a safeguarding concern where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is likely to suffer significant harm.

Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as "teasing" or "a game" Regardless of the motivations these forms of behaviour are not acceptable and have a negative impact on the victim. It is still important that this type of

behaviour is viewed seriously and discussed with those pupils involved.   However, sometimes these behaviours can be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. A pupil who does not respond appropriately to advice from the teacher about their behaviour will be dealt with under the Behaviour Policy.

The school will support victims of any form of bullying. All consequences available to the school as outlined in our Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy will be used to correct, punish or remove pupils who bully fellow pupils in or out of school. In extreme cases this may involve a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Cyberbullying and online abuse
Mobile devices and computers are a source of education, communication and entertainment. However, we know that some adults and young people may use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts, messages and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations online, webcam filming, photography, sexting or face-to-face meetings. These technologies may also be used by those who wish to radicalise vulnerable children for their violent purposes.

Pupil use of social networking sites should not be hurtful to pupils and/or adults (including all members of school staff), neither should it bring the school's name into disrepute. The school's Safeguarding Policy cites cyberbullying as deliberately hurtful behaviour either over the internet, via gaming or with mobile phones/devices. Further details on the acceptable use of ICT, as well the steps taken by the school to protect and educate staff and pupils at Blackheath Prep can be found in the pupils' Acceptable Use of ICT Policy. Behaviour online is additionally subject to the terms of the school's Behaviour Policy.

The school actively promotes the importance of safe online interactions, and this is supported through the pupil's ICT and PSHE lessons, the annual Technology Awareness Week and the use of an ICT code of conduct which includes:

1. **Respecting yourself and others online**
2. **Thinking of immediate and long-lasting impacts of online sharing**
3. **Awareness of privacy and limiting the sharing personal information**
4. **Blocking and reporting inappropriate interactions**
5. **Ignoring direct messages**
6. **Evidence collation**
7. **Telling an adult immediately**

Cyberbullying and online abuse by pupils, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through the school's anti-bullying procedures.

The school:
- expects all pupils to adhere to its rules for the safe use of the internet. All pupils are issued with the ICT acceptable use policy each year and these rules are reinforced through regular reminders in relevant lessons. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system (Watchguard) and all staff, supported by IT Department, monitor pupils' use in school;
- may impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet in line with our Behaviour Policy;
- issues all pupils with their own personal log in credentials. Access to personal sites is not allowed although pupils are allowed access to cloud computing sites for the purposes of school work provided these are used in accordance with the ICT acceptable use policy;

- adheres to the guidance regarding e-teaching and the internet (ChildNet and UKCCIS – UK Council for Child Internet Safety);
- offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in ICT and PSHE lessons which build resilience in pupils to protect themselves and their peers. This includes blocking and removing contacts from apps and online networks. Pupils are encouraged to report concerns to a parent or trusted member of staff. They are also made aware of reporting mechanisms available through websites and social media sites. Any concerns raised are managed through the school's pastoral or safeguarding procedures;
- offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe;
- has specific rules in respect of pupils using mobile phones: The school does not permit the use of mobile phones on the school site. Pupils and their parents, are referred to the IT Equipment and Service Delivery Policy for further details on the permitted use of mobile phones;
- specifically bans the use of cameras on mobile phones in washing and changing areas;
- makes requirements for proper staff use of mobile technology clear in the IT Equipment and Service Delivery Policy;
- provides education and information for staff through safeguarding training and regular updates e.g. on keeping social media information private; and
- includes cyber-bullying in parent workshops, support literature and newsletter articles. Parents and children are provided with useful and informative guidance wherever possible and this includes external support from national agencies including:

    www.internetmatters.org
    www.childline.org.uk
    www.gooseberryplanet.com
    www.thinkuknow.co.uk
    www.nationalonlinesafety.com/guides

Staff responsibility for overseeing effective implementation lies with:
- Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSLs;
- Head of PSHE - education and information;
- Head of ICT and Computing - education and information;
- Deputy Head - Guidance on school behaviour expectations and relevant sanctions;
- Director of IT and IT Manager - technical provision and infrastructure including overseeing filtering and monitoring.

Possibly signs of bullying
- Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:
- Unwillingness to return to school;
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Psychological damage and diminished levels of self-confidence;
- Frequent visits to the School Nurse with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class;

- Choosing the company of adults;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares; and
- Talking of suicide or running away.

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

Anti-bullying culture

It is important that we create an atmosphere in the school where pupils who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action will be swift and sensitive to their concerns. We make it clear to children that bullying can take many forms including persistent name-calling and teasing, intimidation, ostracism and damaging others work or property.

Ethos: Our expectation of all members of the school community is that:
- everyone will uphold the terms and ethos of the Behaviour Policy combined with the school's 7 core values;
- a pupil or a member of staff who witnesses or hears of an incident of bullying will report it;
- a complaint of bullying will always be taken seriously;
- no one will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone else is being bullied.

Equal opportunities: In school and in every year group:
- discriminatory words and behaviour are treated as unacceptable;
- positive attitudes are fostered towards people who are disabled and towards ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic groups within and outside the school;
- positive attitudes are fostered towards all genders, including those who identify as transgender; and
- positive attitudes are fostered towards all individuals regardless of sexuality.

Staff: Through their training and experience, members of staff are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:
- providing good role models for pupils;
- celebrating achievement;
- anticipating problems and providing support;
- disciplining sensibly and fairly;
- making opportunities to listen to pupils; and
- acting as advocates of pupils.

All staff have a statutory obligation to report any concerns about bullying. This is an inescapable personal and professional responsibility by all staff for the protection of children from harm. Staff should log all incidents on CPOMS as soon as possible. This immediately notifies the Assistant Head (Pastoral), DSL and Deputy Head. Staff need to be alert in the areas of the school where bullying is likely to take place. Staff must be vigilant during breaks and transition times, in cloakrooms and classrooms, in the changing rooms, between lessons and in the playground. It is important to go on duty and arrive at lessons promptly. These are times and places where victims are more vulnerable and bullying is not easily seen.

Pupils: Through our pastoral care systems, pupils are informed and taught that bullying will not be tolerated in the school. They are encouraged:
- to celebrate the effort and achievements of others;
- to hold and promote positive attitudes;

- to feel able to share problems with staff;
- to turn to someone they trust, if they have a problem; and
- not to feel guilty about airing complaints;

Pupils are told that if they feel they are being bullied, or know of someone else who is, to tell any member of staff straight away and it will be dealt with. Not telling a member of staff means the victim will continue to suffer and the bully will carry on, probably affecting others too. We have a responsibility to make sure that bullying is not allowed to continue in our school. Any disclosures of bullying made through Place2Be are shared immediately with the DSL for action.

Parents: we aim to work with parents to prevent and tackle bullying through:
- information provided for parents regarding our culture, ethos, practices and procedures; and
- parent workshops

All parents are issued with the Anti-Bullying policy prior to joining the school. All prospective parents can request the policy from the school. Parents who have concerns about bullying should tell an appropriate person. This will often be the form teacher or Assistant Head (Pastoral) but where there is cause for serious concern, or if the problem continues, the Head must be informed.

A proactive approach to anti-bullying
Our systems for detecting and dealing with bullying are designed to operate within all aspects of school life. This includes classes, year groups, houses and mixed school events, such as sports teams and choirs.

Vigilance: Members of staff are vigilant at all times but particularly:
- before lessons;
- in lessons;
- during breaks and lunchtimes; and
- when accompanying school excursions (including the transport method).

Meetings: Bullying is regularly discussed in meetings between:
- staff during operational briefings;
- members of the Pastoral Leadership Team;
- senior management;
- form teachers; and
- within safeguarding meetings.

The purpose of the meetings is to feedback information about friendship patterns, particular incidents, any pupil who seems to be isolated, any groups becoming dominant within a year group and any known conflict between a member of staff and a pupil, or between pupils. Policy and effective practice may also be discussed.

Education: Measures are taken throughout each year to educate pupils about bullying and this policy. These measures include:
- PSHE – the PSHE curriculum includes units on bullying throughout the school. In addition, other aspects of the curriculum, such as rights and responsibilities and peer pressure, support the anti-bullying policy. The programme is structured to reinforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other, specifically whom they should inform if they are being bullied or are worried that another pupil is being bullied;

- In the Prep phase of the school the ICT curriculum includes lessons on bullying, cyber issues and managing online friendships;
- other lessons, particularly RE, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills; and
- Anti-Bullying messages are given in assemblies by the Assistant Head (Pastoral) and other staff as well as in those presented by pupils.

Staff training and actions: Appropriate training in all aspects of safeguarding and pastoral care is arranged to ensure that staff have the necessary professional skills:
- awareness of the risk and indications of child abuse, bullying and cyber bullying; and
- knowledge of how to manage such cases.

Colleagues take steps to ensure:
- there is an adequate presence of staff on the school site and staff are vigilant whether on duty or not;
- there is space available for pupils' quiet withdrawal; and
- Expected behaviour and purposeful upholding of our School Values are maintained.

Pupils' responsibilities: We emphasise, to all pupils, the role which is expected of them in setting a good example and being helpful to younger pupils and each other.

Record keeping and monitoring: Form teachers and the safeguarding team keep records of the welfare and development of individual pupils via CPOMS. From this, the Safeguarding Team are able to review reports to enable patterns to be identified both in relation to individual pupils, and across the school as a whole.

Barriers to consider
It is important to emphasise with pupils, staff and parents why incidents might not be reported.

Victim: There are many reasons why a pupil who has suffered bullying may be reluctant to report it. They may become demoralised and may say, for example:
- it is telling tales. They won't believe me because the person I am complaining about is popular and I am not, and I will become even more unpopular;
- the things they are saying and doing are too embarrassing to discuss with an adult;
- it is all my fault anyway for being overweight/too studious etc;
- there are too many of them; there is nothing the staff can do;
- it will get back to my parents and they will think less of me;
- I will just try and toughen up and grow a thicker skin; or
- I will lie low and not audition for a part in the school play etc.

Witnesses: There are also reasons why a pupil who has witnessed or learned of bullying behaviour may not want to make a report. They may say:
- it is "snitching" or "grassing" and I will become unpopular;
- it is not my concern anyway; or
- I don't like the victim and I would find it embarrassing to be associated with him.

Culture: Any of these responses would be contrary to our culture at the school. Implementation of this policy encourages every pupil to understand that:
- every complaint of bullying will be taken seriously;

- members of staff will deal with a complaint correctly and effectively in accordance with their experience and the training they have received;
- it is important to try and find a solution to a problem; and
- a pupil who complains will receive support and advice.

Procedures for reporting bullying

The following procedures are a guideline except where expressed in the terms "should' or "must". The best guide is the experience and training of the staff.

Pupils: Pupils are reminded through visual material in every classroom that they should raise any issues with an adult as soon as possible. A pupil who is being bullied, or who is worried about another pupil being bullied, should report it without delay and can do so in several ways. They can:
- tell their form teacher, their parents, the nurse or any member of staff at the school;
- contact Childline (0800 1111); or
- contact the Royal Borough of Greenwich social services department (telephone: 020 8921 3172) for advice.

Parents: Parents who are concerned that their child is being bullied should inform their child's form teacher or the Assistant Head (Pastoral) who should be made aware of the concern in any event.

Staff: This policy focuses mainly on the bullying of pupils by pupils although it is recognised that a staff member could be a victim and on occasion may be perceived to be guilty of bullying. Staff members who are concerned about being bullied or harassed should refer to the school's Whistleblowing Policy which is set out in the staff handbook and referred to in the Staff Code of Conduct.

Stages to recording

Initial Allegation: A person in authority who learns of alleged bullying behaviour should:
- firstly, respond quickly and sensitively by offering support and reassurance to the alleged victim;
- report the allegation to the DSL, Assistant Head (Pastoral) or member of the safeguarding team as soon as possible.

Assessment: The Safeguarding team will decide who would be best placed to find out the following information:
- the nature of the incident;
- whether it is a one-off incident involving an individual or a group;
- whether it is part of a pattern of behaviour by an individual or a group;
- whether physical injury been caused

At this stage, the possible outcomes for an incident which is not too serious include:
- a resolution between the parties concerned;
- the complaint is justified in whole or in part, and further action will be needed (see 'range of action', below). This will be discussed with the Assistant Head (Pastoral) if advice is required.

Serious incident: If the form teacher believes that serious bullying behaviour:
- has occurred involving a pupil in their form;
- has recurred after warnings have been given to the "bully" they must inform the Assistant Head (Pastoral).

The Assistant Head (Pastoral), who is also the DSL will, if appropriate:
- interview the alleged victim, bully and any witnesses separately to confirm the facts of the case, if considered

necessary;
- will decide on the action to be taken in accordance with the Range of Action set out below;
- send a summary of findings to the Head.

The Assistant Head (Pastoral) will notify the parents of the victim and bully giving them details of the case and the action being taken.

Range of action: When an allegation of bullying is upheld the range of responses will include one or more of the following:
- advice and support for the victim and, where appropriate, establishing a course of action to help the victim;
- advice and support to the bully in trying to change their behaviour;
- a supervised meeting between the bully and the victim to discuss their differences and the ways in which they may be able to avoid future conflict;
- if appropriate, a group of pupils may meet or be spoken to and discuss the issues. With younger pupils this may, for example, include a chance to discuss how to organise rules of games in advance to avoid difficult situations arising;
- a disciplinary sanction against the bully, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy such as loss of privileges or internal/ fixed term external exclusion. In a very serious case or a case of persistent bullying, a pupil may, after a fair hearing, be required to leave the school permanently;
- involving social services or the police, where there is a safeguarding concern or where a criminal act may have been committed;
- notifying the parents of one or more pupils about the case and the action which has been taken.

Monitoring: The position should be monitored for as long as necessary thereafter. Action may include:
- sharing information with some or all colleagues and with some other pupils if appropriate;
- ongoing counselling and support;
- vigilance;
- mentioning the incident at staff briefings;
- reviewing vulnerable individuals and areas of the school;
- liaison between form teachers, Heads of Phase and the Assistant Head (Pastoral).

Formal complaint: If the victim's parents are not satisfied with the action taken, they should be advised to make a formal complaint, according to the complaints procedure posted on the school website or available on request.

Recording: All cases of bullying must be formally recorded on CPOMS with detailed factual information.

Review
This policy will be reviewed annually by the Assistant Head (Pastoral) and Deputy Head to assess its effectiveness, and will be updated as necessary. In undertaking the review the Assistant Head (Pastoral) will take into account the results of any monitoring, as well as any changes in legislation and/or statutory guidance and other relevant information gathered (such as through a Smart School Council meeting or bullying/pupil survey).

Appendix A

Pupil anti – cyber bullying code

Being sent an abusive or threatening text message, or seeing nasty comments about yourself on a website, can be really upsetting and is also criminal in character. This code gives you seven important tips to protect yourself and your friends from getting caught up in cyberbullying, and advice on to how to report it when it does happen.

1. Respect
Remember that when you send a message to someone, you cannot see the impact that your words or images may have on the other person. That is why it is important to show respect to people and be careful what you say online or what images you send. What you think is a joke may really hurt someone else. Always ask permission before you take a photo of someone.

If you receive a rude or nasty message or picture about someone else, do not forward it. You could be assisting a bully and even be accused of cyberbullying yourself. You could also be breaking the law.

2. Think
It is important to think before you send any images or text about yourself or someone else by email or mobile phone, or before you post information on a website. Remember that what you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever. Do you really want your teacher to see that photo? Follow the 'THINK' acronym: is it Truthful, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary, Kind.

3. Privacy
Don't let anyone know your passwords. It is a good idea to change them on a regular basis. Choosing hard-to-guess passwords with symbols or numbers will help stop people hacking into your account and pretending to be you. Remember to give your mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends only.

4. Block
Most responsible websites and services allow you to block or report someone who is behaving badly.

5. Ignore
Replying to bullying messages, particularly in anger, is just what the bully wants.

6. Evidence
Learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. These will help you demonstrate to others what is happening and can be used by your school, internet service provider, mobile phone company, or even the police to investigate the cyberbullying. A digital footprint will lead back to the offender. If you keep the evidence, it is often possible to trace the sender from their IP address.

7. Tell
You have a right not to be harassed and bullied online.   There are people who can help:
- Tell your parents who can report it to the right place
- Tell your school. Your teacher can support you and the Headmistress can impose sanctions on the person bullying you, without fear of reprimand

Finally, don't just do nothing! If you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying. How would you feel if no one stood up for you?

Further information

The following websites provide a variety of useful and informative guidance to support parents and children with the dangers of the digital world.

www.internetmatters.org / www.childline.org.uk / www.thinkuknow.co.uk / www.nationalonlinesafety.com/

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