

HEDDON-ON-THE-WALL ST. ANDREW'S CE FIRST SCHOOL

POLICY STATEMENT FOR ANTI-BULLYING.

'Love your neighbour, as you love yourself.'
Mark 12:31

Rationale

The school strongly believes that all learners are uniquely made in the image of God and beloved by Him where the development of the whole child is central. This policy is founded in the school's belief in the Gospel values such as truth, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation and love.

As a school we seek to create an environment where individual learners and adults may learn and flourish without fear of harassment or bullying. We also seek to challenge injustice and intolerance in all of its forms within school and encourage learners to do so in the wider world to prepare them as good citizens in their communities. Whenever the opportunity arises it must be made profoundly clear that we will **not** tolerate any form of bullying or harassment at our school.

However, at Heddon-on-the-Wall St. Andrew's CE First School we recognise that bullying can occur. When it does it can be harmful both physically and mentally for the victim. It can also be a sign that the learner carrying out the bullying has underlying issues that need to be addressed.

The purpose of this policy is to enable adults in school to recognise bullying when it takes place and to deal with it effectively.

This policy has been created through consultation with learners, staff, parents and Governors. It recognises recommendations from Northumberland County Council Guidelines and those provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA).

Legal Duties

The school recognises its legal duties in regard to behaviour, namely to:

'promote the well-being of pupils in school.' (Education and Inspections Act, 2006)

'safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.' (Education Act, 2002)

'establish procedures for dealing with complaints about bullying and all matters relating to the school.' (Education Act, 2002)

The school recognises the recommendations from Every Child Matters (DfES, 2004) and the 2010 Equalities Act

Definitions

The ABA defines bullying as:

'the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another(s), where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be carried out physically, verbally, emotionally or through cyberspace.' ABA, 2011.

This can be further clarified by the following:

- Bullying behaviour deliberately causes hurt (either physically or emotionally)
- Bullying behaviour is repetitive.
- Bullying behaviour involves an imbalance of power (the person or people on the receiving end feel they can't defend themselves)

Bullying can also stem from thoughtlessness such as in name calling.

It can also stem from institutionalised attitudes, wider prejudice and discrimination such as in relation to gender, race, religion as well as homophobic bullying and the bullying of those learners with either Special Educational Needs or a disability.

Bullying does not only occur between learners. The above definition can also characterise some relationships between adults or between adults and learners.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can be categorised into the following types:

- Physical: hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal: name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect: spreading stories, exclusion from social group
- Cyber: use of mobile technology (offensive or threatening texts), use of social media such as Facebook to make / spread derogatory messages
- Racist: racial taunts, gestures, making fun of culture or religion
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Sexual Orientation: name calling or taunting using homophobic language
- Gender Reassignment: name calling or taunting using derogatory language
- Disabilities: name calling or taunting using derogatory language

For further details about these categories please see Appendix 1

Bullying is not:

- Bullying behaviour is not teasing between friends without intention to hurt.
- Bullying behaviour is not falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement. (though in some cases it can lead to bullying behaviour)

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasions of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when an occasional 'joke' is played on someone. Learners do sometimes fall out and say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of a learner's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

It is bullying if it is done repeatedly and on purpose.

Why do we Tackle Bullying?

The school tackles bullying as an issue because we are an effective and caring school that values its Christian duty and we believe that:

- Bullying makes people unhappy and leads to low self-esteem.
- Learners who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their school work.
- Some learners avoid bullying by not attending school.
- Learners who observe unchallenged bullying behaviour may copy this anti-social behaviour.
- The school wishes to support and build the self-esteem of all learners, especially bullies and victims.

The Role of Parents

Parents have an important part to play in our Anti-Bullying Policy. We would ask that parents:

- Look out for unusual behaviour in their child – for example not wanting to attend school, feeling ill regularly or not completing their work to their usual standard.
- Always take an active role in their child's education such as asking how their day has gone.
- If it is felt that a child is a victim of bullying parents are asked to contact the school immediately. All complaints are taken seriously and appropriate action will be taken.
- If their child is being bullied the school would ask parents not to approach the child doing the bullying either in the playground or on the way home but to inform school immediately.

- It is important that parents do not advise children to fight back or to repeat the bully's behaviour. This will only make the situation worse.
- Make it clear to a bullied child that it is not their fault.
- Reinforce the school policy on anti-bullying and ensure that your child is not afraid to come and ask for help.
- If you are aware that your child might be involved in bullying, please discuss the issues with them and inform the school. The matter will be dealt with appropriately.

Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying Incidents

Allegations and incidents of bullying at Heddon-on-the-Wall St. Andrew's CE First School will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All of those involved with the incident will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will support all learners involved whilst the allegations are being investigated and resolved.

The following procedures are to be followed:

- Incidents of reported bullying need to be reported to the Key Stage Co-ordinator and the Headteacher.
- The Key Stage Co-ordinator will speak to all learners involved about the incident separately or if appropriate as a group. This will be reported to the Headteacher.
- The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
- Staff will adopt a problem solving approach through circle times and / or drama activities which will move learners from only justifying their behaviour.
- Appropriate action will be taken to end the bullying behaviour or threat of bullying.
- Both victim and bully will be closely monitored on a daily or sessional basis for a set period, to be determined, to ensure that no incidents occur.
- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied. For example: loss of privileges, spending play and lunch times with an adult, be withdrawn from class, be withdrawn from participation in a school visit, club or event not essential to the curriculum.
- Where possible learners will be reconciled with each other.
- An attempt will be made and support given to help the bully (bullies) understand and change their behaviour.
- If the bullying continues or in more serious cases of bullying parents will be informed and invited into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
- In serious cases the incident will be recorded and kept on file.
- In repeated or serious cases the school may follow the following sanctions: lunch time exclusion, fixed term exclusion or permanent exclusion.

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These include:

- Regular PSHCE teaching following the agreed scheme of work.
- Taking part in National Anti-Bullying Week
- Awareness through Collective Worship
- Circle Time
- Drama / role play activities
- Playground Buddies to support learners who have difficulties settling into school or making friends
- Following the whole school Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy which includes using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour.
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another.
- Support from the Locality Inclusion Support Team if appropriate.

Monitoring

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Management Team and the designated Governor. It will be monitored by staff in the staff meeting. This policy will be reviewed every twelve months or sooner if required.

Consultation

This policy will be sent to the following groups for consultation prior to amendment and ratification by the Governing Body. The policy will be placed upon the school website and hardcopies will be available upon request.

Agreed: September 2016

Review Date: September 2017

Appendix 1

Taken from Northumberland County Council Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidelines

BULLYING BY RACE, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR DISABILITY

1. Racist Bullying

Following the Stephen Lawrence incident, the 1999 MacPherson report defines racist bullying as “any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”

A child or young person may be targeted for representing a group. Attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse – name calling, racist jokes, offensive mockery / mimicry
- Physical aggression or threats
- Wearing offensive or provocative badges or other insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines into the school or organisation’s premises
- Racist inciting of others
- Racist graffiti or other written insults including against food, music, dress or customs
- A refusal to associate with someone of other ethnic origin in work or play

For further information and guidance consult the Northumberland County Council anti-racism policy

2. Sexual Bullying

Sexual bullying is characterised by the following:

- Abusive name calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Pornographic material
- Graffiti with sexual content

In its most extreme form, sexual bullying takes the form of sexual assault or even rape. Under these circumstances police would normally be involved as these are criminal offences.

Sexual Orientation

Pupils do not have to be lesbian, gay or bi-sexual to experience this type of bullying. In most cases being different can be enough. (In a survey 82% of teachers in 300 secondary schools in London were aware of verbal incidents. Only 6% of these schools referred to this type of bullying within their policy). Factors hindering schools in challenging homophobic bullying include staff inexperience and parental disapproval.

For further information and guidance consult the DfES publication on homophobic bullying “Stand Up for Us”

3. Disabilities

Children and young people with special needs or disabilities are often at a great risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly. The bullying is usually about their specific difficulties or their appearance. This is compounded by the fact that these children.

Appendix 2

Recognising the signs of Bullying

Taken from Northumberland County Council Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidelines

Those who are being bullied may experience:

- Unhappiness
- A sense of desolation and in some cases, desperation
- Reduced self esteem and self worth
- Poor academic performance
- Exclusion from normal social experience
- A strong desire to escape the situation which may result in absconding or truanting
- A desire to self-harm or even to commit suicide

Those who are being bullied may exhibit the following:

- Unwillingness to attend or participate in activities
- Unwillingness to venture into some areas of a building
- Fear of walking to school or of using public transport
- Underachievement
- Books or clothes destroyed
- Possessions and money going missing
- Signs of distress such as crying easily, lack of appetite
- Becoming withdrawn or disruptive and / or aggressive
- Stammering
- Stealing to pay the bully or replace missing possessions
- A variety of physical symptoms including cuts, bruising, aches, pain, faints, headaches, stomach upsets, bedwetting, disrupted sleep patterns
- A marked change in well established patterns of behaviour

Those who are bullied are often reluctant to say what is wrong or to seek help.