ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Responsible: Mr Mohammed Zarafat

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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to educate pupils, parents, and staff about:

- Bullying and its signs/symptoms
- The measures in place to prevent bullying
- The procedures to follow if bullying arises

This information will be disseminated in a number of ways at pupil and parent inductions and at staff training events. Apart from educating the various stakeholders, we welcome contributions and feedback to improve our anti-bullying practice. This policy has been drawn up in line with the DfE guidance *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* (July 2017).

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is a specific type of aggression in which:

1) The behaviour is intended to the hurt victim(s) emotionally or physically
2) The behaviour occurs repeatedly over time
3) There is an imbalance of power, with a more powerful person or group attacking a less powerful one

Bullying can lead to victims feeling:

- Vulnerable
- Insecure
- Distressed
- Discriminated against

- Inferior
- In physical pain
- Pressurised into carrying out demands

TYPES OF BULLYING

Bullying can be emotional or physical; it can take many forms, and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, e.g., on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, intellectual ability, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It can take place in or out of school, and even virtually (what is known as 'cyber bullying').

1. Examples of non-verbal bullying

Hiding possessions, damaging property, racist graffiti, threatening gestures, exclusion, or isolation from groups/activities.

2. Examples of verbal bullying

Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, racist or homophobic taunts, sexually abusive comments.

3. Examples of physical bullying

Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any other use of physical force. Unsolicited physical/sexual contact.

4. Cyber bullying

Misuse of any information and communication technologies, such as text messaging, email, instant messaging, smartphone applications and social networking websites by e.g., spreading false rumours online, putting up embarrassing photos of people without their permission, anonymously bombarding victims with unwanted/negative messages, making abusive or threatening telephone calls.

A teacher may, unwittingly or otherwise, engage in, instigate, or reinforce bullying behaviour in a number of ways by

- Using sarcasm or other insulting and demeaning forms of language when addressing pupils
- Making negative comments about pupils' appearance, culture, or ethnic background etc.
- Humiliating, directly or indirectly, a pupil who is academically weak or vulnerable in other ways
- Using any gesture or expression of a threatening or intimidating nature
- Performing any form of degrading physical contact or exercise

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

Victims of bullying often exhibit certain signs/behaviours that indicate that bullying is taking place. Members of staff and parents/guardians should be aware of these signs and that they should investigate if a pupil:

- is frightened of walking to or from school.
- doesn't want to go on the school/public bus.
- begs to be driven to school.
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant.
- begins to do poorly in schoolwork.
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'.
- starts regularly 'losing' dinner or other monies.
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- changes their usual routine.
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.

- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.

- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.

- starts stammering.

- stops eating.

- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.

- feels ill in the morning.

- is bullying other children or siblings.

- becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable.

- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.

- is frightened to say what's wrong.

- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility, and the potential causes of these symptoms must be investigated.

PREVENTION

It is our belief that the school should be a safe, secure, and inclusive environment in which pupils are able to learn effectively without having to worry about being bullied. We aim to create this environment through a culture of respect and trust, where pupils treat the staff and each other with respect, and have enough confidence in the system to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.

This will be achieved by

- Instilling noble values in pupils and encouraging good relationships between them via the school curriculum.

- Discussing issues of difference and celebrating diversity through lessons, assemblies, projects, and events.

- Educating pupils about cyber-bullying (e.g., on Safer Internet Day or through PSHE and Computing lessons) and how they can protect themselves from it.

- Making the process of reporting bullying incidents safe and easy for pupils

- Having effective deterrents and disciplinary measures in place to discourage bullying

- Monitoring pupil relationships and changes therein.

- Training staff to recognise and deal with bullying behaviour.

- Including parents in our anti-bullying strategy

INTERVENTION

If pupils have any issues or want to report a bullying incident, they should approach their form tutor or the Behaviour Lead and talk to them about their concerns. Parents and teachers should refer their concerns to the Form Tutors or the Behaviour Lead, or any member of the Senior Leadership Team in their absence. Even if bullying takes place outside the school or out of hours, the SLT has a duty to investigate all incidents that are referred to them.

The SLT will deal with each case as fairly and as consistently as possible and will apply whatever actions it considers necessary to support both the victim and the perpetrator. This may include the involvement of external agencies, if deemed necessary. Please note that the victim will be given full consideration; however, in many cases, there is an underlying issue/motivation behind bullying behaviour, in which case the perpetrator also requires help or counselling from the school.

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence. E.g., under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or to send an electronic communication that conveys an indecent or grossly offensive message, a threat, or information that is false and known/ believed to be false by the sender. In such cases, the police may become involved.

PROCEDURES FOR NOTING AND REPORTING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

- All reports of bullying, no matter how minor, will be noted, investigated, and dealt with by the Behaviour Lead. This will ensure that pupils gain confidence in reporting incidents.
- If there are any grave cases of bullying behaviour by pupils, the Head teacher will immediately become involved in the process.
- If necessary, the parents of the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) will be informed by the Behaviour Lead, so that they are given the opportunity of discussing the matter. They are then able to support and help their children before a crisis occurs.
- Non-teaching staff such as caretakers and cleaners will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them to the Behaviour Lead.
- In case of a complaint regarding a staff member, the concern will normally be raised with the staff member in question, and if necessary, the Head teacher.
- Where cases relating to either a pupil or a teacher remain unresolved at school level, the Complaints Procedure should be followed.

PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATING AND DEALING WITH BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the Form Tutor will initiate an investigative process and seek answers to questions regarding the incident. If the case is deemed to be serious, Behaviour Lead or Head teacher will get involved at this stage.

- If there are multiple individuals involved in an incident, each person will initially be interviewed individually to present their account and establish facts.

- All relevant individuals will then be present at a group meeting where each member will be asked to present their account of the incident; both the victim(s) and the accused will be given the opportunity to defend their accounts.

- Each individual will be helped to handle the possible pressures that face them from other individuals after the interview by the Form Tutor / Head of Behaviour.

- Everyone involved will be asked to write down their account of the incident, along with a date and signature.

- Members of staff who are investigating cases of bullying behaviour will also keep a written record of their discussions with those involved.

- If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to them that they are in the breach of the school Code of Conduct, and every effort will be made to get the perpetrator to see the situation from the victim's point of view.

- The perpetrator will be disciplined appropriately and made to understand the need for considerate relationships between fellow pupils. Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, the perpetrator may be excluded temporarily or even permanently from the school.

- If deemed necessary, a meeting maybe conducted with the parents of the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s) to explain the actions being taken and the reasons for them, referring them to the school policy, and to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions taken by the school.

- Staff will continue to monitor the situation after the disciplinary action has been enforced, to ensure that no further problems arise. Relevant members of staff will be informed of the bullying incident, so that both the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s) are suitably supported, and relations are monitored.

- Every effort will be made to restore the victim's sense of security.

- In cases of prolonged bullying the 'Child Protection Policy' may have to be followed.

APPENDIX I

CYBER BULLYING

Cyber bullying is different to regular bullying, in that it is not face-to-face and can follow a person into places which are usually safe, such as their own home.

It may even be perpetrated by a bully who does not actually know the victim, and it can be very hard to trace back to the bully as the real name may not be used.

Preventing cyber bullying

The best way to prevent cyber bullying is to teach young people to guard their contact information, as follows:

● Use the relevant privacy settings, especially on social media.

● Only add people you know and trust to friends/followers lists online. When talking to strangers, keep your personal information safe, and location hidden.

● Only give your mobile number or email address to trusted friends and keep a note of who you have given it to. Hide your mobile number when making calls to people you do not trust/know.

● Do not leave your name on your voicemail.

● Do not give your details to people you do not know (or don't want to know!)

● Whilst you are on your mobile phone, make sure you also pay attention to your surroundings.

They could also be given preventative advice, such as:

● Always respect others – be careful what you say online.

● Be careful what pictures or videos you upload. Once a picture is shared online, it cannot be taken back.

● Treat your password like your toothbrush – keep it to yourself and change it regularly.

● Block the bully – learn how to block or report someone who is behaving badly.

● Do not retaliate or reply to offending e-mails, text messages or online conversations.

● Save the evidence. Always keep a copy of offending e-mails, text messages or a screen grab of online conversations and pass to a parent, a carer, or a teacher.

● If you are being bullied or abused, tell an adult you trust, e.g., a parent, a teacher, or Head of Pastoral. You could also call a helpline like Childline (0800 1111).

● Most social media services and other sites have a button you can click on to report bullying. Doing this can prevent a bully from targeting you and others in the future. Many services take bullying seriously and will either warn the individual or eliminate his or her account.

● Speak out whenever you see someone being unpleasant to another person by phone or online

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF CYBER BULLYING

It is not always easy to spot the signs of cyber bullying as it can happen all the time, a feature that makes it different from other forms of bullying.

Teachers and parents should be alerted to changes in a child's behaviour, for example:

- Being upset after using the internet or their mobile phone.
- Unwilling to talk, or secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use.
- Spending much more or much less time texting, gaming, or using social media.
- Many new phone numbers, texts or e-mail addresses show up on their mobile phone, laptop, or tablet.
- After texting or being online they may seem withdrawn, upset, or outraged.
- Not wanting to go to school and/or avoiding meeting friends and school mates.
- Avoiding formerly enjoyable social situations.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Low self-esteem.

REPORTING CYBER BULLYING

Anybody being bullied or harassed may:

- Report any online harassment to their internet service provider (ISP) – they are likely to have ideas about what can be done
- Report the problem to their phone service provider if they are being harassed via texts or anonymous callers. They will also have ideas about what could be done to lower the risk of harassment
- If serious threats are being made, report the matter to the police