



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Policy Review Cycle: Bi-annually

Review Assigned to: Levendale Primary School, Local Governing Body

LEVENDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

Levendale Primary School is a Rights Respecting School and this policy is underpinned by our continued commitment to UNICEF and the UN Convention of Rights of the Child. This policy links directly to the following articles of the UN Convention of the Rights of the child.

Children's rights and responsibilities:

Article 14 – Children have the right to think and believe what they want, and to practise their Religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 28 – All children and young people have a right to primary education, which should be free. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they are capable of;

Article 29 – Education should develop each child's personality to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and other cultures.

Article 30 - Children have a right to learn and use the language and customs of their families, whether these are shared by the majority of people in the country or not. This policy was developed in consultation with governors, staff, pupils and the school council.

It has links with the following school policies: Peer on Peer abuse, Child protection Policy, Confidentiality, and Equal Opportunities and Race Equality.

AIMS

Levendale Primary School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils, so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying, of any kind, is unacceptable at our school.

If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

THE OBJECTIVES

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents understand what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Primary Relationships and Health Education Policy

DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy, “bullying” is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.
- Pupils from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils.
- Pupils with SEND.

1. TYPES OF BULLYING

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic and bi-phobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person’s gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person’s disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual’s disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual’s disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Socio-economic bullying: Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of staff take bullying seriously.

Children are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying immediately to any member of staff so that the incident can be fully investigated, usually in the first instance by the class teacher, but where judged necessary, by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), which includes:

- Mrs Lewis, Head Teacher
- Mrs Henderson, Deputy Head Teacher
- Mrs Kirk, Senior Leader
- Mrs Stonehouse, Senior Leader

The Head Teacher will always be informed of any reports of any type of bullying.

Staff will:

- Listen to the victim, bully and any other pupil with information
- Keep a record of the incident
- Meet and talk separately to the victim and bully to discuss what happened.
- The bully will be informed that such behaviour is unacceptable and will be made aware of the consequences of their actions, in line with the behaviour policy or as deemed appropriate by the SLT.
- Inform staff members as appropriate to effectively monitor the situation
- Consider preventative measures including behaviour support plans for the victim and/or bully
- Inform and work with parents

In most cases, once a bullying incident has been reported and dealt with there will be no further incidents. If bullying persists then the SLT will be involved. In such cases, all staff will be made aware of the behaviour in order to monitor the situation effectively across school. All details will be logged on CPOMs.

3. STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, and hate crimes.

4. PREVENTION

TEACHING PROGRAMME, STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES

In order to prevent bullying and deal with any incidents of bullying, we use a range of strategies:

- PSHE lessons – learning about friendships, relationships, respect and well-being
- Computing lessons - learning about internet safety and cyber bullying
- Assemblies – themed around Levendale Goals, British Values and RRSA articles
- Friendship Week is held annually
- E-Safety Week is held annually
- Playground Friends and Sports Leaders encourage positive play
- Adequate supervision and monitoring of outdoor areas by staff at breaks and lunchtimes
- Personalised support where needed
- School Council – Suggestions box
- Unicef Rights Respecting School
- Working in partnership with external agencies e.g. NSPCC Assemblies
- Continuous reviews of school policy and procedures

5. SIGNS OF BULLYING

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Repeated or persistent absence from school
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Unexplained cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude either at School or home

These signs and symptoms could indicate other social, emotional or mental health issues, and may not indicate bullying, but will always be investigated to determine the correct support. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff, usually the class teacher.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated.
- They have been the victim of abuse.
- Their academic performance has started to fall and they are showing signs of stress.

If any staff members become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the class teacher, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

6. CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

Levendale Primary school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. Through the preventative measures (listed above) such as, the PSHE and Computing curriculum, we teach pupils in an age-appropriate way about: abuse; its forms; the importance of discussing and reporting any concerns; and of respecting others.

All staff will be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers. Staff will take all instances of child on child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims, will never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”, and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as “boys being boys”, as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours.

Staff will also be aware that child on child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing-or initiation-type violence.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers.

If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, parents will be notified and a referral may be made to the children’s safeguarding hub, where the Designated Safeguarding Lead deems this appropriate. Where a crime has been committed, the Police would also be notified.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

- Mrs Lewis, Head Teacher

The Deputy Designated Leads are:

- Mrs Henderson, Deputy Head Teacher
- Mrs Kirk, Senior Leader

The school’s Child on child Abuse Policy outlines the school’s stance on addressing child -on-child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed. More information on the school’s approach to preventing and managing instances of child on child abuse can be found within this policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

7. CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Cyberbullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim’s phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else’s name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Tiktok, Snapchat and Instagram

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying and views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying. Many of the signs of cyberbullying will be similar to those found in the 'Signs of bullying' section of this policy. The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobile phones, 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.

- A witness is used for serious incidents
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and witnesses are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture

Due to the potential for some specific forms of bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

8. SUPPORT

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise.
- Other consequences may take place.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Support for Children Involved

Support for victims of bullying might include:

- The pupil will be encouraged to confide in a named member of staff if the bullying continues.
- Monitoring by the class teacher, and other staff members e.g. in the playground by lunchtime supervisor.
- Reassurance that they are safe and that bullying will not be tolerated.
- Encouragement to share their feelings and emotional support.
- Support to develop positive strategies and appropriate assertive skills, e.g. in PSHE lessons.
- They may receive a behaviour support plan.
- Encouragement to widen friendship groups.
- The class teacher will liaise with parents as needed.

In the event of cyberbullying:

- Victims will be given advice on aspects of online safety, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online.

The headteacher will carefully consider in each instance of bullying whether it is appropriate to split up the victim and bully, e.g. preventing them being together in the classroom or other spaces where possible, and will split up other harmful group dynamics to prevent further occurrences where necessary.

The school acknowledges that bullying may be an indication of underlying issues, such as low self-esteem or poor mental health, and will work with the bully to support them to manage their behaviour. In doing so however, the school will ensure that the bully is made aware of the seriousness of their actions and possible consequences, such as the loss of privileges.

Strategies to support the bully might include:

- The class teacher will liaise with parents as necessary.
- They will be monitored in class, by the teacher and in the playground by other staff, including lunchtime supervisors.
- They may be given a personal behaviour plan.

- Positive behaviour reinforcement and strategies.
- Establishment of a buddy system if appropriate.
- Encouraged to develop positive relationships and self-esteem, through PSHE lessons.
- The SENDCO may be involved, if appropriate, including making referrals to outside agencies. e.g. Educational Psychologist, CAMH's.

8. BULLYING OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Peer-on-peer Abuse Policy.

The headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip. The headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

9. RECORD KEEPING

Staff members will ensure that records are kept with regard to all incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions.

The headteacher will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:

- Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour
- Reflections to inform future practice.
- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues, e.g. whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened.

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is reviewed every two years.