

Anti- Bullying Policy 2016

Zero Tolerance

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Scissett Middle School. Our anti-bullying policy ensures that all our children can learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We are a 'Tell Someone' school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff, parents or a trusted adult. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim, it can be direct (physical/verbal) or indirect (being ignored or cyber bullying). It is different from other types of aggressive behaviour because it is defined as something that happens more than once and is targeted specifically at an individual or group.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures;
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- Verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
- Cyber – all areas of the internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse; mobile threats by text messaging and phone call; misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities.

It can also include material bullying which includes damage to belongings and extortion. Perpetrators may use different pretexts as the basis of their bullying, basing their comments or actions on:

- The religious background or faith of the person bullied;
- A disability, perceived physical difficulty or Special Educational Need;
- The race of the victim e.g. racist name calling, taunts, graffiti or gestures;
- The sexuality of the victim e.g. homophobic bullying.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasional falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional "joke" is played on someone. Children do sometimes fall out or 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 child's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the occasional name calling or childish prank.

We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

Prevention

Prevention is the strategy of choice and is addressed in a variety of ways:

At whole school level, Heads of Year, Designated Safeguarding Leads and SMT, through assemblies, will inform pupils of the zero-tolerance policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place. Assemblies will also challenge the notion that there is not such a thing as an innocent, neutral bystanders with regards to the issue of bullying. This is followed up with class teachers during classtime.

Anti-Bullying Week is used to promote the profile of this issue.

PHSE lessons covers the subject of bullying including e-safety.

Cyber-Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for bullying, which can occur in or outside of 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. For more information on this aspect of bullying, please refer to school policy for responsible use of the internet and email.

Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour-or communications-could be a criminal offence. 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 which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive.

Bullying Outside School Premises

Headteachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police.

Response

We will follow a whole-school approach which encourages all staff and pupils to be confident about responding to bullying and all pupils to feel safe.

Any reported incident must be taken seriously.

The member of staff should record the incident on Integris. This is then used to record all progress on an individual's case.

Following investigation action will be taken to deal with all pupils involved and inform the appropriate parties. If an incident is identified as bullying then disciplinary measures will be applied to show clearly, to the whole school, that this kind of behaviour is wrong.

Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves. In serious cases, suspension or exclusion will be considered.

Although in the context of this policy bullying is identified as an issue between pupils we do recognise that bullying can also occur between staff and pupils (in either direction). Where a pupil feels that a member of staff has been bullying them they will be advised to follow the usual procedures for responding to bullying as set out below. Issues relating to bullying from pupils towards staff should be reported immediately to the member of the SLT.

All incidents should be recorded, analysed and monitored to look at numbers and identify where bullying is recurring between the same pupils. We will evaluate whether our approach is effective.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING BULLYING

1. Pupils can approach any member of staff whom they feel confident speaking to.
2. Pupils can press the 'Red Button' on their internet site.
3. Pupils can write details of an incident down.
4. Parents can call school and ask to speak to a member of staff. Initially this should be the form tutor. Further support can then be sought from the Head of Year / Pastoral Lead /Senior Leadership Team.
5. Pupils can inform their parents who can then follow procedure 4 above.
6. Younger pupils may choose to speak to a Befriender who it is expected will then take this information to a member of staff.
7. There are national helplines and websites that pupils can contact on the school web site.
8. All incidents should be recorded, analysed and monitored to look at numbers and identify where bullying is recurring between the same pupils. We will evaluate whether our approach is effective.

Support for the Victim

Where an incident has involved victimisation, harassment, alarm or distress of a pupil or member of staff, the school will provide support for the victim. This will be discussed with the victim's family or the member of staff and an agreed way forward will facilitate an effective closure for the victim to the incident.

School will ensure full documentation of the incident and agreed outcomes.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ANTI-BULLYING

Everyone involved in the life of the school must take responsibility for promoting a common anti-bullying approach and report all incidents of bullying. However, there are people who are responsible within school for the anti-bullying policy.

a) Governors

There will be a member of the governing body to have a specific responsibility for the Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure.

b) The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the Anti-Bullying Policy.

c) The Pastoral Lead and the Safeguarding Leads are responsible for monitoring the policy and anti-bullying strategies.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

If parents are still concerned about specific bullying issues or are unhappy about how a certain incident has been dealt with then there is a complaints procedure, which is available on the school website. Parents should contact the Head Teacher in the first instance.

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