



RADLETT
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Related Information

Statutory Guidance

- ISSR standard 10

Supporting documents

- Equality Act 2012
- Children Act 1989
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Working together to safeguard children 2018
- Online Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Equal opportunities Policy

Introduction

This policy applies to all pupils at the school, including those within the EYFS. It applies to bullying of and by pupils and also applies to bullying behaviour outside of the school.

This policy takes into account the non-statutory DfE advice:

- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)
- Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and School staff (2014)
- Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying (2014).

Aims and objectives

The aims of this policy are:

- To provide a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- To make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying.
- To encourage pupils to report cases of bullying, explain the procedure for reporting and the support provided to victims.
- To support the bullies to overcome their difficulties.
- To make clear each person's responsibilities regarding the eradication of bullying in our school.
- To explain how we ensure we do all we can to prevent bullying, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- To explain how we provide a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.

Definition of Bullying

At Radlett Prep School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and young people, and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.

Bullying is action taken on a sustained and systematic basis by one or more children that hurts another child, either physically, emotionally or psychologically, whether by intention or not. Although the definition is 'sustained and systematic' action should still be taken and records made with one single incident, to prevent repeated actions and to enable the school to identify patterns.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, it is essential that our school:

Eliminates 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; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. Prejudiced-based bullying due to a protected characteristic may include hurtful comments and/or behaviour focusing on:

- Race
- Gender or gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation, including homophobia
- Religious and cultural differences
- Appearance and health conditions
- Home circumstances
- Disability and SEND
- Some kind of perceived difference
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Differences in academic performance

Types of Bullying

Physical Bullying

Physical bullying can include but is not limited to hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.

Emotional

Emotional bullying can include but is not limited to the use of words to tease, mock, or isolate another person.

Cyber-Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual bullying', which can occur in and outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen beyond the school day into home and private space, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content.

Racist Bullying

This refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that make the person feel unwelcome marginalised and excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity culture, faith community, national origin or national status.

Homophobic Bullying

This can include but is not limited to when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual people.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 is a law that protects people from discrimination and advances equality of opportunity. It is based on the 9 protected characteristics which are: age, sexual orientation, race, pregnancy and maternity, disability, marriage and civil partnerships, gender reassignment, religion or beliefs, and gender. While not all of these are directly applicable to Primary School aged children, it is important that they are reflected as a part of the wider society in which they live.

We expect staff to be welcoming to all and celebrate difference, proactively provide pupils with everything they need to be confident and thrive and to consider equality in all decision making. Incidents where bullying is focused on the Protective Characteristics of another person are treated seriously and recorded on CPOMs.

The School's Response to Bullying

At the School, we always treat bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the School's values, and potentially with its policy on equal opportunities for pupils, and will not be tolerated. When incidents of bullying do occur, they are dealt with quickly and taken seriously. The School will never dismiss or downplay bullying as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”. All reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy. Staff will reassure any victim(s) that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

The School understands that bullying can be so serious that it may cause physical, emotional, and psychological damage, such as eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Stopping violence and ensuring the immediate physical safety of pupils is the School's first priority, however, the School acknowledges that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying, and therefore staff will use their discretion when dealing with an incident of bullying within the parameters of this policy and the Behaviour Policy. Whilst bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, sexual violence and assault, sexting, the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes (in certain circumstances), upskirting and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

The School recognises that children with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to child on child group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. The School also recognises that certain children may face additional barriers to reporting an incident because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.

Pupils who are victims of bullying will always be supported and will be reassured that they will be kept safe. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving and offered support for their own circumstances, where appropriate.

Bullying which occurs on school trips, online, or outside of the School's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on School premises. Staff will, where appropriate, discipline pupils for misbehaviour online, outside school premises and outside school hours.

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 poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with, or spoilt by others;
- Books, bags, money, and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Diminished levels of self-confidence;
- Frequent visits to Matron with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, or late arrival to class;
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported / recorded, as appropriate, in accordance with this policy.

Prevention of Bullying

The School's response to bullying does not start at the point in which a pupil has been bullied. We take the following preventative measures in order to create an environment that prevents bullying from becoming a problem at the School in the first place:

Pupils

- The School promotes an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of school;
- All new pupils, including those within the EYFS, are taught about the School's Golden Rules for behaviour. These are also displayed in classrooms and around the School.
- We use appropriate assemblies to explain the School's policy on bullying such as anti-bullying week assemblies and assemblies on the school values;
- Our PSHCE programme is structured to reinforce messages about community involvement and taking care of each other. It focuses on the importance of equality and diversity and pupils are encouraged to avoid prejudicial and exclusionary language;
- Other lessons highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by developing social skills and by teaching values that show all bullying to be unacceptable;
- All of our pupils are encouraged to tell any member of staff at once if they are being bullied, or if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place. They are reassured that they will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe;
- We display advice on where pupils can seek help around the school including details of where they can connect with external specialists such as ChildLine and Kidscape;

Staff

- Upon induction, all new members of staff are given training and guidance on the School's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to, and record allegations of bullying at the School, including cyberbullying. The School will ensure that all School staff understand the principles of the School's policy, the School's legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent incidents of bullying from arising or escalating and also details of sources of further support;
- By setting a school climate of mutual support and praise for success, this makes bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.
- Our school values emphasise compassion, respect and community, these are reflected within our Golden rules;
- The School recognises that certain children may be more at risk of bullying than others and may require additional support when dealing with an incident of bullying, for example children with SEND and/or certain health conditions, and LGBTQIA+ pupils. The School will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand the specific needs of our pupils, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all pupils;
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are documented on CPOMs;
- Behaviour logs on CPOMS are reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and SLT regularly in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored;
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of class teachers, phase leaders and pastoral leads who are skilled in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and who are alert to possible signs of bullying and will know when to apply our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy to bullying incidents;
- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies;
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and monitor the playground, school field (when the weather is fine) and dining room. Staff are alert to inappropriate language or behaviour at all times;
- The School has the right, and duty, to investigate incidents of bullying involving our pupils which take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips, online, or that otherwise occur outside of school. The School has the right to take disciplinary measures in respect of such incidents. Disciplinary measures will be taken in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy and will be applied in a fair, consistent, and reasonable manner, taking into account the needs of pupils with SEND and certain health conditions, and vulnerable pupils; and
- Staff will always consider the motive behind bullying behaviour and whether it raises any concerns for the welfare of the perpetrator(s). If staff reasonably suspect that a pupil may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, they should follow the procedures set out in the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and discuss their concerns with the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay.

- This policy is readily available on the School's website so that they are clear on the School's approach to bullying and what to do if their child experiences bullying;
- Safeguarding newsletter details information on recognising bullying in all its forms;
- We encourage close contact between the class teacher and parents/carers, and will always make contact if we are worried about a pupil's well-being;
- If parents know or suspect that their child, or another pupil, is being bullied, they should contact the School without delay. All concerns will be taken seriously; and
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures and all other aspects and implementation of this anti-bullying policy.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

Procedures for dealing with reported bullying

If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied. We explain why their actions were wrong and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, staff inform their Year Group Leader and the relevant Phase Leader or Vice Principal. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation.

The School ensures that all instances of, or concerns about bullying and cyberbullying, both on and away from school premises are easy to report and that they are recorded properly. Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying will be kept on CPOMs.

The School recognises that pupils are likely to report bullying to someone they trust: this could be any member of staff. The School also recognises that children may not find it easy to tell staff about bullying verbally and that instead they may show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to. It is also recognised that an incident may come to a member of staff's attention through a report of a friend, or by overhearing conversations. All staff will be trained in handling an allegation and will be aware that they must listen to the pupil, not ask leading questions, and make a written record of the allegation to the best of their ability.

The School also recognises that a first disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported. It is not necessarily representative of a singular incident. Staff will take all reports seriously regardless of how long it has taken for the child to come forward. Staff will act immediately and will support the victim(s) when they raise a concern using the following procedure:

- The staff member dealing with the report of bullying will arrange for the matter to be investigated, which will include discussions with the victim, the alleged bully and any witnesses and an appropriate strategy will be put in place for dealing with the matter.
- Parents will be consulted in the event of repeated or substantial allegations being made.
- Every effort is made to provide prompt, sensitive and effective support for victim and bully.
- Support from external services will be sought where appropriate.
- The motivation behind the bullying behaviour will be considered.
- Frequent monitoring occurs after incidents to prevent repetition.
- A record of incidents of bullying is kept by the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the School and regularly reviewed to enable patterns over time to be identified.

Sanctions

Cases of bullying are handled sensitively by all staff at the School. It is recognised that these are difficult and complex situations which need to be dealt with in a thoughtful manner. Careful calibration of the School's response, so as to ensure that the incident is dealt with seriously without overreaction is at the heart of the School's policy.

The key aim of the School's pastoral action will be to bring the bullying to a halt, and to help the bully understand the inappropriate nature and impact of their actions and to provide a deterrent effect. Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities of the Student and the needs of vulnerable Students.

Sanctions may include staying inside at playtime; a series of missed playtimes; suspension from the School; in the most serious of cases sanctions may include expulsion. In severe cases of bullying or persistent bullying, strong sanctions will be applied including suspension or expulsion. In relatively less serious cases the School will apply its full range of other sanctions. Parents may be called into the School to speak with a senior member of the pastoral team or where appropriate another member of the Senior Leadership Team.

It should also be noted that, although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal act in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence. If the School feels that an offence may have been committed the Principal may decide to seek assistance from the police. It is vital that Parents and the School work together to ensure that all Students are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be bullying of any kind.

Bullying can have extremely serious implications for the wellbeing of Students at any School and can lead to physical or psychological damage for both the victim and the bully. It is recognised that a perpetrator of bullying is usually an unhappy Student, who has often experienced bullying themselves. The School makes every effort to support the perpetrators of bullying, by helping them to recognise the error of their ways and offering counselling where appropriate.

Staff Training

As part of the regular mandatory training, staff are reminded of the Anti-Bullying Policy. All members of staff are trained in procedures to prevent and deal with bullying as a critical part of child protection training, and issues are regularly discussed in Year Group meetings, Raise and Review meetings and in Staff Briefings.

Training is reinforced through the activities covered during anti-bullying week. Additionally, assemblies throughout the academic year reinforce issues about bullying, as well as acts of kindness, resilience, and respect for the School community and wider community.

Monitoring and review

The School will record all incidents of reported bullying in accordance with this policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, in conjunction with the SLT, will review all incidents of reported bullying to help identify patterns of behaviour, so that the School can take appropriate steps to address bullying behaviours within the School. Records of bullying incidents will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying procedures, and to highlight any necessary amendments.

This policy is reviewed and updated at least annually.

Complaints Procedure

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our Complaints Procedure (which is published on our website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of EYFS children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted, if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled (the Complaints Procedure explains how to complain to Ofsted).