Service Delivery Policy (Education – England)

Anti-Bullying

POLICY STATEMENT

- The aim of this Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure that pupils and learners are educated in a safe, caring, and supportive environment, without fear of being bullied. Bullying is an unacceptable and anti-social behaviour which affects everyone and therefore will not be tolerated.

- We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our pupils and learners so they can flourish in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. If bullying does occur, all pupils and learners should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

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January 2024	V3.03	Abbie Heard	Amendments and review
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April 2023	V3.01	Abbie Heard	Full Refresh and Reformat

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1.   Scope

1.1   Rationale

1.1.1   Our approach is to instil a culture of proactive actions to contribute towards a learning environment that is a positive experience for all pupils / learners and Team Members. We strive to create an ethos of positive behaviour where pupils / learners and colleagues treat one another with respect. We believe that it is important that all Team Members and pupils / learners illustrate values of respect for each other, at all times.

1.1.2   Due to the nature of our schools and colleges, and those we support; it is accepted that pupils / learners will display behaviours that challenge. Due to their individual special educational needs, some pupils / learners may not have sufficient understanding or awareness that certain behaviours directed towards others may be undesirable or that they might be construed as bullying. Similarly, some pupils / learners, who are the recipients of such behaviours, may be unable to express or communicate their aversion to such behaviours or to tell adults. However, our primary role is to equip our pupils / learners with transferable socially acceptable skills, that will enable them to become ethically informed citizens. This means that all Team Members at our schools and colleges have a duty to not only be aware of such behaviours and of any pupils / learners involved, but also to respond appropriately to instances of suspected/alleged bullying behaviours.

2.   Definitions

2.1   What is Bullying?

2.1.1   Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Department for Education, (July 2017) defines bullying as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or groups either physically or emotionally.

2.1.2   Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber bullying via text messages, social media, gaming, or the internet, which can include the use of videos and images), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a person is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual or perceived differences between children and young adults.

2.1.3   Bullying can take several forms, including:

- Physical – Causing actual bodily harm to another individual which cannot be considered as an event which occurs in the normal course of school/college/home life.

- Verbal / Emotional – Behaviour such as name calling which demeans and erodes the sense of self-worth of another individual and which continues, even after supportive interventions have taken place.

- Indirect – Sly or underhand actions carried out behind the target's back or rumour-spreading.

- Extortion - Demanding money and/or goods with threats.

- Online – Using any form of technological means, mobile phones, social networks, gaming, chat rooms, forums, or apps to bully via text, messaging, images, or video. The use of online technology is increasing, and therefore the opportunity for online bullying with it. This policy addresses the general approach and procedure to any form of bullying but must be applied in line with our e-safety policy.

- Sexual - Unwanted touching, threats, suggestions, comments and jokes or innuendo. This can also include sextortion, so called 'revenge porn' and any misuse of intimate, explicit images of the pupil / learner targeted.

- Prejudice-related - Bullying of a pupil / learner, or a group of pupils / learners because of prejudice. This could be linked to stereotypes or presumptions about identity. Prejudice-related bullying includes the protected characteristics.

2.2   Recognising signs of bullying

2.2.1   We recognise that pupils / learners who experience complex communication difficulties, social emotional difficulties, and those with Autism may exhibit behaviours that challenge. As a result of this, it may be difficult to distinguish whether bullying is taking place, however, our Team Members will always take the signs below seriously and always follow our local safeguarding procedures.

2.2.2   Examples of signs and symptoms of bullying include but are not limited to:

- Withdrawal.

- Low Self-Esteem.

- Lacking in Confidence and / or increased anxiety.

- Feeling isolated/left out.

- Acting out/emotional outbursts, including name calling and physical actions toward adults.

- Physical marks (for example, cuts and bruises).

- Change from normal behaviour.

- Absence/attendance issues.

- Changes to behaviour.

- Changes to health for an unexplained reason (for example, getting headaches or tummy ache).

- Change in friendship groups.

- Changes to diet / eating habits.

- Loses, steals, or asks for money.

- Self-harm.

- Threats or attempts at suicide.

- Being nervous or frightened areas or environments.

- Avoiding particular areas or activities.

- Being nervous or upset when using electronic devices (including avoiding the use of these items or checking them obsessively).

- Gives unusual explanations for events, appearance, or behaviour, or appears frightened to talk about it.

3.   Safeguarding and Bullying

3.1   Roles and Responsibilities

3.1.1   Our Schools / Colleges will:

- Provide a safe and secure environment where pupils / learners and Team Members can feel confident to talk about challenging topics.

- Promote open and trusting relationships with clear boundaries, so that pupils / learners are able to report their concerns, including incidents of bullying.

- Actively promote and celebrate diversity and equality.

- Provide information to safeguard pupils / learners and protect them from instances of bullying, including the sharing of a clear and robust procedure to follow in the instance of bullying.

- Implement a clear and honest curriculum which educates pupils / learners about what bullying is, and the impact it can have on individuals.

- Follow the agreed procedure whenever there is a report of bullying, with reference to the Safeguarding and Therapeutic Approach (Behaviour) Policies, as appropriate to individual circumstances.

- Follow up instances of bullying with a clear support plan, individualised for and agreed with those involved.

- Adopt a reflective whole school / college approach if instances of bullying occur, in order to continually improve standards and ensure the ongoing safeguarding of all pupils / learners.

3.1.2   We recognise that some incidents of bullying might be a safeguarding matter or may require the involvement of the police. The Children Act 1989, states that bullying becomes a child protection concern when there is:

> *'Reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.*

3.1.3   Where this is the case, we will report concerns to the local safeguarding board, via the school / college safeguarding procedure and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This process applies to both a target (victim) and a perpetrator, and Team Members are mindful that bullying may happen outside of the school or college setting, and the behaviour of a perpetrator may be linked to unknown adverse experiences in their own lives. Bullying may also involve a Team Member as a perpetrator or target (Victim).

3.1.4   If in doubt always seek advice from Designate Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

3.2   Whole School/ College Preventative measures

3.2.1   Our curriculum aims to develop pupils / learners' skills and knowledge of the personal, social and health issues relevant to them in a meaningful way, for example, raising awareness of bullying. Our integrated therapy team support pupils / learners' access to materials, and as a channel for communication. Alongside this we have a number of whole school / college measures to develop a safe and supportive environment for our pupils / learners.

3.2.2   Whole school / college preventative measures may include:

- Building strong relationships with pupils / learners and Team Members.

- Adopting a rights-based approach, and actively promoting pupil / learner voice.

- Working with multi-agencies to achieve the best outcomes for pupils/ learners.

- Community links and opportunities to develop social skills.

- Modelling behaviour.

- Developing strategies to encourage and support family engagement (for example through a newsletter or end of term events).

- Easy-read material should be on display and include links to external agencies.

- Non-judgmental attitude towards each other.

- Use of a buddy bench as a safe space.

- Rules and boundaries created alongside pupils/ learners.

- Open channels of communication for Team Members and pupils / learners.

- An Inclusive ethos.

- Raising awareness through participation in local and national initiatives, such as National Anti-Bullying Week.

- Risk assessed management of the environment, including peer compatibility, and Team Member ratios.

- Maintaining effective records to track patterns of behaviour and incidents.

- Motional assessments help identify appropriate emotional and social targets for pupil / learner development.

- Attachment and trauma informed practice, with the application of restorative strategies.

- Provide and promote opportunities to learn about and celebrate diversity and difference.

- Robust recruitment and employee training processes.

3.3 Training and Support for Team Members

3.3.1 All Team Members will become familiar with our Therapeutic Approaches (Behaviour Policy), Safeguarding, E-Safety and Anti-Bullying policies and procedures as part of their general induction to the school / college. Regular updates and reinforcement regarding these policies and procedures will be given at other training sessions as necessary. Face-to-face and e-learning sessions are provided for Team Members in order for them to keep their knowledge and skills in these areas up to date.

3.3.2 Instances of bullying or suspected bullying will be discussed at daily Team Members meetings. Team Members will be informed, consulted, and given guidance in respect of particular problems and/or general policy.

3.3.3 Any member of Team Members who feels they need help and support in dealing with a bullying problem should approach the Head Teacher/ Principal, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Therapies team. Each service will also have identified Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) who can assist.

3.3.4 Strategies that prove effective in helping both the perpetrator and targeted person (Victim) should be shared with colleagues as a regular part of meetings /briefings and by other more informal means as appropriate.

3.4 Disclosure

3.4.1 The development of secure and trusting relationships is a priority in all our settings, as this will support pupils / learners' confidence to share their concerns with Team Members. However, we recognise that disclosing an incident of bullying may be a frightening experience for our pupils / learners, and it is important that pupils / learners have options for disclosure. This includes:

- Approaching a trusted member of Team Members to give an account of what has happened. This can be via a range of communication methods depending on pupil / learner preference, for example a verbal report, a written account or via the use of an Alternative Augmentative Communication aid (AAC).

- Confiding in a friend, carer, or other trusted person. The trusted person may then contact the DSL / DDSL, in order to discuss the disclosure (this could be face-to-face, by phone, email or other method of communication).

- A report may also be given by a witness to an incident (s). Again, each pupil's / learner's preferred communication style / method should be accommodated, to enable the pupil / learner to share information in a way that is comfortable for them.

- Information may be shared indirectly through the course of a class / lesson discussion or other activity.

3.5 Procedure

3.5.1   The 'Keeping each other safe in a nurturing and kind environment procedure' has been developed in collaboration with the pupil voice. Pupils felt that they wanted to challenge unkind behaviour towards others and recognise that there would be an escalation process to support their own and others behaviour to account. The process focusses on the therapeutic actions of restoration between peers whilst recognising how theirs or others behaviour may affect each other. (See Appendix 3)

3.5.2   Team Members must always take a potential target seriously and seek to offer support. Pupil / Learner safety must be the first priority.

3.5.3   All incidents of suspected bullying must be reported immediately to a Team Member of both the potential target(s) (Victim(s)) and alleged perpetrator(s). They will then work in accordance with the strategies below to resolve the problem. If more than one Team Member is involved, they should work together to provide a co-ordinated approach. They will also ensure that the concerns are logged and shared with the Head Teacher/ Principal and DSL

3.5.4   Opportunities should be created whereby the pupil / learner can be encouraged to express their concerns safely and in confidence. Sufficient time should be set aside for the supporter to listen and take note.

3.6   Initial Strategies to use with pupils / learners involved.

3.6.1   All pupils / learners involved should be spoken to, individually if necessary, and what they say must be recorded on the summary section of the incident recording form (Appendix One).

3.6.2   The pupil / learner who feels bullied should be counselled about what they can do and what they would like to happen to resolve the situation.

3.6.3   The perpetrator(s) should also be counselled about what they can do and would like to happen to resolve the situation.

3.6.4   Where appropriate, both parties should be brought together to discuss the way forward and stop any further incidents of bullying. This must be done sensitively and carefully, as it will be very frightening for some pupils/ learners.

3.6.5   It may also be appropriate to counsel any bystanders involved in the situation.

3.6.6   Colleagues should be informed at morning meeting (or immediately if the matter is serious) and advised if the situation arose out of a circumstance that everyone needs to be vigilant e.g., breaks, lunchtimes etc.

3.6.7   Parents or Carers (if appropriate) should be informed as soon as possible.

3.6.8   The Head Teacher/Principal and DSL/DDSL should be informed. This can be done verbally but should always be followed up by a written report via Databridge.

3.6.9   A member of the Senior Leadership Team will review if there is a pattern in behaviours.

3.6.10   Team Members will continue to monitor the situation after all of the steps above have been followed.

3.7   Escalation

3.7.1   In the event of ongoing or repeated problems, the following procedure should be implemented:

- Action should be taken to ensure that the child /young adult involved suffers from no adverse consequences, and to verify and stop any bullying.

- The situation should be monitored closely by the Class Teacher and Teaching Assistants, who will co-ordinate assistance of other Team Members as appropriate.

- All incidents and discussions with Team Members, pupils / learners and parents/carers should be recorded, in writing (Databridge).

3.7.2   Details of the action taken will be individualised according to the specific circumstance, and the details of this will be authorised by the Head Teacher or Principal. Actions will also be in line with the Therapeutic Approach (Behaviour) Policy.

3.7.3   Examples of potential actions are:

- Multi-disciplinary agreement of specific intervention. This may include the pupil(s) / Learner(s), education team, therapy team, parents / carers, and other relevant agencies,

- Further revision of risk assessments, including the management of the environment, and level of contact between the pupils / learners involved,

- Revised curriculum to focus on the development of positive relationships, and Health and Wellbeing.

- Targeted intervention from the therapy team.

3.7.4   If appropriate, target(s) (Victim(s)) and / or those who are demonstrating the bullying behaviours, should be counselled by their Class Teacher, Teaching Assistants and / or clinical Team Members to help them develop skills such as confidence and resilience.

3.7.5   In extreme circumstances, an exclusion or suspension from school or college may be considered, though this would be a rare and last resort (please refer to the exclusion policy for further information).

3.7.6   Responses to serious incidents or those where child/adult protection concerns are present (including allegations of bullying against a Team Members), must also be in line with the school / college safeguarding procedure, whilst responses to online bullying must also be in line with the e-safety procedure.

3.8   Guidance for Parents or Carers

3.8.1   Parents/Carers who have concerns will be listened to carefully and their concerns will be effectively and sensitively investigated in line with this Anti-bullying policy and procedures.

3.8.2   If a Parent/Carer feels they have not been heard or feel the situation has been delt with unfairly, can raise a complaint via the complaints procedure Policy No. 10

3.9   Monitoring and Review

3.9.1   Incidents of bullying at our schools and colleges will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team, who will adapt a curious approach and be vigilant to patterns of data gathered, for example:

- Recurring complaints of bullying against a particular pupil or group of pupils / learners.

- Evidence that a particular pupil / learner is, for some reason, becoming a target (victim) for bullies.

- Particular times of the school / college day / week when bullying is tending to occur.

- Specific situations where bullying may be occurring.

- Scrutiny and high level discussion regarding incident data and information gathered as part of the monthly incident review group (IRG) meetings.

3.9.2   If a pattern appears to be forming, the Team Members team will work to address the problem, both with the individuals concerned and the school / college, through assemblies, lessons, and other measures as appropriate. There will be time allocated for reflective practice within weekly meetings, to discuss how incidents were managed and what as a school or college, we can learn and improve.

3.9.3   This policy will have a periodic review of twelve months, but it will also be reviewed as and when needs are identified. Where possible, the strategy will be revised following capturing pupil voice.

4.   Legislative Framework and Guidance

4.1.1   This policy has been written in line with the Independent Schools Standards (2014), and with reference to the following legislation:

- Human Rights Act 1998

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

- Education Act 2002

- Education and Inspections Act 2006

- The Equality Act 2010

- Malicious Communications Act 1988

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

- Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, 2023

4.1.2   The following guidance and documents have also been used in formulating this policy:
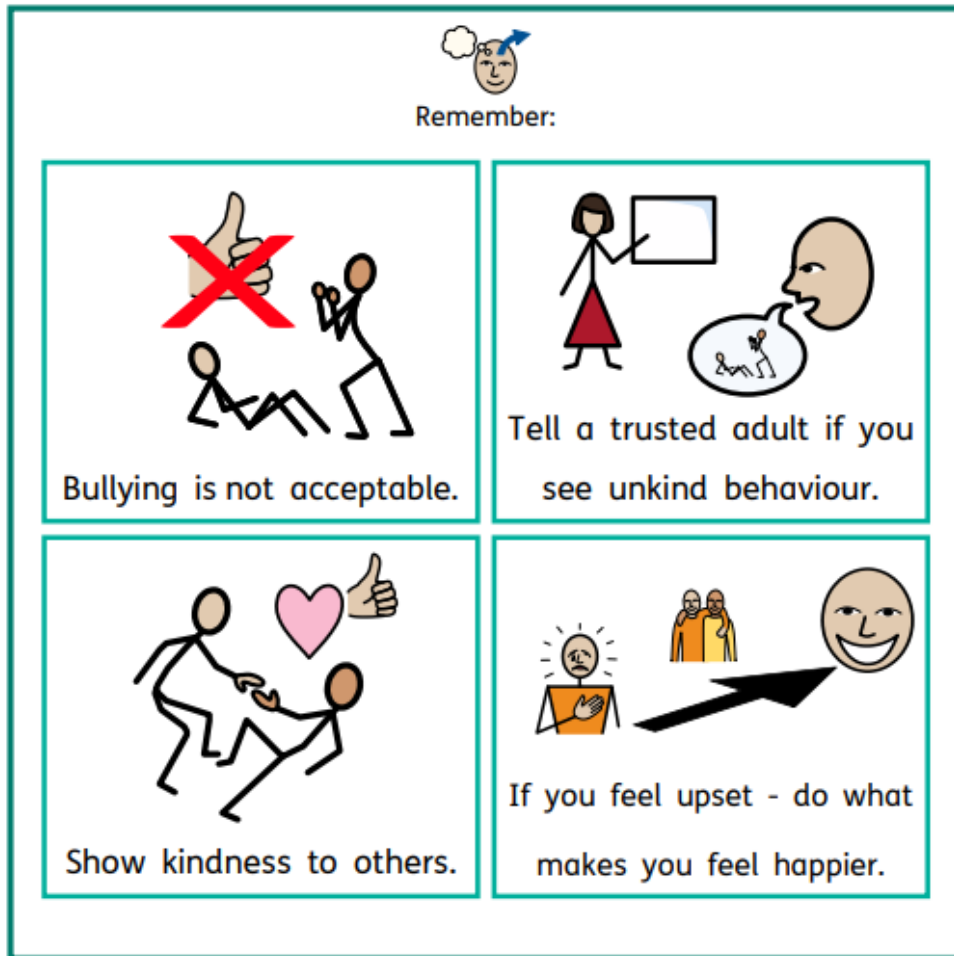
- Anti-bullying alliance: anti-bullying policy

- Challenging Bullying Rights, respect, equality: Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools 2019

- Respecting Others: Anti Bullying Guidance circular 23/03

- Preventing and Tackling Bullying

- UNCRC Rights of the Child

4.1.3   This policy should also be read and implemented in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy

- Internet Use and E safety policy

- Therapeutic Approach policy

- Attendance policy

- Exclusion and Suspension policy

- Equality and Diversity policy

- Anti-Radicalisation policy

- Recruitment and Selection policy

- Confidentiality

- Colleague Code of Conduct

- Whistleblowing and Making Protected Disclosures

- Looked after and Previously Looked after Children policy.

- SEND / ALN policy.

- Child Sexual Exploitation policy

- Educational Visits and Off-site Activities policy

5.   Appendix 1 – Easy read display information

Remember:

Bullying is not acceptable.

Tell a trusted adult if you see unkind behaviour.

Show kindness to others.

If you feel upset - do what makes you feel happier.

You can get help and advice from:

BulliesOut
www.bulliesout.com
e-mail: mail@bulliesout.com

ANTI-BULLYING ALLIANCE
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

KIDSCAPE Help With Bullying
www.kidscape.org.uk

NSPCC
NSPCC | The UK children's charity | NSPCC

childline ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME
www.childline.org.uk Tel: 0800 1111

6.   Appendix 2 – Where to find further help and advice.

6.1.1   **Bullies Out** – Anti-bullying charity based in Wales that works with individuals, schools, colleges, youth, and community settings. E-mentors offer online support.

(e-mail mentorsonline@bulliesout.com).

www.bulliesout.com

e-mail: mail@bulliesout.com

6.1.2   **Anti-Bullying Alliance** – Information for schools / colleges, parents/carers, and children and young people on all aspects of bullying.

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

6.1.3   **Kidscape** – Anti-bullying charity that runs workshops for children and young people who have been bullied.

www.kidscape.org.uk

6.1.4   **The Diana Award** – Trains young anti-bullying ambassadors to help others.

www.antibullyingpro.com

6.2   Helplines and support services

6.2.1   **Childline** – Provide counselling for anyone aged under 19 in the UK.

www.childline.org.uk

Tel: 0800 1111

6.2.2   **Samaritans** – Charity dedicated to reducing feelings of isolation and disconnection that can lead to suicide. E-mail, live chat, and other services available.

www.samaritans.org

Tel: 116 123 (English-language line – free to call)

Tel: 0808 164 0123 (Welsh-language line – free to call)

7. Appendix 3

Restorative Phases	Incident Type	Restorative Intervention
R1	Pupil is unkind to another pupil (1 occurrence)	Restorative conversation is held at the time of the incident around kindness and acceptance how the individuals feel and what might be going on for that pupil at that particular time – recorded on Databridge. Reported to parents/carers during daily email.
R2	Pupil is unkind to another pupil (multiple occurrences) but still maintaining a low level of friendship	Recorded friendship pastoral intervention held between the two pupils to understand what each pupils' feelings are and what may be going on for each pupil. Reported to parents/carers during an email from pastoral team.
R3	Pupil is unable to maintain any form of relationship with each other, bullying is ongoing and restorative action is having little or no impact	Meeting is held with parents/carers to discuss the actions that the pupil needs to take, and the bullying behaviours experienced at the School by the pupil along with restorative actions previously taken following consultation with the therapy team.
R4	Continued and sustained levels of bullying towards another pupil over the period of 2 weeks but no more than 4 weeks (level dependent)	Pupil is still not able to display the safe behaviours towards others and will be educated offsite for a short period of time to allow a 'circuit breaker' reflection period. A meeting will be held with the therapies team to discuss any further potential strategies needed.

Re-integration meeting held with parents/carers and pupils. |
| R5 | Bullying re-starts and the pupil is still not able to maintain the behaviours expected at the School. | A review meeting is held with parents/carers and case worker to discuss concerns raised and consistent levels of bullying, a joint action plan is recorded which may involve external agencies and a prolonged period of offsite learning to allow support to be implemented for the victim. |