

Avenue Pre-Preparatory School and Nursery

Counter-Bullying Policy (Including cyber bullying)

Date of Policy: September 2021

Date of review: September 2022

Authorised by: Mary Fysh, Principal and Martin Ayres, Chair of Advisory Board

COUNTER BULLYING POLICY

RATIONALE

At Avenue Nursery and Pre-Preparatory School (the School), our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop to his/her full potential. We expect our staff and pupils to treat each other with courtesy and cooperation so that children can learn in a relaxed but orderly atmosphere.

The School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. In this connection the school works closely with parents and carers to establish and maintain consistent expectations of behavior. This is underpinned by the school's commitment to equal opportunities and improving outcomes for all children. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions. This policy is available on our website and to parents of pupils to peruse in the school office during the school day. It is also available and known to staff and recently appointed staff.

This Policy has been drawn up having regard to the publication "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" DfE October 2014 and **applies to the EYFS and KS1.** <https://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/resources/departement-education-guidance-preventing-and-tackling-bullying---highlights-restorative>

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination in any form will not be tolerated. We aim to treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to respect each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying, including the use of electronic media, use of banter or other forms of intimidation, is regarded as being unacceptable. This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school is aware of the risks of peer-on-peer abuse and has developed additional guidance for staff on managing such challenges. (Please see additional guidance and Child Protection Policy 2021). Careful consideration will always be given to any suggestion of sexual exploitation or violence, leading to action in accordance with the school's child protection/safeguarding policy (2021). The

school is fully cognisant of the issues, pressures and social context of harm to children and will take every reasonable step to prevent any form of bullying, harrasment or inappropaite behaviours.

THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

We always treat bullying, including allegations of bullying, very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles. Bullying can be so serious that it causes psychological damage, eating disorders, self-harm and in extreme circumstances self-harm. Serious cases of bullying are likely to fall within the orbit of child protection leading to referral to Children's Services of the local authority where harm is thought to be significant. In these circumstances the school is duty bound to report serious concerns about bullying behaviours. The school's child protection procedures include peer on peer abuse and action will be taken in accordance with the policy where such concerns exist. In this connection, a bullying incident may be treated as a child protection concern where there is a reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm as the direct result of bullying.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

"Bullying may be defined as: *Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally*". Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies.

Bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including sexual), verbal (including email, chat room and SMS messages), and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle, such as cyber bullying. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, sexual, sexist or homophobic, which focus on religion, cultural background, disabilities or other physical attributes (such as skin/hair colour or body shape). Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve everyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents. It can also occur if a child is adopted. The school actively promotes fundamental British values of tolerance, democracy and rule of law.

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 bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others.
- ❖ Books, bags 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 symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches etc.
- ❖ Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- ❖ Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class.
- ❖ Choosing the company of adults.
- ❖ Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact.
- ❖ Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares etc.
- ❖ Talking of self-harm/suicide or running away.

It is noted that girls and boys may respond differently to forms of bullying or harassment and that in some situations will be reluctant to share information with adults. All staff must remain alert to what children say to each other and be prepared to report any concerns to the DSL(s) in line with school policy. Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We take the following preventative measures in place in order to ensure that bullying does not become a problem:

- ❖ All new members of staff are given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to allegations of bullying in their first week at the School. They are required to read the school's policy as part of their induction alongside the school's child protection policy..
- ❖ We use appropriate assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our PSHE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other
- ❖ Other lessons, particularly RS, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable, and by developing social skills.
- ❖ All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place in line with our policy on whistleblowing.
- ❖ All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are kept securely in the office of the Principal in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored.
- ❖ We have a strong and experienced team of teachers who support the Head and Principal and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
- ❖ Disciplinary sanctions which reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect, such as exclusion, will be considered in exceptional cases of severe and persistent bullying
- ❖ Support and guidance is given to staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies. Inset sessions are held regularly using outside experts.
- ❖ Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly during playtime and in areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour. Modifications to the School buildings have contributed towards making the School less attractive to possible bullying.
- ❖ We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.
- ❖ We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.
- ❖ A Counter-bullying booklet is purchased by the School annually and given to all parents during Counter-Bullying Week.

EYFS CHILDREN

The youngest children are also encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They learn to look after their own possessions and to respect others' possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, to work hard and to listen to others. They learn respect and to value differences and diversity. Staff set a high standard of behaviour for the children to model.

We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions, only when there is hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see the Principal who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action but such instances are rare.

Parents are always informed when any sanction or reproof is needed and, in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, they will be invited into the school to discuss the situation with their child's Teacher and the Head of the Nursery and to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.

The EYFS Coordinator is in day-to-day charge of the management of behaviour in the Nursery Department.

The Behaviour Management Policy for our EYFS and KS1 children is on the School website for parents and their children to read together.

CYBER BULLYING

In recognition of the age range of the children at the School, the unsupervised use of the internet by the children is forbidden.

MOBILE PHONES AND CAMERAS (Please see separate Photography Policy)

Any active mobile phone brought into School by a child will be handed in and returned to the parent/carer at the end of the day.

The school operates a strict policy on the use of mobile phones by staff and this is set out in the staff code of conduct. In particular, work experience students or volunteers must leave their mobiles in the staff room and must not use them whilst with the children.

School cameras are readily available for use throughout the School by the staff and therefore mobiles must not be used to photograph the children, for example, on School trips. All parents are asked to sign a consent form relating to the taking of photographs of their child for use around the School (using school authorised cameras and SIM cards only) and on the website and extra care is taken to ensure that photos are not used inappropriately where either full consent or partial consent has not been given by the parent.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

'Prevention is far better than waiting for a situation to arise where a cure is required' (with apologies to Persius, AD 58)

The School has a comprehensive Behaviour Management Policy which covers in detail the procedures to be followed when there has been an incident, or reported incident, of bullying within the School. The Policy covers the procedure for dealing with bullying, sanctions to be given in cases of unacceptable behaviour in the School and, most importantly of all, the reward systems in operation which encourage best behaviour amongst our children.

THE SANCTIONS TO BE APPLIED IN THE EVENT OF A CASE OF BULLYING WILL DEPEND UPON THE SPECIFIC SITUATION IN WHICH IT HAS OCCURRED, AS FOLLOWS:

- ❖ **Fighting** Which includes pushing, hitting, biting, scratching etc...
Verbal warning- one only. Sitting on the step for a number of minutes commensurate with the child's age.
4yrs = 4mins. Use sand timers
- ❖ **Loss of House point**
In the event of a serious incident, where real harm has been done, all involved parties should be questioned as to how and why it happened. Any witness should be listened to and the children involved taken in and a brief account written down by the teacher present. In addition, that teacher should complete the appropriate accident form. The school's First Aid policy should be applied as necessary. At an appropriate time, an apology from any perpetrator is considered essential and this should be acknowledged by any victim. In certain circumstances, where the parents are aware of continued behavioural issues with a particular child, the parents will be informed and the child sent home.
- ❖ **Refusing to share**
Child with item wanted by another must be spoken to and the need to share clearly explained. Use sand timer or clock to time the "turn".
- ❖ **Excluding others from games**
In playground games the group must be spoken to about the importance of including others and how the game can be adapted and roles changed to include another. Explain the importance of sharing roles- how teachers sometimes read stories or help with art and at home time, involved in several different roles. Use friendship stop. Circle times and assembly are good opportunities to reinforce this message.
- ❖ **Name calling**
Verbal warning, and an explanation as to why this is hurtful and unacceptable at any time. Remind the child that he/she should treat others as he/she would like to be treated.
- ❖ **Tale telling**
Although the children are encouraged to let an adult know if something is wrong during playtime, habitual tale telling by a particular child (sometimes copied by another) needs attention. A verbal explanation as to why this form of behaviour is unacceptable should include the fact that the tales are frequently untrue and that to make and enjoy friendships you must be loyal and truthful. Tales are often exaggerated and this needs to be explained.
- ❖ **Ganging up**
This is particularly unpleasant and something which needs careful monitoring especially if it happens at regular intervals and by the same child leading a group of children.
The gang leader needs to be identified and spoken to severely. He/she must be made aware that ganging up is unacceptable in school (or anywhere for that matter) and as a leader he/she has a responsibility to lead and help others with kindness and consideration. Circle times and assembly can reinforce this message. Loss of house point if child persists after cautioning.

Where 'gangs' might form a focus will be made on the 'gang' leader in order to determine the form of action that may be needed to prevent an escalation of problems and/or to provide help and support. The aim will be to help children to be aware that ganging up is unacceptable in school (or anywhere for that matter) and as a leader he/she has a responsibility to lead and help others with kindness and consideration. Circle times and assembly can reinforce this message. Loss of house point if child persists after cautioning.

Staff on duty should be aware of any vulnerable child who may need support at playtime. Use the friendship stop. Appoint a group of children to be "special friends" each playtime.

INVOLVING THE CHILD AND HIS/HER PARENTS

Circle Times and PHSE lessons encourage the children to be aware of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school and, in particular, the part that they are able to play in preventing bullying, even if they are not involved in the situation themselves.

The School reacts promptly if a parent informs any teacher of possible incidents of bullying at School that their child has spoken about to them at home.

In any case of continued bullying, the child's parents will be called to the School for a discussion as to how best deal with the unacceptable behaviour of their child. In extreme cases the child may be excluded from the School for a temporary period of time or, if need be, permanently.

The Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policies are made available to Parents via the School's website and all new parents are encouraged to read these and discuss them with their child before he/she joins the School.

RELATED POLICIES AND PUBLICATIONS

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following School Policies:

- Child Protection
- Behaviour Management
- Equal Opportunities
- SENDA
- Staff Code of Conduct
- E-Safety and IT acceptable use
- Whistleblowing
- Peer-on-Peer abuse guidance for staff

In addition, the Policy has been drawn up with reference to the following:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE September 2021)
- DfE Non-Statutory Guidance:
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying - October 2014
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools – January 2016

School staff are required to read all policies. Copies are available in the School Office as well as on the School website.