

The Federation of Heathfield and St Francis Schools



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STATUTORY POLICY

The Federation of Heathfield & St Francis Schools Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy By: Debbie Urry

Date: November 2019

Signed: *Chris Mowat*
Chair of Governors

To be reviewed every 2 years.

This policy is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The articles relevant to this policy are;

Article 3 – The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children

Article 10 – Governments must respond quickly and sympathetically if a child or their parents apply to live together in the same country. If a child's parents live part in different countries, the child has the right to visit both of them.

Article 28 – Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free, Secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 40 – A child accused or guilty of breaking the law must be treated with dignity and respect. They have the right to help from a lawyer and a fair trial that takes account of their age and situation. The child's privacy must be respected at all times.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

We believe that all children have the right to be heard and communicate about their experiences and feelings. We value all children and respect how they feel.

We aim to prevent bullying. It is, therefore, important we create a trusting culture in which it is easy for children to confide in adults.

We believe that the child displaying the bullying behaviour may need as much help as the victim and we endeavour to help both parties, with the help and support of parents/carers. A child who is bullying needs to understand the effects their behaviour has on others and be supported to learn different ways of behaving.

We believe everyone is important. We want our schools to be a place where everyone feels welcome, has a voice, is safe, is able to achieve and have fun. We are committed to providing a caring, relaxed and safe environment, in which all our children are able to learn, develop and progress to their full potential. Any behaviour which is bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, children need to know that it will be dealt with properly and efficiently.

We promote the use of positive and effective intervention strategies with children. All staff and children are expected to treat each other with respect and to follow the school values, to be good role models to each other both in the school community, the wider community and online.

It is important to ensure that all adults working with children are clear about their role, in order that their own rights, and those of the children in their care, are protected. We are proud to be a Right Respecting school.

We have written this policy in line with the advice and guidance for schools in reference to The Equality Act 2010, we aim to protect individuals from unfair treatment and promote a fair and more equal society. It shows our commitment to prevent and respond effectively to the bullying of protected and vulnerable groups of children including disabled/children with SEN, those who are perceived as LGBT, race and religion targeted, sexist and sexual bullying. Please also see our Safeguarding Policy.

What is bullying?

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.

There are four key elements to this definition, that bullying is:

- hurtful;
- repeated;
- intentional; and

- power imbalance.

We teach children that:

- bullying happens over and over again;
- it is hurting someone on purpose;
- it is not an accident; and
- bullying is unfair.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc;
- verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling;
- emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion;
- sexual - unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, exposure to inappropriate films etc;
- online/cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion;
- indirect – can include the exploitation of individuals;
- racial, religious/cultural – racial, religious or cultural taunts, graffiti or gestures;
- special educational needs and disability – negative or abusive comments to anyone who appears to be 'different' mentally or physically; and
- homophobic – because of, or focusing on the issue of homosexuality, homophobic abuse/language.

Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which he or she may belong.

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying is behaviour which results in pain, distress, anxiety or fear to the victim, it can affect a person's mental well-being.

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should explore further if a child:

- feels unwell in the mornings;
- says they cry him/herself to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- is unwilling to go to school;
- reluctant to make the journey to school – is frightened of walking to and from school, doesn't want to go on the school bus, begs to be driven to school;
- changes in his/her usual routine;
- displays unhappiness;
- is anxious;
- has unexplained behavioural changes e.g. moody, bad tempered, aggressive or withdrawn, anxious, lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- changes learning patters, lacks concentration;
- comes home with clothes torn or possessions damaged;
- has possessions or money going 'missing';

- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- is nervous and jumpy when an online or telephone message is received; and
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours are not an exhaustive list and everyone should be looking for changes specific to the child.

Preventative strategies

As a school we distinguish between inappropriate behaviour to others that may arise through the impact of special educational needs and associated social or behaviour difficulties and those that occur through bullying. We ensure strategies and behaviour plans are put in place to manage behaviours in line with the relevant behaviour policy. These plans are reviewed and updated regularly. We also:

- ensure all staff are given access to the anti-bullying policy;
- given children opportunities to express their viewpoints using a wide range of strategies. This includes in lessons, in 1:1 sessions, and conversations with trusted adults;
- have regular School Council meetings;
- address anti-bullying and relationship strategies as part of the curriculum in PHSE and Thrive (where available) resources;
- adopt anti-bullying strategies, including well-structured days including structured and well-staffed playtimes and lunch times; and
- make it clear what the consequences of bullying are and what sanctions may be as part of our behaviour policy.

Recording of bullying incidents

Staff will log incident in the classroom behaviour book and serious incident file is necessary. The incident will be reported to the leadership team.

Actions following incidents

Actions will be as follows:

- the children's parent/carer will be informed and involved;
- the class teams will monitor and support the situation;
- each pupil to give their point of view individually in a non-judgmental format;
- in all cases we will try to empower the victim to seek help and feel confident and safe in resolving the issues;
- we will acknowledge the target has been bullied;
- each child involved agrees to improve the situation;
- ELSA or Thrive will be offered where available and necessary; and
- children may receive sanction in line with our Behaviour Policy.

Responsibility

Everyone within school is expected to:

- act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another; and
- adhere to and to promote the objectives of this policy.

Individual staff:

- to be aware of pupils who seem unhappy;
- to listen to and to believe children who say they have been bullied;
- to record concerns on the school's systems – behaviour logs and CPOMS;
- to act as positive role models in terms of communication, showing respect, listening and problem solving;
- to teach children skills of negotiation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, assertion and listening;
- to give support to children who use bullying; and
- teach and praise alternative ways of behaviour in line with the School Values.

Children:

- to talk to a trusted adult about any incident which makes them unhappy or which they perceive to make another child unhappy;
- to treat everyone with care and respect; and
- support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and happy and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.

Parent/Carer can help by:

- supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures;
- encouraging their child to be positive members of the school community;
- discussing with their child's teacher any concerns about their child, this includes behaviours that could indicate they are being bullied;
- helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school;
- to inform school if they suspect bullying is taking place;
- to cooperate with the school fully in investigating allegations of bullying;
- to support any strategies the school uses to help effect more appropriate and safe behaviour; and
- to support any sanctions the school decides as a result of investigations.

Bullying outside of school

Schools are not directly responsible for bullying that occurs off the premises but we know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school. The bullying may be perpetrated by children from our own school, by children from other schools or by people who are not at school at all.

Where a child or parent/carer informs us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- talk to children about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school;

- talk to the Headteacher of any other school whose children are bullying; and
- talk to the police where this deemed necessary.

The DfE says that, “failure to take disciplinary steps to combat harmful behaviour outside the school might breach the school’s common duty of care”. Legal services advise that schools can take disciplinary action against children for incidents that occur outside of school.

Concerns and Complaints

We recognise that there may be times when a parent/carer feels that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we would ask that this be brought to the Executive Headteacher’s notice. If the Executive Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents/carers can raise their concerns more formally through the school’s Complaints Procedure.

Evaluating our Policy

We will evaluate our anti-bullying policy using the following measures:

- the number of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period;
- children’s perceptions of bullying in school through structured discussions in class time and surveys;
- the number of days of absence which are through to arise as a consequence of bullying;
- we will investigate patterns of absence to ensure that children are not taking unnecessary days off school due to fear of being bullied;
- the number of complaints and compliments that we receive from parents/carers; and
- from the comments made by visitors and other people connected with the school.

Useful websites for further reading and advice

The Anti-Bullying Alliance is a coalition of organisations and individuals that are united against bullying.

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

The Diana Awards mission is to foster, develop and inspire positive change in the lives of young people. They believe that young people have the power to change the world.

<https://diana-award.org.uk>

The Equality Act 2010 – Advice for Schools – The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it’s unlawful to treat someone.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf