

Preventing and Tackling Bullying

Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies

All schools have a legal duty to prevent bullying. In July 2017 the DfE guidance was updated. The document outlines schools' legal obligations, the principles which underpin the most effective anti-bullying strategies in schools and the powers schools have to tackle bullying. It includes information about how schools can take action to proactively prevent and respond to bullying, as well as how schools can support children and young people who experience bullying. It has a helpful list of resources which schools can access.

A whole school policy to prevent and tackle bullying

A whole school policy should be a carefully considered document which has been coproduced by everyone in that school's community. To be truly effective it is part of the school ethos and is known, understood and modelled by its community. It is part of a school's approach to behaviour and discipline but is often an individual policy. The policy needs to be highly visual and displayed around school for instance in school documents which are shared with children and parents and published on the school's website. To be truly effective it needs to be taught and practised throughout the school day and given a place in the curriculum. A good policy ensures pupils and staff are clear on expectations and on how the school tackle bullying as a community.

Creating your school's policy

Your policy to prevent and tackle bullying is best reviewed annually as part of your school's calendar – it may take place during Anti-Bullying Week or at the start of the school year. It is highly recommended that its review includes everyone - pupils, staff and parents. A template is provided below as purely a guide/checklist. Individual schools through their consultation process will be best placed to develop their own policy.

The consultation process can involve the Schools Council, the Parent Teacher Association – it is an opportunity for people to be honest about what works well and about changes in school policy they'd like to see.

Policy template/ checklist

As a school community agree on what you mean by bullying – you can select a definition e.g.

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Department for Education

Make sure you are explicit about your school's expectations e.g.

Bullying, in any form, will not be tolerated at our school. As a "listening and telling" school we are committed to the creation of a positive and safe learning environment for all.

Bullying is present to a greater or lesser extent in all institutions. All members of the school community deserve the right to feel valued, equal and respected and be able to come to school without fear. Bullying has a serious effect on a pupil's self-esteem, emotional and mental health.

Detail how bullying presents itself e.g.

- **Physical:** hitting, stealing or hiding belongings, sexual assault.
- **Verbal or written:** name calling, insulting, racist remarks, offensive sexual remarks, taunting, mocking, threatening language, producing offensive graffiti.
- **Indirect/emotional:** spreading nasty stories, excluding from groups, forced joining of groups, graffiti, defacing property, displaying literature or materials of a racist, sexist or pornographic nature.
- **Cyber-bullying:** using web pages, offensive or abusive text or email messages, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet.

Detail that bullying takes many forms and it can be related to:

- Race
- Religion
- Culture
- Nationality
- Sexual orientation (or alleged orientation)
- Sexual harassment
- SEND
- Appearance
- Health
- Home circumstances e.g. bereaved, child who is looked after

Detail your purpose for the policy e.g.

- To promote the school's aim and values.
- To develop a positive and safe learning environment in which bullying will not be tolerated.
- To promote inclusion, mutual agreement, self-esteem and self-worth in order to meet the physical, emotional and mental health needs of all members of the school community.
- To raise the standards of behaviour and levels of achievement of all

Detail your school's guidelines for implementing the policy:

- There needs to be recognition that anyone can be affected and that bullying can take many forms (e.g. peer – peer, teacher – pupil, pupil – teacher, teacher – teacher, teacher – parent, parent - teacher).
- It is recognised that the Headteacher and Governing Body have a statutory responsibility for school behaviour and discipline, but that all members of the school community accept collective responsibility for the successful implementation of this policy.
- Pupils are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying, whenever they feel unsafe or feel others maybe unsafe.
- All staff will respond to student, staff or parental concerns seriously and support the agreed procedures.

Please consider DfE guidance alongside this document.

For further support please contact the Targeted Education Support Service (TESS)

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Give details of your preventative strategies and interventions e.g.

Our proactive strategies include:

- We are a listening and telling school. This is a message that will be promoted at all times and with all audiences.
- There is an agreed collective responsibility to address any incidents of bullying observed.
- The School Council will include bullying as an agenda item at each meeting.
- Peer support system for pupils will be promoted and training provided for both staff and pupils.
- Parents will be encouraged to actively support the policy at parents' evenings by signing the home-school agreement and promoting the School's Behaviour Policy.
- The issue of bullying will be raised in order to maintain awareness of the issue through school assemblies and prominent pictorial displays, posters, visual and audio recordings
- Every opportunity to promote whole school initiatives such as celebrating diversity and difference, involvement in anti-bullying week, theatre productions and external speakers will be taken.
- The Governing body and senior leaders will monitor bullying via staff meetings, auditing proformas from pupils and parents and an annual questionnaire on bullying and school practice for pupils and parents to complete.
- Bullying will be addressed within the PSHE and Citizenship Curriculum.
- All staff will receive training on the identification, prevention and management of bullying. At the start of a new school year procedures for dealing with a bullying incident will be discussed at a staff meeting. The policy will be discussed and then distributed to all new staff.
- Our children also have access to:

R Time
Peer Massage
Social and Emotional Aspects to Learning (SEAL)
Play leaders/Buddies/Guardian Angels
Friendship Stops/benches
Worry Box
Circle Time
Nurture
Emotionally Friendly Schools
Restorative Solutions
Circle of Friends

Detail how your school responds to Bullying e.g.

Our school follows a restorative approach and has received training from Targeted Services

The Six Principles of Restorative Practice



Benefits

Develop emotional literacy

Skills for life- communication, empathy, problem solving

People resolve their own issues not done for them- ownership

Reduce repeat behaviour (bullying)

Improved relationships

Conflict is managed- not disruptive, ignored or escalated

Bullying outside school

The Headteacher has the power to respond to bullying behaviour involving pupils whilst out of school; be it on a school trip, school activity or in the community. Conduct that threatens the health and safety of pupils, staff or members of the community will not be tolerated. The Head teacher will consider the evidence available and if the claim is proven will impose sanctions in line with the school's general behaviour policy. In serious cases where an offence may have been committed the Headteacher will contact the local police.

State when and how you will reviewing the policy e.g.

The policy will be monitored and evaluated annually, involving stakeholders. This policy is the outcome of consultation between all members of the school community (pupils, teaching and support staff, governors and parents) through questionnaires and meetings. It will be reviewed every year.

References:

Restorative Approaches in schools – Targeted Services

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk - updating / writing your Anti-Bullying Policy

www.kidscape.org.uk – Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure checklist

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