

Anti-Bullying & Cyber Bullying

Oracle School - Bedford
Policy & Procedure



Policy	Anti-Bullying & Cyber Bullying
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Signed	

This policy has been written with regard to the non-statutory DfE advice: Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017) and Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014)

Purpose

It is a basic right of all children and young people that they receive their Education free from humiliation, harassment, oppression and abuse. Bullying may not only be face to face, but behind the scenes and using mobile and computer devices.

Oracle school has a responsibility to create and maintain a secure and safe environment at school for pupils who are in our care, so that parents may send their children to school in the confident knowledge that they will be protected from being bullied and that action is taken to reduce the potential for bullying. We understand the seriousness of bullying, both physical and emotional which may cause psychological damage.

In the same way, all adults in Oracle School have the right to work free from harassment, intimidation or abuse.

Scope

All staff should be aware that:

- all bullying, both actual and alleged incidents, are important and must not be ignored.
- cyber bullying may occur both at school and off the school premises (please see e-safety policy, safeguarding policy and behaviour policy).
- all bullying incidents must be recorded and the head teacher informed immediately the incident has been recorded and of any action taken.
- pupils will be encouraged and helped to inform us of bullying incidents-involving others as well as themselves
- all staff and students have a responsibility to prevent/act on bullying
- our action is firstly to stop the bullying rather than to punish
- the “no blame approach” is the correct perspective - both the alleged perpetrator of bullying and the alleged victim must be treated as being in need of help and support.

Principles

All discovered bullying will be acted upon. Therefore, every person who is part of Oracle School has a responsibility to take action in accordance with this policy and the school's safeguarding policy.

The school will aim to prevent bullying by delivering an anti-bullying programme, through the curriculum. Educational elements such as PHSEE, Citizenship, assemblies, projects, drama, stories, literature, and the discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language will also be utilised. Pupils will also be taught how to deal with bullying, the part they can play to prevent bullying and what to do if they find themselves as bystanders.

The organisation, administration and practices within the school will reflect the commitment to the prevention of bullying.

When dealing with students involved in bullying incidents the school's aims are to:

- a) Support and counsel the victim
- b) Correct the behaviour of those responsible and provide the necessary help and support. This includes in school help in addition to help from external agencies such as Children's Services.

The school acknowledges the importance of clear, constructive communication between the various parties concerned with minimising and dealing with bullying in the school.

Incidents are monitored regularly as part of the weekly behaviour / safeguarding meetings to ensure senior leaders have a clear picture of incidents through the school. The logs on Engage are scrutinised to ensure that any response is effective and sufficient. The bullying log will on Engage also include a section to categorise the incident, especially if this is due to protected characteristics.

Implications for Pupils

Pupils need to understand what bullying is; its causes, effects, and methods of prevention.

Pupils must accept that they have a duty to themselves and others in preventing bullying, and taking action should it occur.

The action may be direct, that is intervening in a bullying situation (the difficulties in this are acknowledged).

Or indirect, reporting bullying or potential bullying to another adult, at home or in School.

Bullying is never right. If a pupil is being bullied, they should feel able to tell someone and get help.

Pupils also have a vital role in the prevention of bullying by drawing the attention of the adults in the school to anything, which, from their point of view, may give the opportunity for bullying to occur.

Pupils who tolerate bullies are supporting them. Pressure from other pupils can stop bullying.

Implications for Teachers and all other Adults employed at School

- (1) All discovered bullying including through the internet or other mobile communication must be acted upon as soon as possible and seen to be acted on. NOT TO ACT IS TO CONDONE.
- (2) A system of Sanctions and Rewards and the use of the points system are the best vehicles for dealing with bullying. Staff must ensure that they are familiar with and use these systems effectively.
- (3) Incidents must always be carefully recorded using Schoolpod.
 - (a) The bully and victim must be seen by a senior member of staff and their comments carefully recorded. As necessary the DSL must also be involved.
 - (b) All staff working with the young people involved in the incident(s) should be informed, including social workers where there is current local authority involvement.
- (4) Danger periods are breaks, lunchtimes and the start and finish of lessons. Knowing that, a conscientious exercise of professional duties should minimise the opportunities available to bullies.
- (5) There are implications for pupil management by staff, who must be aware that their own conduct is often reflected in the way children behave. For example, if bullying strategies are used by staff this reinforces the idea that bullying is a legitimate way of exercising power and control.

- (6) Teaching about bullying through the curriculum is an essential strategy in prevention. Staff should consider issues relating to bullying where appropriate, maintaining a consistent anti-bullying stance.
- (7) Staff will be made aware of bullying through a training module delivered at induction. Also through on-going training that includes the content of this policy, legal responsibilities, what actions to take to resolve and prevent problems, and what sources of support are available; where appropriate, schools we will invest in specialised skills to understand the needs of our pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils;

Implications for Care workers

Care workers have a key role to play in the prevention and identification of bullying.

- (1) Care workers can help identify early signs of possible bullying manifesting itself in abnormal behaviour patterns such as: -
 - An unwillingness to attend school
 - Pattern of vague headaches or stomach aches
 - Moodiness
 - Requests for extra money
 - Equipment gone missing
 - Self-harm
- (2) If care workers think a child is being bullied or is bullying, then they should contact a member of the senior management team immediately. There is always someone available.
- (3) If the problem occurs only outside school, the school will of course offer help and support, but it may be necessary to contact children's services and/or local police. Where concerns are raised about bullying and radicalisation, the DSL/Director of Education must be informed, who will then report to the police.
- (4) A child should not be encouraged to hit back although he/she may need to defend themselves if physically attacked.

Implications for School Managers

In many ways all staff are “managers” and have a role to play in creating a climate and attitude within the school which does not sustain bullying.

This is mainly concerned with valuing others and treating everyone, their property and the school, with respect. The school actively promotes the values of tolerance, understanding and support to children of different cultures, faiths and backgrounds.

Examples to students of good practice are essential and would include for example:

- Ensuring that notices around the school are polite and positive
- That staff treat each other and pupils with consideration, etc.
- Other positive ideas would be welcome.

Middle/Senior Management

Particular responsibilities would include:

- (1) Ensuring coherent curriculum content on bullying.
- (2) Ensuring policies, practices and consequences are clear to care workers through the prospectus and booklets.
- (3) Evaluating policies, structures and practices.
- (4) Supporting all staff in dealing with bullying should it occur.
- (5) Facilitating staff training and development.

Procedure:

Prevention

- Raise awareness amongst students of school’s position against bullying.
- Foster an atmosphere in which students feel comfortable about seeking help and in which they know how to seek help.
- Make students aware of strategies for coping with bullying.
- Minimise the occurrence of situations in the day which make bullying likely to occur
- Provide positive reinforcement of good behaviour both formally and informally.

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Dealing with bullying

- Aims:
- to support and counsel the victim and alleged perpetrator
 - to correct the behaviour of those responsible

- Via
- prompt but considered response to incidents
 - collation of relevant information

Rewards and Sanctions (Please see behaviour and sanctions policy) Rewards

We will try to never miss an opportunity to offer praise and reinforce positive behaviour as highlighted in the school points system.

Praise

Highlight positive behaviour and set achievable goals.

Encouragement

Acknowledge children and positive actions in Assemblies e.g. news rewards. Rewards individually and publicly.

Use of points System, Good News etc., will enable individuals to earn rewards.

Sanctions (these will be applied only with a view to improving the behaviour of those responsible and to showing the school's commitment to its policy against bullying.)

Immediate:-

- Possible exclusion
- Meeting with the head teacher
- Apology to victim/meeting
- Loss of privileges/ points not earned
- Recorded

If bullying occurs:-

- Recorded on Engage and becomes a behaviour daybook or an incident on the system - victim and action statements will be printed off monthly for inclusion in a paper file.
- Individual behaviour contract/ restorative work.
- Further loss of privileges

If no improvement:-

- Following Behaviour Policy a series of exclusions.
- Exclusion (fixed term)
- Finally exclusion (permanent)
- An evaluation of needs and risks and referral to Children's Services

Definitions

There are a number of definitions of bullying, however in the latest School Standards a working definition of bullying is;

“that it intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer - it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email)”

Bullying can take many forms but three main types are:

- physical- hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- verbal-name calling, insulting, racist remarks, homophobic remarks, sexist remarks or any other comment which isolates a person in relation to their appearance, persona, beliefs or background.
- indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups

Prejudice-based bullying

Prejudice based bullying is bullying based on a protected characteristic:

- a. Age
- b. Disability
- c. Gender reassignment
- d. Marriage and civil partnership
- e. Pregnancy and maternity
- f. Race
- g. Religion or belief
- h. Sex
- i. Sexual orientation.

The school recognises that cyber bullying is an increasingly common and serious phenomenon. The purpose of this policy is to make clear the school's response to a report of cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying (Please see the school's E-safety and acceptance policy)

Cyber bullying is different to other forms of bullying because it can happen at any time of day outside of the school grounds in places previously regarded as safe e.g. home. The audience for electronically circulated messages can be large and circulation is hard to control. The bully and the bullied may never be in the same physical space so cyber bullying can appear anonymous.

Cyber bullying can take place between people of different ages and generations including teachers and being a bystander makes someone an accessory to bullying although it is recognised that in some instances this will be unintentional.

Cyber Bullying includes the malicious use of:

- Mobile phones
- Instant messaging
- Chat rooms and message boards
- Video hosting sites such as You Tube
- Social networking sites such as Facebook
- Webcams
- Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs)
- Gaming sites, consoles and virtual worlds

Cyber Bullying potentially falls foul of a number of laws, including those concerning harassment, threatening behaviour, and defamation. In addition the Head has powers under the 2006 Education and Inspections Act to reasonably regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off-site and to confiscate (for a limited period) items such as mobile phones.

What the School will do

The School is proactive in preventing Cyber Bullying through the inclusion of the topic in PSHE lessons for each year group, its Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement (PAUA) for ICT, its monitoring of ICT use in school and its internet safety awareness programme. Pupils are encouraged to report anything which concerns them. The School is aware that the technologies available to pupils are constantly changing and, as a result, the School's provision to prevent Cyber Bullying is reviewed annually.

All incidences of Cyber Bullying will be evaluated by the School and the issues carefully recorded with evidence being retained. Advice will always be sought from children's services and the advice followed.

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On receiving a report of Cyber Bullying either in or outside of School, the School will:

- Reassure the person making the disclosure that the issue will be investigated with discretion.
- Advise the person making the complaint on how to prevent further instances and also how to keep the relevant evidence.
- Evaluate the allegation, collecting as much information as possible.
- Take action to prevent the further circulation of the material e.g. if the person responsible is a pupil in School then the School through the member of SLT responsible for overseeing staff Cyber Bullying issues will supervise the immediate removal of content.

When the person who is bullying has been identified, the School will (depending of the severity of the incident) follow a number of steps:

In the first incident:

The bully will be seen by their form tutor and the head of school and/or house manager to ensure that they understand the seriousness of their actions and the effect on the victim. Further action will then be taken to both punish the bully and ensure that their behaviour changes. Such punishment could include a verbal warning, limited internet access, prohibiting the use of mobile phones in school, detention or suspension.

In more serious cases, the school may:

- Contact the parents of the bully and the victim.
- Contact the host site or phone company to make a report.
- Confiscate mobile phones or other devices used to Cyber Bully and ask for information on who else may be in possession of the material.

In most cases the School will deal with matters internally, but in serious cases where there are concerns about the welfare of pupils (either the victim or perpetrator), the School will refer the matter to children's social care and/or the police where an offence is thought to have been committed, for example when:

- There is evidence of a serious criminal offence being or about to be committed including radicalisation.
- The victim has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious harm, including self harm.
- There is evidence or suspicion of adult involvement.
- There is evidence that a group of pupils, including pupils from another School, may be involved.
- Any of the children involved are the subjects of a Child Protection Plan.