



Anti-Bullying Policy

2017/2018

BIRCHES HEAD ACADEMY ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

As a school we are committed in providing a warm, friendly and disciplined atmosphere in which every child is valued, challenged and fully developed. We aim to provide an ethos of good behavior where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect, creating an inclusive environment. Pupils can openly discuss bullying without fear of discrimination and where pupils are not afraid to challenge and stand up for what they know is right. We promote a safe and calm community that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus. We promote equality and ensure safeguarding for all and provide the opportunities that will allow each student to achieve success in as many aspects of their school life as possible.

Aims and Objectives

- To make it possible for students to experience the school as a caring, supportive, learning environment, free from bullying behaviour.
- To create an atmosphere of tolerance, mutual respect, co-operation and consideration for others, enabling students to feel safe from fear and threat.
- To accept that it is everyone's responsibility to prevent all forms of bullying.
- To accept that all forms of bullying are breaches of the school behaviour policy.
- To counter the belief that informing staff and parents of incidents of bullying is not 'telling tales' but is helping to keep the school a happy and safe place in which to develop.
- To involve all staff in promoting and following the policy and in referring bullying incidents.
- To communicate with parents, students and staff effectively on the subject of bullying
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the policy through questionnaires and student interviews.

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

What is bullying?

Bullying is a willful, conscious intention to hurt, threaten, frighten and humiliate and where the behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated over time, this could be over consecutive days/weeks. Usually there is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.

Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or because a child has been adopted or has caring responsibilities. It may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

What does bullying look like?

Social Emotional	Attempting to, or excluding from any friendship group, intimidation
Physical	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Racist	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual	Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender)	Focusing on the issue of sexuality
Verbal	Humiliation, teasing
Cyber	All areas of internet ,such as email & internet chat room misuse Mobile threats by text messaging & calls Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Possible Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

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 investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- school work deteriorates
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber-message is received

These signs and behaviour could indicate other problems, but bullying could be considered a possibility and should be investigated

Roles and Responsibilities

All students must know that they will be listened to and believed, and that our response will be swift, effective and sensitive to their concern.

Students

If you are being bullied in school:

- Do not listen to the bully when they say that you will be in trouble if you talk to someone.
You are not doing anything wrong — they are.

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Fighting back may make things worse; talk to your personal tutor, a teacher or parent/guardian first.
- Talk to an adult that you trust and take a friend with you if it helps.
- Talk to a member of the Anti-Bullying Team.
- What you say will be passed to your Pastoral Leader. You will be taken seriously.

If you see someone being bullied in school:

- The best thing you can do to help is to talk to someone.
- *Take action!* Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult or a member of the Anti -Bullying Team immediately. Teachers have ways of dealing with people who bully without getting you into trouble.

Staff

- All staff should be alert to any incidences of bullying in classrooms and around school.
- Anyone who suspects bullying may be happening must inform the relevant Personal Tutor and/ or Pastoral Leader of those suspicions.
- All staff should take any incidents of bullying reported to them seriously and be sensitive to the feelings of the student(s) reporting issues of bullying. Make it clear that they have made the right decision to tell.
- All staff should deal promptly with any issues of bullying in the classroom and offer the support of a safe room/area or Student Reception if it is necessary.
- All staff will encourage students to complete the online bullying report button or complete an incident form which will be given to the Pastoral Leader who will determine if this is a bullying issue
- Pastoral Leaders will discuss the incident with the student and agree the best course of action
- Pastoral Leaders will investigate any reports of bullying with the aim of stopping any bullying immediately.
- Pastoral Leaders will use mediation, refer to appropriate interventions or whole school sanctions as appropriate to challenge and resolve incidents of bullying.
- Pastoral Leaders will offer support to change the behaviour of the bully which could involve outside agencies.
- Pastoral Leaders will ensure all bullying incidents are recorded with the appropriate code on SIMs.
- Pastoral Leaders will monitor each case to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Pastoral Leaders will refer a student to the Senior Pastoral Leader should a student require peer support
- Senior Pastoral Leader will nominate an appropriate member of the Anti-Bullying Team to an identified student for support.

Parents

Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc. If you suspect your child is being bullied or is bullying in school:

- Inform the school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow;

- Advise your child not to fight back;
- Tell your child that there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not their fault that they are being bullied;
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the school policy concerning bullying and that they need not be afraid to ask for help.

Outcomes

- The Pastoral Leader will determine the appropriate course of action
- Where possible, both victim and bully will be asked to reconcile the situation via mediation/conflict resolution.
- The Pastoral Leader will record all incidents of bullying and inform parents, with a view to resolution.
- Students may be referred to counselling services provided by outside agencies.
- Support to change the behaviour of the bully through school intervention programmes and through PD curriculum
- Sanctions may be applied. Exclusion will be considered.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored

Proactive Measures to Prevent Bullying

At Birches Head Academy we accept that prevention is better than the cure and therefore strive to create a whole school ethos to reduce/eliminate bullying.

- Proactively seeking to celebrate success to create a positive school culture
- Personal Development lessons provide opportunities to explore bullying as a topic.
- Teaching methods employed encourage co-operative work inside and outside the classroom.
- Extra-curricular activities provide opportunities for encouraging better co-operation and understanding between children also, lunchtime clubs for vulnerable students.
- Where appropriate Personal Tutors provide time for class groups to discuss issues related to relationships and consider strategies for dealing with difficulties.
- Assemblies are recognized as an important forum to raise awareness and restate expectations of behaviour and to promote 'Anti-Bullying Week' annually during March and November.
- E-Safety across the school and via Assemblies to include safe practice involving the use of: on-line chat rooms /social networking sites and mobile phones.
- Positive behaviour is encouraged and expected at all times. It is also recognized and fostered by our reward system.
- Residential and day trips are seen as an excellent way of developing positive relationships and mutual understanding.
- Anti-Bullying Team to offer peer support
- Working with a Restorative Justice approach, including Mediation and Counselling schemes.
- Regular audits and questionnaires are undertaken ensure students feel safe

Restorative Approaches

Restorative Approaches inspired by the philosophy and practices of restorative justice, puts repairing harm done to relationships and people over and above the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment.

Transforming Conflict

The key values of RA create an ethos of respect inclusion, accountability and taking responsibility, commitment to relationships, impartiality, being non-judgmental, collaboration, empowerment and emotional articulacy .

Policy Review Framework

The policy should be reviewed annually (or sooner in the event of revised legislation or guidance).

Signed :Governor/Chair of Student Services Committee

Date :