Anti – bullying Policy

Procedure Owner:	Polaris Education
Approved by:	Managing Director - Kicha Mitchell
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Vision Statement

The Anti bullying policy represents a very important part of the ethos of our School. It should be read together with the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Equality and Diversity Policy and the curricular plans for RSE, PSHE and Citizenship.

Behaviour and Anti bullying underpin the feelings of safety and security of the pupils and therefore have a huge impact on the learning and teaching within school. The importance placed on behaviour and anti-bullying means that they have a continued place on the weekly Senior leaders meeting agenda. Continued vigilance will ensure a happy and welcoming school.

Statement of intent

Our aim is

- To work together as a school community to build a happy, secure framework within which all can learn and live in harmony.
- To be an organisation that demonstrates in its practice its commitment to equality of opportunity for all

Rationale

Schools are required under the Education Act, to be responsible for maintaining acceptable standards of discipline and behaviour and for regulating the conduct of their pupils. Embodied in our school aims is the intention to create a school environment where bullying has no place and where children are safe and happy.

Key Principles

- To accept that all schools can have incidents of bullying and that as an effective caring school we need a consistent set of strategies to deal with them.
- We have a duty to tackle bullying in school as it affects children's welfare, happiness, self-esteem, confidence and ultimately educational achievement.
- Action against bullying has to be seen as part of the school's approach to promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural welfare of the children and developing the school's partnership with the wider community.

Definition of bullying behaviour

The staff and pupils in our other Polaris schools together created our definition of bullying. It is an important part of tackling bullying that all in our school community have a shared understanding of what we mean by the term bullying and what can be some of the reasons for bullying.

Bullying is the repeated deliberate action by one person or a group of people against an individual or a group of people which hurts (physically or emotionally) or seeks to humiliate them. The act can be verbal, physical or in behaviours which make the victim feel intimated.

Types of Bullying

There are various types of bullying, but most have three things in common:

1. It is deliberately hurtful behaviour
2. It is repeated over time
3. There is an imbalance of power, which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying may take various forms, including:

- Physical
    e.g. kicking, hitting, pushing, intimidating behaviour or interference with personal property
- Verbal/psychological
    e.g. threats, taunts, shunning/ostracism, name calling/verbal abuse or spreading of rumours, verbal, written, online or text abuse or ridicule
- Racial
    e.g. physical, verbal, written, online or text abuse or ridicule based on differences of race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, culture or language
- Faith based bullying
    e.g. negative stereotyping, name calling or ridiculing based on religion
- Sexist bullying
    e.g. Use of sexist language or negative stereotyping based on gender
- Sexual Bullying
    e.g. unwanted/ inappropriate physical contact or sexual innuendo
- Homophobic bullying
    e.g. negative stereotyping, innuendo, name calling or ridiculing based on sexual orientation or the use of homophobic language
- SEN/Disability bullying
    e.g. excluding from activity, negative stereotyping, innuendo, name calling or ridiculing based on disability or learning difficulties
- Gifted /Talented bullying
    e.g. negative stereotyping, innuendo, ostracism, negative peer pressure name calling or ridiculing based on high levels of ability or effort.
- Cyber bullying
    e.g. abuse on line or via technology such as mobile phone, text, messaging services, social network sites, interfering with electronic files, setting up or

promoting inappropriate websites and or inappropriate sharing of images from webcams/mobile phones etc

It is important to appreciate that all of our pupils have Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities. Many struggle with social, emotional and/or mental health difficulties. Many also struggle with understanding and managing social interaction. This may mean they can act in a way which can distress others without that being their intent - we have to consider the intent and understanding before we label actions as bullying. In cases where we feel the pupil lacks the understanding to 'bully' we will ensure that they and the pupil on the receiving end of the actions are fully supported to prevent ongoing distress and to help develop the understanding needed.

Given that bullying can take so many forms it is important not to have a stereotypical image of a bully.

Similarly, it is important to be aware of some of the reasons often associated with bullying behaviour. Bullying can be related to special educational needs, disabilities, different racial, ethnic or social groupings, appearance or health conditions, home circumstances or LGBTQIA+ identity. There can be sexist or sexual bullying.

Some children may even appear to provoke bullying by their own behaviour towards others. Nonetheless all of our community are entitled to be protected against bullying.

It is recognised that in very rare occasions a member of staff may be the victim of bullying whether by pupils, other staff or parents/carers. These incidents should they occur will be dealt with as per this policies direction.

All members of the school community, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and children need to know that bullying is totally unacceptable and that any instances will be dealt with.

Reporting and recording bullying

All staff should be proactive in creating an ethos where positive behaviours are rewarded and praised.

Children should be reminded that they need to discuss any difficulties in the classroom to one of the members of staff in the room.

Children should be reminded that they must report any difficulties they are having during break times to one of the members of staff on duty, as near as possible to the time it happens.

Most incidents of disputes can be resolved by discussions with the children concerned. It is important to allow all the children involved an opportunity to put their point of view and for the member of staff to adopt a 'problem solving' approach rather than an interrogational or accusatory approach.

Members of staff in classrooms or on duty during breaks or at lunchtime should report incidents, where they have had to intervene, by way of the Information sheets in Pastoral

office. In this way the pattern of incidents can be monitored and the needs of individual children be highlighted.

All reports of bullying are then logged and monitored by the Pastoral Lead

Serious incidents involving damage to people or property should always be brought to the attention of a senior member of staff.

The parents/ carers of victims and those seen to be displaying bullying behaviour will be involved in the event of a serious incident and/ or repeated incidents.

Parents and carers should always feel confident that they can bring concerns about their young people to the attention of the school staff. We will endeavour to find out about the issues raised and get back to parents/carers as quickly as possible.

Responding to bullying

Any sanctions that are taken against individual or a group of children should consider the needs of the victim, the needs of those displaying bullying behaviours, the ages of the children concerned and the severity of the incident.

Reference should be made to the school's Behaviour policy and advice in the Staff Handbook which relate to acceptable and unacceptable sanctions.

Time needs to be invested to ensure all are listened to and that support is available after any incident. Informal chats can be arranged to continue to monitor.

All involved should know there will be on going vigilance, support and involvement, e.g head teacher/ Pastoral team.

Strategies for preventing bullying

See also Behaviour policy

The best protection against bullying comes when all parts of the school day and the school environments operate in an orderly and disciplined way.

By developing, encouraging and rewarding co-operative behaviour we are working to create an environment where bullying will not thrive.

Curriculum

Reference should be made to the school's curriculum and policies for Sex Relationship Education, Citizenship and PSHE, all of which support the teaching of positive and proactive strategies for developing knowledge of the wider community, assertiveness and an awareness of the needs of others.

Teaching covers all aspects of protected characteristics and pupils are helped to understand and respect different life choices, sexuality, race, religion and gender.

The pupils working together with staff to ensure bullying is never acceptable and will always be reported and stopped is the key to an environment where bullying is prevented from occurring.

The PHSE Curriculum plan promotes positive relationships with others in many of the units covered throughout the year. Including support material for Anti- bullying Week.

Reference should also be made to the school's scheme of work for *Asdan and PSHE and* Religious Education which teaches about a range of cultures and religions and seeks to develop acceptance, respect for and tolerance of different beliefs and cultures.

Assembly and Tutor time

Within the tutor sessions and assemblies pupils will be reminded of positive behaviour and will have time to reflect on the anti-bullying message.

Anti-bullying week

Whilst our approach is consistent throughout the year we highlight this approach through a cross curricular theme during Anti-bullying week.

Child Protection

Staff should make reference to updated guidelines on child protection and the requirement for them to act on any issues which concern them about a child's welfare and safety.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Our practice on partnership with parents/ carers offers opportunities for parents/carers to discuss issues of their child's welfare as well as their educational achievement at any point in the school year. However, the EHCP meetings and regular parental consultations are times when the child's overall welfare and social development should be discussed and any difficulties noted and acted upon. Our school has always had an open door policy for parents and carers and neither should feel they need to wait for the consultation date to raise concerns about their child.

Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs

Although we are aware that we always consider individual pupils we should also be aware there is research to suggest that there are gender differences in the way boys and girls either bully or are bullied. Both girls and boys display bullying behaviours. Children of all social classes and levels of academic ability may bully. Boys may bully as individuals or in a

group. Girls are most likely to bully in a group, often bullying in ways that are difficult to detect, particularly in excluding individuals or groups. As victims, boys are more likely to be physically threatened and girls more likely to be subjected to unpleasant campaigns of rumour or name calling. A child with special educational need that is obvious to others may be a target for bullying. The school's practice of not highlighting differences between children is the best support for these children. Particular vigilance is called for where a child's SEND makes them physically or emotionally vulnerable.

SEND

We have pupils who find social interaction very challenging. Their SEND leads to confusion around the social norms and acceptable choice of words and actions. Pupils with certain SEND may be very open and direct in their thoughts and words. This can cause offence. These pupils may need a great deal of support to help them to understand the impact of their words and actions.

It is important to work with individuals with an understanding around their SEND – supporting those who feel offended or affected by comments or actions as well as those who may not fully appreciate what they have said has had this impact

Roles and Responsibilities

The DSL (Head of Education) is responsible for reviewing this policy

All staff are made aware that they all have responsibility to root out any bullying and to act swiftly in ensuring it does not re occur.

Pupils should work together to ensure a culture where bullying is never hidden or seen as accepted in school.

Staff and pupils work together to ensure that there is an understanding that comments which are delivered in the form of humour may also cause offence or distress.

Consultation and Participation

In reviewing this policy staff, pupils and parents all contributed.

Pupils and parents completed questionnaires.

The school council helped to design and correlate the information from the questionnaires

The staff, pupils and a group of parents created the definition of bullying used in this policy.

This policy is available on request to parents and carers.