

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Fairley House School

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Named person responsible for review:	Deputy Head
Approved by:	Head
POLICY CHANGES	
Date of amendments	Page number and update
10/5/24	Pages 5 and 6- MyConcern added to method of log bullying / potential bullying, actions taken and follow up.

This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” September 2023 and “Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges” guidance, September 2021. The setting has also read Childnet’s “Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools.

Aims

Bullying is unacceptable at Fairley House School and will not be tolerated. The primary aim of the policy is to prevent bullying. The secondary aim is to address any bullying that occurs effectively so that it is as short lasting as possible, and effects are minimised.

The school also recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school. The school will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying.

Fairley House aims to promote Emotional Literacy, defined as people being able to 'recognise, understand, handle and appropriately express their emotions' (Sharp, 2001). We therefore take a strong stance against bullying of any type since it indicates a lack of appreciation for the feelings of others. Bullying will not be tolerated and will be addressed. Bullying can cause deep distress, to the extent of victims refusing to attend school or even, in extreme cases, attempting, or committing, suicide.

We are aware that many of our children have been bullied in previous schools due to their learning difficulties and this can make them more prone to bullying or to becoming the victim of bullying. Some of our children have poor gross motor skills and motor planning and this may make them more vulnerable in the playground, or aggressive, when they knock into people. Some of our children have speech and language needs which may result in social interaction difficulties, again making them more vulnerable in social situations.

We do not take a 'no blame' approach to bullying, since sometimes a strong message of disapproval must be conveyed to the bully and the disciplinary system invoked. This could include fixed term exclusion or permanent exclusion in the case of persistent bullying with no mitigating factors. The Behaviour Policy sets out detail on sanctions. However, we do take a solution-focused approach with the aim of stopping any bullying.

Links with Other School Policies and Practices

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans including:

- o Behaviour and discipline policy
- o Complaints policy
- o Child Protection policy
- o Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)
- o Curriculum policies, such as, RSE/RSHE, PSHE, citizenship and computing
- o Online Safety (including mobile and smart technology and social media) policy

Links to Legislation

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- o The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- o The Equality Act 2010
- o The Children Act 1989
- o Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- o The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- o Public Order Act 1986.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be defined as *'behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally'*. DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying

Bullying can include physical and emotional abuse such as name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, taking belongings, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, peer isolation (e.g. excluding people from groups) and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

The same unacceptable behaviours can be expressed online; this is sometimes called online bullying or cyberbullying. Specifically this can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

Fairley House School recognise that bullying can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.

Bullying is recognised by Fairley House School as being a form of peer on peer abuse; children can abuse other children.

- Abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
- We recognise that even if there are no reports of bullying, it does not mean it is not happening and it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
- All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

Signs and Symptoms

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

- unwilling to go to school;
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- stammering;
- attempts or threatens self-harm;
- cries themselves to sleep at night/bedwetting;
- regularly feels ill in the morning;

- begins to do poorly in schoolwork;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions go missing;
- has unexplained cuts and bruises;
- stops eating;
- frightened to say what is wrong
- frightened of walking to and from school
- changes his or her routine

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and report promptly any suspicions of bullying to The Head or Deputy Head Teacher.

Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities

Research shows that children and young people with SEN and disabilities are more at risk of bullying than their peers. Public bodies have new responsibilities to actively promote equality of opportunity for all disabled people and eliminate disability-related harassment.

Children and young people with SEN and disabilities, whether in mainstream or special schools, do not always have the levels of social confidence and competence, and the robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying. This is particularly relevant at Fairley House. Where children with SEN and disabilities are themselves found to be bullying, in most cases (except those related to specific conditions) we should expect the same standards of behaviour as apply to the rest of the school community, having made the reasonable adjustments necessary.

Bullying related to appearance or health conditions

Those with health or visible medical conditions, such as eczema, may be more likely than their peers to become targets for bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight, and other body image issues, can result in bullying, and obvious signs of affluence (or lack of it) can also be exploited ruthlessly with severe consequences.

Bullying related to sexual orientation

Evidence of homophobic bullying suggests that children and young people who are gay or lesbian (or perceived to be) face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. The pupil may not want to report bullying if it means 'coming out' to teachers and parents before they are ready.

Bullying of young carers or looked-after children, or otherwise linked to home circumstances.

Children may be made vulnerable to bullying by the fact that they provide care to someone in their family with an illness, disability, mental health, or substance misuse problem. Young carers may be taking on practical and emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Research has highlighted the difficulties young carers face, including risks of ill-health, stress, and tiredness, especially when they care through the night. Many feel bullied or isolated. Children in care may also be vulnerable to bullying for a variety of reasons, such as not living with their birth parents or because they have fallen behind in their studies. Some pupils are heavily influenced by their communities or homes where bullying and abuse may be common. Some bullying at school may arise from trauma or instability at home related to issues of domestic violence or

bereavement, or from the experience of being part of a refugee family. Siblings of vulnerable children may themselves be the subject of bullying by association.

Sexist or sexual bullying

Sexist and sexual bullying affects all genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name-calling, comments and overt 'looks' about appearance, attractiveness, and emerging puberty. In addition, uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery or graffiti may be used. Pupils identifying as transgender or experiencing gender dysphoria (feeling that they belong to another gender or who do not conform with the gender role prescribed to them) can also be targeted by bullies.

Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.

Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied, and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.

Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.

Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:

- looking at use of the school systems
- identifying and interviewing possible witnesses
- contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.

Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:

- Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content
 - Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy. (We will access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the school's powers are used proportionately and lawfully).
- Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.

Where an individual can be identified, the school will ensure that appropriate sanctions are implemented to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help or support they may need.

Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.

Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:

- advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply.
- providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists.
- helping those involved to consider and manage any private information they may have in the public domain

Preventative Strategies

We aim for a school ethos which promotes kindness and respect towards others. This ethos is promoted in school assemblies, through House Competitions, through modelling by staff and by the way in which conflict between children is addressed.

Bullying is specifically addressed in assemblies and in PSHEE. Children are urged to report bullying, confident that it will be addressed. Bystanders are encouraged to challenge bullying. They should point out to the bully the unacceptability of what is being done, then report bullying to an adult if this is unsuccessful. Role plays can be especially helpful in promoting bystander challenge.

We are a small school and children are closely supervised, so that bullying is less likely to occur compared with some schools with less easily managed sites. The playground is small and the whole of it is visible. Duties are heavily staffed. For younger children (Junior Department) there is a no contact rule for the park. Bullying can be a manifestation of social problems, which may be more prevalent amongst children with specific learning difficulties. Social skills/Interpersonal skills training are offered for children who have difficulties in this area. This may include work on friendships. These sessions may take place within the whole class setting and may involve a therapist and the class teacher. Assertiveness training, negotiation and dealing with conflict are all areas that are covered, according to need.

Developing skills in these areas help children to resist bullying. However, some children who bully are, in fact socially skilled, but lack empathy. We aim to help children to develop empathy by encouraging children to treat others as they would like to be treated themselves.

Confidence and self-esteem building are a central tenet of the school's purpose. This is done through recognition of achievements and good behaviour, including descriptive praise and rewards. We consider that children with strong self-belief are less likely to bully others or to allow others to bully them. Children's Emotional Literacy is developed by teaching them a wide vocabulary of words for emotions, through The Zones of Regulations. We believe that this makes them better able to express their feelings, helping them to resist attempts at bullying. We also consider that being able to understand and express emotions reduces conflict between children and makes them less inclined to misinterpret others' actions, which can be a factor in bullying.

New parents are informed of the school's strong anti-bullying stance and urged to report bullying. We post the anti-bullying policy on the website. Children are also encouraged to report bullying to staff, especially technological bullying that might not be noticed by a member of staff.

Where appropriate, staff members will act as mentors for pupils. Children can discuss issues with a mentor of their choice and the issues may include bullying.

Procedures

All incidences of bullying reported are logged on MyConcern and investigated. We adopt a solution focused response to reports of bullying. Investigation may reveal that the child who reported bullying has behaved in a way that provokes aggression from other children (the provocative victim). Alternatively, there may have been a misunderstanding or bullying may have occurred. Reference to the definition allows us to make a judgement on whether bullying has occurred. However, all reports are kept on file, regardless of whether actual bullying occurred. A note is made of whether the incident fits the definition of bullying. Bullying may be reported by a parent, a child, or observed by a teacher. The children concerned are interviewed separately to allow the

interviewer to build as clear a picture as possible. Children are then brought together to state their view of the problem briefly to each other before being helped by the facilitating adult to generate a solution that they will personally carry out. Parents are informed if their child is found to be a victim of bullying or is found to be bullying. Contact with parents is deliberately non-judgemental and aims to engage their cooperation. Experience has shown that involving parents indicates to children how seriously we take the matter and changes behaviour.

All actions taken are logged and the situation monitored.

Actions may include:

- Informing all staff.
- Discussion of children involved in Solution Circles within staff meetings.
- Extra vigilance in the playground.
- Further meetings with parents and children to discuss success of solutions.
- Invoking the discipline system for the aggressor if there has been clear bullying or for both children if there has been inappropriate behaviour on both sides.
- MyConcern allows staff to log bullying, actions taken and follow up.

Supporting Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing immediate pastoral support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the DSL, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to any further concerns. Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support. This may include working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Integrated Children Services or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy. This may include: official warnings, detentions/internal exclusions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), in extreme or repeated cases, fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Integrated Children Services or Early Help or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Education and Training

The school community will:

- Train all staff, including teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, etc.
- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building self-esteem.

Involvement of Pupils

We will:

- Involve pupils in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
- Regularly canvas pupils' views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum. Utilise pupil voice in providing pupil led education and support
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

Monitoring and Review

Putting Policy into Practice

The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.

Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's Development Plan.

The Head will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate and will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

Useful Links and Supporting Organisations

The following links may provide additional support to children, staff or families.

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net Cyberbullying
- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-council-for-internet-safety
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying SEND
- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk

Race, Religion and Nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srrtc.org/educational

LGBTQ+

- Barnardo's LGBTQ Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk Sexual Harassment and Sexual Bullying

- NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline: 0800 136 663 or help@nspcc.org.uk
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaignposters
- Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-sexist-bullying
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-sexist-bullying/investigating-and-responding-sexual>
- Childnet Project DeShame (Online Sexual Harassment and Bullying): www.childnet.com/our-projects/project-deshame