Anti-bullying Policy

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Staff Responsible: Amy Bresnen

Statement of intent

The Vale of Evesham believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the school's Behaviour Policy (more reference to the anti-bullying policy needs to be within the behavior policy), which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at the school.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but

not limited to, the following:

Education and Inspections Act 2006	Crime and Disorder Act 1998
Equality Act 2010	Education Act 2011
Protection from Harassment Act 1997	DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
Malicious Communications Act 1988	DfE (2018) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
Public Order Act 1986	DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
Communications Act 2003	DfE (2019) 'Keeping children safe in education'
Human Rights Act 1998	DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

This policy operates in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy, the E-safety Policy, the Safeguarding Policy, The Equal Opportunities policy and the PSHE Policy.

Definition

Bullying can be defined as; "Behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally". (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", March 2014).

Bullying can include: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

This includes the same inappropriate and harmful behaviours expressed via digital devices (cyberbullying) such as the sending of inappropriate messages by phone, text, Instant Messenger, through websites and social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading images by mobile phone or via the internet.

Forms of Bullying

Bullying can happen to anyone. Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (cyber-bullying)

These can be to target victims for different reasons, such as;

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.

Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

-Pupils with SEND.

-Pupils who are adopted.

-Pupils suffering from a health problem.

-Pupils with caring responsibilities.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.

Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.

Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.

Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Roles and Responsibilities

All pupils and adults have a shared responsibility to eliminate bullying from school and circumstances out pupils may find themselves a part of. With this in mind, our approach is as follows:

The role of the Board of Governors

- Evaluate and review the policy to ensure it is not discriminatory.
- Implement the policy.
- Ensure that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensure the school is inclusive.
- Analyse any bullying data to establish patterns and review the policy in light of these.

The role of the Headteacher

- Review and amend the policy.
- Keep a record of all reported bullying incidents (Sleuth) to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analyse the data in the bullying record at regular intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arrange appropriate training for staff.
- The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.
- The Headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, in turn, making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The role of ALL school staff

- Be alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Be available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Provide follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Be alert to possible bullying situations and inform pupils' class team or head of department, of such observations.
- Refrain from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understand the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Report any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support through Sleuth.

- Staff actively supports anti-bullying strategies by teaching children directly about safeguarding issues and cyber-bullying. Information is regularly sent home to parents/carers to further develop parental awareness of safeguarding issues on the internet and mobile devices.

The role of Parents and Carers

- Informing their child's class team or head of department if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any worrying changes.

The role of Pupils

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying.

Statutory Implications

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

The Headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the Headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.

Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

Addressing and preventing bulling

The Vale of Evesham has a whole school commitment to eradicating a bullying culture within our school. **Any and all incidents relating to bullying are recorded and monitored through Sleuth and, dependent on the severity of the incident, through CPOMS. All Sleuth data which includes bullying is shared at weekly Departmental Meetings by Head of Year, Weekly SLT meetings and Pastoral Support Team.**

Bullying will be discussed, addressed and taught through many areas of the school curriculum. Whether it is in direct lessons or through snack, playtime, lunch or other transitional opportunities that pupils may want to discuss things on their mind. More specifically bullying will be addressed through:

- The PSHE and RSE curriculum will support and enhance pupil's confidence, build upon their knowledge of rights and wrongs, and give them the tools to help them lead well-grounded and independent lives, wherever possible.
- circle time; where emotions and social situations can be discussed, modelled and reviewed as a small group
- Problem solving, collaborative and co-operation games through the use of circle or reflection time, will help pupils to develop trust and will encourage them to appreciate the feelings of others.
- A high ratio of adults to pupils in the dining hall or at playtimes to support and supervise where necessary.

The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.

The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

Signs of bullying

Staff, along with other stakeholders, will be alert to the followings signs that may indicate a pupil may be the victim of bullying:

Being frightened to travel to or from school	Asking to be driven to school
Truancy	Unwillingness to attend school
Becoming anxious or lacking confidence	Saying that they are feeling unwell in the morning
Decreased involvement in school work	Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
Missing possessions	Missing dinner money
Asking for extra money or stealing	Cuts or bruises
Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages	Lack of appetite
Lack of eye contact	Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
Becoming short tempered	Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the above signs might not be an indication of bullying, they may be due to a deeper social, emotional or mental health issue and so are still worth investigating. In addition, staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a person is likely to have bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to the pupil becoming aggravated
- They have been the victim of domestic abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall, which has meant they are stressed
- If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's class team, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision by providing relevant training and support for all staff. Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. If a member of staff is unsure about whether an incident(s) of bullying has taken place, discuss with relevant Head of Department or DSL to determine whether it is an incident of

bullying. **ALL BULLYING BEHAVIOUR TO BE RECORDED AND MONITORED THROUGH SLEUTH.**

Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another is always challenged and never ignored; staff will address said behaviour by drawing attention to the 'Consequences' school rules and explaining consequences to actions. Upper school will continue to model and use 'The bottom Line' as part of their behaviour management, alongside the 'Consequences' school rules.

Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff. Staff will always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped. This may be in the form of small group or individual sessions in PSC to support 'repair and rebuild' of relationships.

Peer on peer sexual abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of peer-on-peer sexual abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline.

Sexual harassment violates a child's dignity and makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and can create a hostile, sexualised or offensive environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence.

Sexual violence refers to the three following offences:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy outlines our stance on addressing peer-on-peer sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence be uncovered.

To prevent peer-on-peer abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons.

The school will also ensure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in PSHE lessons, RSE and group sessions. Such content will be age and stage of development specific, and tackle issues such as **healthy relationships, respectful behaviour, gender roles stereotyping, equality, body confidence, self-esteem, prejudiced behaviour, addressing cultures of sexual harassment and the knowledge that sexual violence and sexual harassment is ALWAYS wrong.**

All staff will be aware that pupils of any age and sex are capable of abusing their peers and will never tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up".

All staff will be aware that peer-on-peer abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting and gender issues, such as girls being sexually touched or assaulted, and boys being subjected to hazing/initiation type of violence which aims to cause physical, emotional or psychological harm.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of our pupils all of whom have an EHCP, who are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the pupil's SEND and will always explore indicators further.

LGBT children can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, children who are perceived to be LGBT, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBT children.

The school's response to boy-on-boy and girl-on-girl sexual violence and sexual harassment will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between children of the opposite sex.

Pupils will have better relationships with some adults, more than others and this may be who they choose to disclose an incident to. Please refer to our safeguarding policy where pupils will be supported and reassured throughout, that nothing can be kept confidentially if they or someone else is in danger of harm. Pupils will know they

can access time in PSC or to ask for time to talk to an adult away from their class and peers.

Any and all incidents of peer on peer abuse MUST be recorded on sleuth.

Managing disclosures

Victims will always be taken seriously, reassured, supported and kept safe. Victims will never be made to feel like they are causing a problem or made to feel ashamed. The school will only engage with staff and agencies required to support the victim and/or be involved in any investigation.

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the disclosure, the school will not make this promise. Even without the victim's consent, the information may still be lawfully shared if it is in the public interest and protects children from harm.

More information regarding the school's stance on preventing peer-on-peer sexual abuse is available in our **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.

If a child has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a Cause for concern will be made through CPOMS (include Sleuth notes on all CPOMS with need-to-know information which enables us to track any behaviours with concerns/Safeguarding) the DSL will be notified ASAP and a referral will be made to children's social care services (CSCS). Once a DSL has been notified, depending on the severity of the incident, Police may be notified, along with the parents and carers of the pupils involved.

Cyber bullying

The Vale of Evesham has an E-safety policy which outlines the school's approach to cyber-bullying. We have a zero-tolerance approach to any bullying, including cyber-bullying.

If a child(ren) are victims of cyber-bullying, the procedure is to talk to the child to establish the facts, talk with the other party/ parties involved and ALWAYS record through CPOMS (with relevant information in a sleuth note), monitor and record through sleuth and to report to Heads of department alongside the DSL.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the Vale of Evesham has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices without parental consent where there is good reason to do so.

We have a designated CEOP's Ambassador within school and the whole-school has annual online safety training which includes noticing and how to respond to cyber-

bullying. We receive updates on new government papers and technology, allowing us to keep up to date with new technologies, apps and trends to increase staff awareness and knowledge.

If we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, or the within the school community, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied:

 - we explain why the action of the child was wrong and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future.
 - If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the Deputy or Headteacher.
 - We then invite the child's parents/carers into the school to discuss the situation.

Support is available through Pastoral Support (PSC) and these can include individual sessions, small group sessions to repairing sessions with the bully. They could also include discussions with the bully to try and decipher and help to work through any under lying issues that they may need to be supported through.

Involvement of Pupils and Parents/Carers

We will:
-   Regularly canvas children and young people's 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.
-   Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.

Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.