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### 1. Introduction

The school adopts a strategic approach to preventing and tackling all forms of bullying through open communication with students, parents and staff, including frequent reminders that the school will not tolerate any form of bullying.

1. This policy has regard to the following: Public Order Act 1986, Malicious Communications Act 1988, Children Act 1989, Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Communications Act 2003, Education and Inspections Act 2006, Equality Act 2010, Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE guidance 2013), Supporting Children and Young People who are Bullied, Advice for Schools (DfE guidance 2014)

### 2. Definitions

Bullying is deliberate unkindness or any action repeated over time that causes verbal, physical or mental harm. Forcing unwanted attention on someone else, particularly if in a sexual way, is also bullying. In very serious incidents, a single action can constitute bullying behaviour.

1. When the harmful activity is online (e.g. on social media), a single action can have a repeated impact, so harmful and/or offensive behaviour online does not need to be repeated over time to constitute bullying.
2. Bullies usually intend harm to their victims, but an unintentionally harmful action can constitute bullying if its effects are sufficiently severe, or if the action is contrary to “common sense” and/or if it would have been reasonable to predict that the action would be likely to cause harm or offence.
3. Bullying has serious consequences that can be physical, emotional or psychological. Some people who have been bullied have attempted suicide.
4. Bullying of any form will not be tolerated between students or teachers and staff. It is bullying to write notes, make phone calls, send electronic messages or create or post them on websites or social media if they offend, hurt, annoy or worry anyone, whether it is a student, teacher or someone else. From home, from school, from anywhere, it is still bullying. Digitally sending or posting a picture or video that hurts someone else or humiliates them is bullying.
5. **Hate Crime:** is defined as “any targeted victimisation of those who are considered different.” Support can be obtained by contacting Rebecca Richardson (County Hate Crime Coordinator) on: [rebecca.richardson@victimsupport.org.uk](mailto:rebecca.richardson@victimsupport.org.uk). The recorded strands of hate crime are:
  1. Disability
  2. Gender
  3. Race
  4. Religion
  5. Sexuality
  6. Age
  7. Alternative subcultures
  8. Homeless
  9. Sex workers

### 3. Countering Bullying

The school works to promote the positive qualities of altruism and community spirit by means of consistent school-wide consideration of those values in assemblies, form times, PSHE, Voluntary Service, fund-raising activities, and

through our general approach in and out of the classroom. The promotion of the Fundamental British Values also has an important part to play in developing students' sense of tolerance and respect for diversity.

1. Staff are regularly reminded through staff training days about the principles and specifics of this policy and appropriate external training courses are funded to improve support for students. Staff are also supported by providing specialist advice to teachers and students when dealing with bullying associated with special educational needs, psychological or mental disability, or in circumstances where individuals feel out of their depth (e.g. if uncomfortable when called to deal with bullying associated with LGBT students).
2. The school has a commitment to the emotional well-being of its students and staff and therefore openly acknowledges the physical and emotional seriousness of bullying which can lead to psychological damage.
3. Assemblies and form time as well as PSHE lessons contribute to an approach which seeks to talk openly about bullying and therefore prevent it becoming a hidden problem. When bullying is discussed, students are reminded of the role of the bystander (including online) in bullying incidents and given strategies to help stop and to report bullying when they know of it. Parents are encouraged to contact the school as soon as they are concerned, and the school provides advice to parents to help them identify and discuss bullying with their child.

#### 4. Reporting and Investigating

It is the duty of everyone who sees an instance of bullying – or potential bullying – to try to stop it. This applies to all students, teachers and other members of staff. Staff and students are regularly reminded of the need to be vigilant for signs of bullying and of the requirement to report instances of bullying to the Form Teacher and/or Principal who maintain a central record. This is true for bullying in school, cyberbullying and bullying outside of school.

1. We take all allegations of bullying seriously and will investigate each one as thoroughly as possible. The school will take the firmest action against any bullying, teasing, harassment or other form of behaviour that hurts or denigrates others for their appearance, maturity, immaturity, race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, difference, particular needs or disability. Though in most cases of bullying the school will seek ways of reconciling bully and victim and helping both to move forward, in severe and persistent cases it will permanently exclude the bully if necessary.
2. We strive to be proactive in identifying situations and occasions where bullying may occur and taking appropriate preventive action.
3. Usually the Form Teacher will lead an investigation into bullying behaviour by seeking confirmation of evidence from witnesses or other means. The evidence will then be presented to the bully who will be asked to comment on the allegations. The victim's parents will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation and the Principal will be informed. In most cases the parents of the alleged bully will also be contacted as early as possible so that a full picture of the situation and possible issues surrounding it can be understood.

#### 5. Support and Sanctions

1. The school will offer emotional support to the student being bullied and reassure students that they have done the right thing in telling. The student will be asked for as much detail as possible about the incidents of bullying and if there were any witnesses. In some cases students might be asked to keep a discreet "log" of events over the next few days to help pinpoint exactly what is happening to them. The student will be asked if they have told their parents and also if they want to talk to anyone else e.g. school counsellor about what is happening to them. The school will also give advice to parents to help them support their child and discuss the issues at home.
2. The school recognises that being a victim of bullying can have effects on a child long after the bullying has stopped, in particular in terms of low self-esteem and will continue to provide appropriate support when needed.
3. **Working with the bully and applying sanctions:**  
The aims of the sanctions are:
  1. to help the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop;
  2. to hold the perpetrator to account, getting them to recognise the harm caused and deter them from repeating the behaviour; and
  3. to demonstrate to the school community that bullying is unacceptable and that the school has effective ways of dealing with it, so deterring others from behaving similarly.
4. In applying sanctions, consideration will be given to type and impact of bullying and the possibility that it was unintentional or was in retaliation. The specific circumstances of students with additional needs, for example ADHD will also be considered. The outcome will include helping the bully to recognise the consequence of their actions and providing support to enable the attitude and behaviour of the bully to change. Parents will always be informed about sanctions imposed. The sanctions available are set out in the Behaviour Policy.

## Appendix. Bullying: Definitions and Examples

**Bullying** may:

- be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, spitting);
- be verbal (e.g. teasing, spreading rumours);
- be indirect (e.g. excluding someone by not talking to them or leaving them out of a group);
- be manipulative (e.g. getting someone else to tease or hit someone);
- involve complicity in someone else's action (e.g. as a bystander who looks the other way);
- take place in cyberspace, on social network sites, or by sending text/voicemail messages.

Bullying is often hidden. It may involve actions or comments that are racist, sexist, homophobic, or which focus on disabilities. It can focus on someone's gender, religion or culture, make fun of someone because they have special educational needs, or because someone's family circumstances appear unusual, for example they are a carer. It can happen anywhere and at any time.

**Physical Bullying** may involve:

- hitting or kicking someone;
- jostling, bumping, pushing someone;
- spitting at someone;
- invading someone's body space;
- physically humiliating
- firing darts or pellets at someone;
- taking or damaging or hiding someone's property; or
- invading someone's work space or locker.

If physical bullying involves assault, actual bodily harm or wounding it is a criminal offence.

**Verbal Bullying** may involve:

- spoken comments;
- written notes;
- emails or text messages;
- improper use of Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook and similar social media;
- phone calls;
- the defacing of notices;
- name-calling, spreading rumours, publicly blaming someone for something they haven't done; or
- circulating unflattering drawings or photographic images of someone.

**Indirect or Manipulative Bullying** may involve:

- ostracising a fellow pupil by refusing to sit alongside him/her in class, in the dining hall, etc. (or by moving away when he/she comes and sits down);
- the manipulation of social networks to exclude, marginalize or intimidate individuals;
- publishing photographs or images of someone that are intended to invite mockery or gossip;
- encouraging others to become the agents of physical or verbal bullying against one's intended victim.

**Bullying characterised by racism, sexism, homophobia and the exploitation of disability** may involve:

- spoken comments, phone calls, electronic messages or written notes about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some group of students;
- e-mails, web postings or text messages about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some group of students; or
- the defacing of notices with snide remarks about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some group of students.

**Sexual Bullying** may involve:

- bullying that seeks to hurt people by drawing attention to their body shape, hair colour, manner of dress, alleged sexual attractiveness (or lack of it), close friendships (or the absence of intimate relationships in an individual's life);
- physical action of a sexually intimidating nature (by the invasion of body space, inappropriate touching);
- spreading rumours about an individual's lifestyle (or the lifestyle of a close friend or relative); or
- spoken comments, written notes, emails, web postings, text messages, phone calls about someone (their friends or a

member of their family), or about some group of students.

**Bullying focussed on religion, culture or family background** may involve:

- spoken comments, written notes, emails, web postings etc. that highlight an individual's religion or culture with the purpose of mocking them for cultural or religious difference;
- pejorative religious or cultural descriptors (e.g. "Muslim terrorist", "Paki shopkeepers"); or
- gossip about an individual's family circumstances, spreading stories about (for example) his/her being adopted, a parent in a same-sex relationship, a relation in the news for negative reasons.

**Electronic or Cyber-bullying** may involve:

- sending abusive, insulting or malicious text messages or emails;
- posting abusive or malicious messages on websites, using blogs, on-line or personal polling sites, etc.;
- posting on a social network site facts or photographs of someone with the intention to embarrass or belittle them in the eyes of others; or belittle them in the eyes of others;
- indulging in malicious or spiteful conversations in chat rooms;
- spreading abuse, malice or scurrilous gossip by other electronic means;
- hacking into social networking sites and removing personal material;
- filming fights or assaults (e.g. "happy slapping" clips) using mobile phone networks or other networks;
- making repeated silent calls to a mobile phone or leaving abusive messages on voicemail or;
- "fraping" (using a pseudonym or someone else's telephone or e-mail account) for anonymity when indulging in bullying.

Children may attempt to justify much of this type of behaviour as a 'practical joke' rather than as bullying. This misconception of such activity is not acceptable. In circumstances where bullying actions involve hacking into the computer of another person or some other action by which the bully adopts a different identity online, that act of deception will be judged to compound the significance of the bullying activity. Similarly, online bullying activity that is done anonymously will be judged with greater severity.

**Sexting** is the term given to the practice of sharing sexually explicit images or text. It is commonplace. 39% of 13-18 year olds do it. 15% of 13-18 year olds think it is OK to do it. Circumstances in which students might 'sext' one another vary. **Where school students under 18 years of age are involved this practice is always illegal.** Students must also understand that:

- sending someone your sexualised image, when you are under 18, is bullying – it is an action with threatening character because the recipient could face severe legal consequences and it causes anxiety;
- passing on a sexualised image of any person under 18 is bullying – it is an action that threatens the recipient and one that demeans the person pictured. it is a cause of anxiety; and
- sending a sexualised image to try and initiate a romantic relationship is bullying – it is threatening, offensive action. It causes anxiety.

The consequences of sexting can be serious for the perpetrator. It is illegal in the UK to publish or download a sexual image of someone under 18 even when it is the child him/herself who created and posted the material online.

**Child Protection:** Bullying that is so extreme that a pupil suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm is a Child Protection concern and will be reported as such.

**Signs of Bullying:** A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he/she is being bullied. Parents and teachers should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- is unwilling to come to school;
- becomes withdrawn or anxious as a weekend or holiday draws to a close;
- expresses anxiety about his/her appearance (hair colour, body shape, clothing etc);
- changes established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons or support of a local football team, changing their accent or vocabulary);
- has possessions which go "missing" or returns home with clothes or books damaged;
- asks for significant increases in pocket money he/she is given;
- begins to do poorly in school work;
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- becomes excessively eager to please;
- is bullying siblings or other children;
- exhibits diminishing levels of self-confidence;
- chooses the company of adults in preference to that of peers;
- displays repressed body language and poor eye-contact;
- begins stammering or truanting;

- shows reduced interest in personal hygiene or grooming;
- complains of headaches or stomach cramps;
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- has difficulty sleeping or experiences nightmares; or
- runs away or talks of suicide.

<b>Revision Control Table</b>	
Drawn up by	D Sturdy
Date	01/05/18
Review schedule	Annual
Reviewed	01/06/19 by DS; 01/06/20 by DS; 10/06/21 by DS 17/5/22 by DS
Next review	01/09/23