Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy adapted from (if applicable):

Governing Body Sub-committee
Name: Student Matters and Equality Committee
Date approved: 11 November 2021

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1

Introduction

At Belper School and Sixth Form Centre we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our students to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential.

We would expect students to feel safe in school, including an understanding of the issues relating to safety, such as bullying. We also want them to feel confident to seek support from any member of staff should they feel unsafe. We see the effective application of our Anti-Bullying Policy as a central part of school improvement as it makes each and every student feel valued and respected as an individual and as part of the whole school community.

Policy Development

This policy was formulated working with the school community with input from members of staff, Governors, parents/carers, young people, and other partners, such as Stonewall. Students contributed to the development of the policy through the School Council, one to one conversations and student surveys.

The School Council oversees a student friendly version of the anti-bullying policy which is displayed in various places, such as around the site and on the website.

Parents/carers are encouraged to contribute by taking part in written consultations, parent meetings and surveys.

Definition of Bullying

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace.
http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/about-us.aspx

Bullying differs from teasing and falling out between people or other incidents of anti-social or poor behaviour. What makes bullying different is:

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves
- It is usually persistent or repeated over time

An incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent, especially if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying, in particular where there is a power imbalance. This possibility should be considered particularly in cases of sexual, sexist, racist or homophobic bullying, hate crime, cyber bullying and when children with disabilities are involved.

Types of Bullying

There are many types of bullying as it can take many different forms. Bullying can include, but is not limited to:

- name calling
- taunting
- Intimidating body language
- mocking
- making offensive comments
- physical assault
- taking or damaging belongings
- cyber bullying, such as inappropriate use of social media, text messaging and e mailing, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet
- producing offensive graffiti
- gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- excluding people from groups
- Peer on Peer abuse
- Sexual harassment and abuse

We should be aware that bullying can occur between individuals but it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'.

Certain groups of students are known to be particularly vulnerable to bullying by others. These may include students with special educational needs such as learning or physical disabilities, young carers, Children in Care, those from ethnic and racial minority groups, those young people who are lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender or questioning their gender role and those with same sex parents.

There are specific types of bullying behaviour related to the following that all people should be especially vigilant in recognising as early as possible. This is bullying related to:

- race, religion or culture
- special educational needs or disabilities
- appearance or health
- homophobic, bi-sexual and transphobic bullying
- young carers or looked after children
- issues related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying

Although all people should be extra vigilant of certain types of bullying, there is no hierarchy of bullying. All forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Homophobic, transphobic and biphobic bullying and using homophobic language

Homophobic language in terms of abuse used towards lesbian, gay and bisexual people or those thought to be LGB. It is also used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or have gay friends, family members or their parents/carers are gay.

Transphobic bullying is used to refer to a range of negative attitudes, feelings or actions toward transgender or transsexual people, or toward transsexuality. Transphobia can be emotional disgust, fear, violence, anger, or discomfort felt or expressed towards people who do not conform to society's gender expectation.

Dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexuality they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of homophobic language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any homophobic intent. Persistent use of homophobic language or homophobic bullying will be dealt with like any other form of bullying.

Where does bullying take place?

Bullying is not confined to the school premises. Advice for school leaders to help with this problem and its effects on children acknowledges that it may also persist outside school, in the local community, on the journey to and from school and may continue into Further Education.

Cyberbullying

The increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims. We will ensure that our children are taught safe ways to use the internet (see our acceptable use policy) and encourage good online behaviour. Whilst most incidents of Cyberbullying occur outside school we will offer support and guidance to parents and their children who experience online bullying and will treat Cyberbullying the same way as any other forms of bullying.

There is no specific pattern to where bullying takes place or with whom bullying occurs. Bullying can take place between, but is not limited to:

● young people
● young people and staff
● between staff
● individuals or groups

Peer on peer abuse, sexual harassment and abuse

Peer on peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional, financial, and/or coercive control exercised between children and young people; this includes intimate and non-intimate relationships. We will ensure, through a structured and age appropriate RSE curriculum delivered through PSHE, our students are aware of this issue, how to keep safe and understand that this behaviour is not acceptable and not tolerated. Students will also be given clear guidance on how to report any form of abuse or sexual harassment should it occur, in the knowledge that it will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Assemblies and tutor time activities will, throughout the year, re-emphasise our approach to this form of bullying behaviour and the 'Respect for all, by all ' message reinforced

Staff will have guidance through safeguarding training on peer on peer abuse, understand what measures they must take if a student reports such an incident and will be very aware that this 'could happen here'.

Guidance for students

If you are being bullied or harassed:

● remember it is not your fault
● try to stay calm and look as confident as you can
● be firm and clear – look them in the eye and, if possible, tell them to stop and tell them how you feel.
● remember, it is ok to just walk away

After you have been bullied or harassed:

● all bullying and harassment is wrong and you do not have to stay silent about it
● tell an adult or somebody you trust about what has happened straight away.
● adults in school have a responsibility to give you help and support around bullying
● if you are scared to tell a teacher or adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you
● keep on speaking until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying.

When you are talking to an adult about bullying be clear about:

● what has happened to you
● how often it has happened
● who was involved
● who saw what was happening
● where it happened
● what you have done about it already.

If you experience bullying or harassment by mobile phone, text messages or e-mail:

● don't retaliate or reply
● save the evidence - do not delete anything
● make sure you tell an adult who you trust
● contact your service provider or look at their website to see where to report incidents
● be careful who you give your mobile phone number or e-mail address to
● make a note of exactly when a threatening message was sent.

Guidance for parents/carers

If your child has been bullied or harassed:

● calmly talk with your child about their experiences
● make a note of what your child says including who was involved, how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what happened
● reassure your child that they have done the right thing to tell you about the bullying
● explain to your child that should any further incidents occur they should report them to an adult in school immediately
● make an appointment to see your child's tutor or Head of Year
● explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing.

When talking with members of staff about bullying or harassment:

● try to stay calm and bear in mind that the staff member may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
● be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved make a note of what action the school intends to take
● ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school
● stay in touch with the school and let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

If you are not satisfied:

● check with the school Anti-bullying policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed
● You may at this stage discuss your concerns with a parent governor or other parents, and/or make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral Care, Mr Brookes)
● If this does not help you may wish to make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Headteacher

If your child is displaying bullying behaviour towards others:

- talk with your child and explain that what they are doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy
- discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- show your child how they can join in with other children without bullying
- make an appointment to see your child's tutor or Head of year and explain the problems your child is experiencing as well as discussing how you can work together to stop them bullying others
- regularly check with your child how things are going at school give your child lots of praise and encouragement when they are co-operative or kind to other people.

If your child is experiencing any form of cyber bullying:

- ensure your child is careful whom they give their mobile phone number and email address to
- check exactly when a threatening message was sent and keep evidence of offending e-mails, text messages or online conversations. Do not delete messages
- if the bullying involves a student from Belper School, contact the school to report this
- contact the service provider to report the incident
- if the cyber bullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed, you should consider contacting the police.

Guidance for adults experiencing bullying or harassment

The responses may be broadly similar or vary greatly to the response chart if it is an adult being bullied. If you are experiencing bullying as an adult:

- share your concerns with a trusted colleague
- seek advice and information from your union or professional association
- make a record of all incidents and date them
- if you feel your situation is not being resolved then you should follow the school's formal procedures as adopted by the Governing Body. This initially involves speaking to the Deputy Headteacher, or if the incident involves the Deputy Headteacher, the Headteacher.
- If the incident involves the Headteacher, staff should contact the Chair of Governors

Strategies for Preventing Bullying

Belper School and Sixth Form Centre takes a firm stance against bullying and promotes positive relationships built on mutual trust and respect amongst all members of the school community. This is central to the school's vision, ethos and culture and forms an integral part of daily life and interactions. Our culture for learning and school atmosphere is built on tolerance, equality and diversity and through this we foster an anti-bullying position.

In order to nurture an anti-bullying ethos the school implements a number of proactive strategies which include:

● Having a member of staff as the lead person who is named as the Anti-Bullying Coordinator. This is Gavin Brookes, Assistant headteacher
● Having a named Governor who is the Anti-Bullying Link Governor
● Ensuring a positive culture and ethos is fostered by all and that relationships are built on mutual respect, tolerance, equality and diversity
● 'Respect for all, by all' is a key theme on the school development plan and at the start of the September term students sign a pledge referring to being respectful towards others
● Being child-centred as an organisation
● Training and developing staff in all aspects of anti-bullying
● Role modelling expected and acceptable behaviour
● Promoting and rewarding positive behaviour
● Educating students through age-appropriate means about what bullying is and how to respond to it, through such methods as assemblies, PSHE delivery, curriculum subject delivery and theatre in education performances
● Promoting awareness of anti-bullying through Anti-Bullying Week and the work of the School Council
● Developing confidence amongst people to report bullying and take a stand against it
● Informing parents and carers through newsletters and the website on how to promote positive behaviours, how to spot bullying and how to respond to it
● RE curriculum with Anti-bullying and promotion of positive citizenship messages
● E safety lessons in IT lessons

To support the proactive strategies named above, there are a number of reactive strategies that are implemented to respond to bullying and attempt to prevent further bullying from occurring. These include, but are not limited to:

● Implementation of sanctions in line with our behaviour policy
● Restorative approaches from trained staff
● Peer mentoring
● Counselling
● Mediation
● 1:1 key worker sessions
● Group sessions and circle time
● Bespoke training programmes

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8

Identifying and Reporting Bullying

Although there is a culture of respect and there are a number of proactive strategies in place to support an anti-bullying ethos, it is a sad reality that bullying may take place in all establishments. What is important is that bullying is identified, reported and dealt with. Our school has clear and well publicised systems, structures, policies and procedures to ensure that bullying is responded to strongly.

Bullying is often reported by the victim themselves when they approach staff or speak to parents who contact the school on their behalf. It is also identified by friends and peers who witness it or become aware of it. They have a responsibility to report it through the various channels available. Furthermore, staff as part of their duty of care will observe or identify changes in behaviour with students that indicate there may be issues which need unpicking and dealing with. All these and other possible cases would lead to the identification of a bullying issue and the need to report it.

There are a number of ways in which any person can report a case of bullying. Reporting routes include:

- A student to any member of staff in person or through a written means
- A friend of a victim to any member of staff in person or through a written means
- Parents/carers via email, phone or letter to the tutor or class teacher in the first instance
- All staff and visitors in person to any named member of staff within the pastoral system, via an email or through sending a MOSOC slip to the mosoc@belperschool.co.uk

Responding to Bullying

Belper School and Sixth Form Centre take a stepped approach to dealing with and responding to bullying. All reports will be taken seriously and analysed within the context. The approaches are outlined below and go from verbal warnings from the tutor all the way to potential exclusion from the school by the Headteacher. All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated with the involvement of all parties. The response will be staged and include, generally but not exclusively:

The reported issue will be investigated by a member of staff and appropriate sanctions and education will take place in line with our behaviour policy. All incidents will be logged on Cloud school for future reference to identify any patterns of bullying behaviour.

Support measures will also be put in place which could include utilising a range of responses appropriate to the situation, such as solution focused work, a restorative approach, circle time or individual work with victim/perpetrator.

Communication will be made to parents / carers of both the victim and perpetrator to discuss the issue and steps that will be taken in school to ensure our students are safe and feel safe.

Continuation of bullying behaviour will be dealt with in line with our behaviour policy and an escalation towards more serious sanctions will be made.

All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated.

Outline of the steps the school will take in the event of a bullying incident occurring:

- Interviewing all parties to ascertain all sides of the situation
- Informing parents of the situation
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy
- Implement appropriate actions and support - Solution focused, restorative approach, circle of friends, individual work with victim or perpetrator
- If appropriate, external agencies may be used, for example police, school nurse or the Targeted Support Service
- Liaising with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises i.e. in the case of cyberbullying or hate crime.

Recording Bullying and Evaluating the Policy

All bullying incidents will be recorded on the Cloud school management information system. These will be logged under Verbal, Cyber, Racist, HBT and sexual harassment.

The information we hold will be used to ensure individual incidents are followed up and also used to identify trends and inform preventative work in school and in the further development of this policy. The school Anti-Bullying Coordinator will use this information to produce reports to the Leadership Group and the Student Matters and Equality Committee of the Governors.

Where evaluation indicates there is a need for a more detailed review of the policy, its implementation and working practices then this will trigger a formal review utilising various stakeholders in the school including, but not exclusive to, student voice, the Anti-Bullying Coordinator, Heads of Years and other key staff.

The policy will be reviewed and updated every three years, or sooner if required.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher:

- Overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation
- Appointing an Anti-Bullying Coordinator
- Liaising with the Governing Body, parents/carers, Local Authority and outside agencies
- Ensuring monitoring, evaluation and review (MER) takes place
- Ensuring the policy is reviewed as scheduled

The Anti-Bullying Coordinator:

- Policy development and review involving students, staff, Governors, parents/carers and relevant agencies
- Promoting a positive and inclusive ethos built on mutual trust, respect and relationships
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review
- Managing bullying incidents
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

All Staff:

- Implementing the policy
- Promoting positive relationships
- Acting as positive role models
- Being aware of anti-bullying strategies and implementing them

Links with other school policies

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Confidentiality Policy
- Equalities Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Rewards Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Reference documents and related policy documents

National

Ensuring Good Behaviour in Schools- A summary for Heads, Governing Bodies, (June 2011)

Preventing and tackling Bullying – Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies (June 2011)

Behaviour and Discipline in School- Guide for Head Teachers and School Staff (July 2011)

Safe to Learn- DCSF Guidelines

Embedding anti-bullying work in schools – DCSF-00656-2007

Homophobic bullying – DCSF – 00668-2007

Cyberbullying – DCSF – 00658-2007

Bullying Involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities – DCSF 00372-2008

www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications

Cyber bullying - supporting school staff and

Cyber bullying - A whole school community issue

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12