# Bellingham Partnership Schools

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

*To be read in conjunction with Bellingham Partnership Schools Behaviour Policy.*

**"BULLYING IN ANY FORM IS UNACCEPTABLE IN OUR SCHOOLS, IT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND WILL BE ADDRESSED."**

Bellingham Partnership Schools strives to provide a safe, secure and positive environment where children thrive and are respected without the fear of being bullied. All schools must have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying and encourage good behaviour. This policy and procedures are part of Bellingham Partnership Schools Behaviour Policy.

The schools believe that bullying is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether committed by young people or by adults. We recognise that the impact of bullying behaviour, can cause deep distress excludes pupils from their full educational entitlement, and can lead to pupils not wanting to attend school or in extreme cases attempting suicide.

We are inclusive schools and build upon a range of strategies that promote and underpin our ethos of promoting high expectations of outstanding behaviour. We also recognise that every member of our community is responsible for supporting and defending our values and challenging any behaviour that falls below it.

Staff are vigilant about bullying behaviours and approach this in the same way as any other category of child abuse. This may be a child protection concern if a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Some children may be too young or have a level of Special Educational Needs which means they may be unable to realise that they are unable to recognise what others are doing to them. Staff are also aware of those children who may be vulnerable pupils and use strategies to help those who are at risk of falling victim to the behaviour of others or become unkind to others.

This Policy has been drawn up with regard to the Children's Act 2004, The Human Rights Act 2000, The Equalities Act 2010, DfE Guidance preventing and Tackling bullying 2014 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 and Northumberland County Council Guidelines 2014, new Ofsted Framework.

The policy is available via the schools' websites or hard copies available from Bellingham Middle or Bellingham First offices

**AIMS**

- To work together to ensure a safe environment where pupils thrive and learn
- To promote outstanding behaviour and understanding of the zero tolerance of bullying
- To protect all pupils and members of our schools' community from being bullied
- To ensure that all staff, pupils and parents are aware of what constitutes bullying behaviour
- To raise awareness of the procedures and support available for both the victim and the bully.

The Head Teachers: Mrs Simpson (Head at BMS) and Mrs. Goddard (BFS) are responsible for the dissemination, implementation and monitoring of the policy so that all are aware of the aims, and procedures: The Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee of the Governing Body ensure that the policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed.

What is Bullying?

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally". DfE 2011 It can take many forms, violence, verbal, cyber-bullying, via text internet or emotional. It can be short-term or continuous over a long-period of time. Part of the victim of bullying distress is caused by anxiety about future attacks.

We understand that all children have disagreements with each other and friends fall out for a time. This is not usually bullying but if this becomes bullying it will be dealt with seriously.

The main types of bullying can be:

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| Physical | Hitting, pushing, biting, pinching, kicking, taking or hiding belonging, punching any use of violence, damaging possessions, extraction or theft |
| Verbal | Name calling, teasing, insulting, writing or sending unkind messages, graffiti, threatening to spread rumours, threats by phone, malicious gossip |
| Emotional | Being intentionally unfriendly, excluding from groups, tormenting, Intimidation |
| Racial/Colour | Racial taints, graffiti, gestures, name-calling |
| Sexual | Inappropriate physical contract or sexual comments |
| Homophobic and Transgender | Direct bullying focusing on sexual orientation or transgender issues |
| Cyber/Internet | Email, text messaging, social media, chat room misuse, websites, twitter, Facebook misuse: Inappropriate publishing of pictures/videos. |

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion or belief
- Culture
- SEND
- Appearance or health condition
- Home/Family circumstances, Adoption, Young carers, looked after children, poverty
- Sexual orientation, homophobia/transgender

Bullying hurts and can damage the mental health of a victim .Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, lunchtimes, journey to and from school or trips and in cyberspace. It can also take place in group activities and between families in the community.

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of one person or persons over another, such as size of an individual, strength, numbers of people or anonymity (cyber bullying/anonymous calls threats) We recognise that pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving and that intervention is necessary.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may not be able to tell that he or she is being bullied therefore adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate if a pupil:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school or going on the school bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) or starts to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering

- Runs away
- Threatens or attempts suicide
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the mornings
- Begins to make less effort with school work than previously
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions damaged or goes missing
- Asks for money or steals money
- Has dinner money regularly lost
- Comes home unusually hungry or stops eating
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives implausible answers to any of the above
- Is nervous, jumpy refuses to make eye contact
- Has a change of attitude or seems unhappy.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional or mental health problems, but bullying should always be considered a possibility and be investigated

Implementation

Prevention

At Bellingham Partnership Schools we use a variety of age appropriate methods to support our pupils in preventing and understanding the consequences of bullying such as

  - A strong ethos which promotes tolerance and respect, including respect for difference and diversity.
  - Positive leadership on how to recognise and deal with bullying
  - Assemblies
  - PHSE and Citizenship lessons
  - SMSC Curriculum
  - A planned approach to the issue of bullying, so that it is discussed openly and regularly in a context which promotes self-esteem and confident relationships.
  - Regular consultation with children to find out what bullying occurs, when, where and by whom.
  - Safe areas for children and young people at times when they feel particularly vulnerable.
  - Identifying independent listeners including pupils (named Supportive Friends) and adults other than school staff (e.g. School Nurse) to whom those who are being bullied may turn.
  - Support the child who is demonstrating bullying behaviour.
  - The involvement of children and young people in procedures dealing with instances of bullying through Supportive Friends and peer mediation.
  - Provision for follow up of those who are bullied and those who bully.
  - A commitment to the development of a multi-agency approach that might help reduce bullying behaviour.
- Anti-bullying week
- Pupil surveys and research carried out and acted upon
- Recording and monitoring of bullying incidents
- Staff training
- Supportive friends training

- Supportive friends drop-ins
- Anti-bullying working party
- Anti-bullying strategies explicitly taught across the curriculum
- Structured PSHE programmes covering bullying, self-esteem, assertiveness etc.
- Celebration of differences through assemblies and displays
- Peer mediation work
- A variety of lunchtime clubs and activities
- Explicitly teaching ways of staying safe using technology in the 21st Century
- Assuring the positive development self-esteem and emotional well-being through the implementation of SEAL strategy (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning)
- Encouraging an open climate in which bullying behaviour is openly discussed and actively discouraged.
- Providing children with the opportunity to raise bullying concerns.
- Being alert to the signs of bullying, as identified in this policy.
- Model appropriate social relationships built upon respect to children, through their interaction with other members of staff and the way in which they relate to children.
- Listening to, and sharing concerns with parents and carers.
- Actively teaching anti-bullying strategies when opportunities arise in the curriculum, as well as through work carried out in Anti-Bullying week, PSCHE, etc.
- Exploit opportunities that arise throughout the school day to exemplify expected behaviour and reject bullying behaviour.
- Act on any information indicating bullying is happening.
- Report any incidents of bullying to the Head or Deputy Head teacher.
- Being calm and consistent.

## PROCEDURES AND SYSTEMS

### Action Taken

When a member of staff is made aware of any incident, the following procedures must be followed:

- Act promptly and ensure the victim is safe, under no imminent threat and their immediate welfare is seen to.

- Investigate and establish whether the incident is bullying (refer to Appendix I on "The Nature of Bullying") through sensitive discussion with pupils, parents, witnesses etc whilst maintaining wherever possible confidentiality.

- Once bullying has been confirmed, this information must then be shared with the Head teacher and an appropriate course of action will be discussed and planned.

- Support the school's recording and monitoring of bullying incidents through providing a written account of the incident, including names, dates and any action taken, and pass this onto the Head teacher

- Provide ongoing pastoral care and support for both the child who was bullied and the child/children who carried out the bullying.

- Ensure information is communicated with other relevant staff, in particular the form teacher of any children involved.

**Parents/Carers**

If a parent/carer suspects their child is being bullied or using bullying behaviour towards other children they must alert the school as soon as possible by means of telephone, letter, email or by making an appointment to discuss their concerns primarily with the child's form teacher. Parents are assured that concerns will be dealt with sensitively and where requested or appropriate, confidentially.

Once the initial concern has been reported the school will, wherever possible, discuss how the concern will be investigated further. The school will endeavour to keep parents informed of any developments by phone calls or emails.

If it is established that a child has been using bullying behaviour, the child's parents will be informed either by letter, email or telephone. The safety and welfare of the child being bullied will be ensured as a matter of priority: this may mean the child/children involved in the bullying may be kept in at break times or lunch times, or kept in after school. Once this has been established, support systems will be put into place to monitor the perpetrator and help them to modify their behaviour. School recognises that children use bullying behaviour is sometimes a cry for help and so will work closely with the child so that the behaviour does not continue. These systems may include working with a member of staff during break times or lunch times (or in some cases after school), mentoring by an appropriate person in school, or the use of a behaviour monitoring sheet/diary. Outside agencies, such as the Children's Early Intervention Team, may also be called upon to support the child.

If a pattern of bullying behaviour is established, the child will be placed upon the school's Special Educational Needs register and a behaviour plan drawn up in an attempt to address the child's behavioural and emotional difficulties. Parents will be kept informed of the school's concern over a child's repeated bullying behaviour. In extreme circumstances, when a child refuses to adhere to the school's anti bullying policy to the detriment of the safety and well-being of other children, an exclusion may be given.

Parental opinion on how well the school tackles bullying and deals with incidents is actively sought through both parental questionnaires and discussion with parents. The school also welcomes feedback from parents over specific incidents and, in cases where parents are unhappy, they will be informed about the school's complaints procedure.

## DEALING WITH BULLYING THAT TAKES PLACE OUTSIDE SCHOOL PREMISES

A head teacher's duty of care to prevent bullying is applied only within the precincts of the school. However, a good deal of bullying can take place outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school. The development of technology, in particular the internet, emails and mobile phones, has provided a new and particularly intrusive way for bullies to reach their victims outside the school environment.

This bullying may involve young people from the school, young people from other schools or young people not at school at all. It is therefore essential that all young people are encouraged to seek help.

Where a pupil reports bullying off the school premises, the school will implement the following procedures, where appropriate:

- Cyber bullying

  Seek to find out the nature and extent of the bullying through witnesses from the school;

- Encourage the victim to keep a copy of the material in case the bullying does not stop and further action is needed;
- Where the bullying is on-line, seek to, wherever possible, remove the offensive or upsetting material (a copy will be kept in case further action is necessary);
- Ask all parents to monitor closely their child's internet activity and information communications technology (e.g. mobile phones, emails etc.);
- Provide opportunities for training for parents on e-safety;
- If the bullying is of a serious nature, or is continuous, the school will recommend to the parents of the victim that the matter is reported to the police.

## Bullying on journeys to and from school

- Investigate the nature and extent of the bullying, where possible, through witnesses from the school;
- Talk to the transport company and parents about bullying on buses;
- Talk to the head teachers of other schools, where pupils from these schools are bullying off the premises;
- Plan safe routes to school with the pupils;
- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside school premises;
- Talk to the local police about specific problem groups and problem areas;
- Talk or write to the parents when the bullying behaviour is carried out by a pupil from this school;
- If the bullying continues the school will recommend to the parents of the victim that the matter is reported to the police.

## MONITORING, RECORDING AND EVALUATING

Monitoring is essential to help assess progress and evaluate the impact of the anti-bullying policy. The results will inform planning so that action can be targeted.

The Head teacher is responsible for the recording and monitoring of bullying incidents. The records kept serve as a means to monitor incidents so that, where appropriate, patterns are identified and the school's policy and procedures can be updated as necessary e.g. through the identification of hot spots. This information, excluding names of pupils, will also be shared with the local authority so they can monitor incidents of bullying across the county.

Data containing pupils' names will not be passed onto any other establishment and are kept solely as a way to monitor behaviour within the school. These records will be destroyed when a child leaves the school. Parents may request a copy of their child's behaviour records. (For reasons of data protection any information regarding other children will be removed).

The policy is evaluated through: data collected from monitoring; pupil and parental questionnaires; work carried out during anti-bullying week and through the formation of an anti-bullying working party.

It is the role of the Head teacher to ensure that this policy is fully implemented and monitored for effectiveness. The Governing Body will review this policy every 2 years as part of their rolling review programme or whenever deemed necessary by the Head teacher and Governors in the light of events and changes in the law.

The Governing Body will review the updated policy and identify any specific actions that have been or need to be taken.

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| Updated by | Rebecca Simpson |
| Date | October 2017 |
| Review date: | October 2018 |

Appendix I

## THE NATURE OF BULLYING

There is often some confusion surrounding what is and what is not bullying. The overuse of the word “bullying” to describe all aspects of anti-social behaviour, or fall outs between friends, is not helpful in identifying and dealing with bullying issues. The staff of the school have therefore worked closely with children, parents, the local authority and outside agencies to define bullying.

Bullying may be defined as the abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent to cause distress to another individual or group. It is deliberately hurtful behaviour which may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature. It is repeated over a period of time on those who feel powerless to resist with the intention of causing distress.

Bullying should always be taken seriously. All bullying is unacceptable.

Bullying does not only occur between children. The above definition can also be seen to characterise some relationships between adults or between adults and children.

In more serious instances where adults abuse their power over a child or a child abuses their power over another child, bullying may be viewed as child abuse and should be treated as such.

- **Bullying** is deliberately hurtful. It typically has seven elements:-
    1. *an initial desire to hurt*
    2. *the desire is expressed in action*
    3. *someone is hurt either physically or emotionally*
    4. *there is an imbalance of power*
    5. *it is without justification*
    6. *it is typically repeated*
    7. *there is evident enjoyment by those who bully*

**Bullying can typically take four forms**

1. Physical bullying*hitting, kicking, taking belongings*
2. Verbal bullying*name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks*
3. Indirect bullyings*preading nasty stories, exclusion from social groups.*
4. Cyber bullying *the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the Internet, to deliberately to upset someone else*.

Name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics. However, pupils can be called names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour, sexual orientation or some form of disability.

The use of mobile phones to text insulting, obscene or threatening messages is both verbal and indirect bullying. The use of phones, including camera phones to harass or transmit derogatory text messages and or photographs must also be viewed as bullying.

Bullying is always significant to the person being bullied.

## BULLYING BY RACE, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR DISABILITY

1. Racist and Religious Bullying

   Following the Stephen Lawrence incident, the 1999 MacPherson report defines racist bullying as "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person" A child or young person may be targeted for representing a group. Attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Incidents can include:
   - Verbal abuse – name calling, racist jokes, offensive mockery / mimicry
   - Physical aggression or threats
   - Wearing offensive or provocative badges or other insignia
   - Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines into the school or organisation's premises
   - Racist inciting of others
   - Racist graffiti or other written insults including against food, music, dress or customs
   - A refusal to associate with someone of other ethnic origin in work or play

2. Sexual Bullying (including homophobic behaviour)

   Sexual bullying is characterised by the following:

   - Abusive name calling
   - Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty and sexual orientation
   - Inappropriate and uninvited touching
   - Sexual innuendoes and propositions
   - Pornographic material
   - Graffiti with sexual content

   In its most extreme form, sexual bullying takes the form of sexual assault or even rape. Under these circumstances police would be involved as these are criminal offences.

3. Disabilities

   Children and young people with special needs or disabilities are often at a great risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly. The bullying is usually about their specific difficulties or their appearance. This is compounded by the fact that these children and young people may not be able to articulate their experiences.

Appendix II

## RECOGNISING BULLYING

Both boys and girls bully and can bully as individuals or as members of a group. Children who bully others come from any kind of social or cultural background.

Bullying always creates inequalities and is damaging to all those involved. The person being bullied, the person who bullies and those who witness or know about the bullying are all affected in some way. Those who bully can experience difficult and unhappy relationships with both peers and adults and frequently need help to overcome these difficulties. Research evidence suggests that those who bully are more likely to engage in anti-social activities and have a greater prevalence of poor mental health.

A child or young person could have experienced both being bullied and having bullied others. Bullying is not a natural part of growing up and should never be accepted as such.

Those who bully may show aggression through for example, poor control of impulsive actions, a positive view of violence or a desire to dominate. They may exhibit anxiety through for example low self-esteem or difficulties in making friends. They may be easily led in joining in bullying or in standing by whilst bullying takes place.

Those who bully may experience difficulty in admitting what they have done; be reluctant to admit that what they have done is wrong; suppress feelings of guilt; feel no remorse and repeat the hurtful action, especially if this goes unchallenged.

Those who are bullied may spend their lives in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and feel that they have done something to attract the bullying. Any child or young person can be bullied.

Those who are being bullied may experience:

- Unhappiness
- A sense of desolation and in some cases, desperation
- Reduced self-esteem and self-worth
- Poor academic performance
- Exclusion from normal social experience
- A strong desire to escape the situation which may result in absconding or truanting
- A desire to self-harm or even to commit suicide

Those who are being bullied may exhibit the following:

- Unwillingness to attend or participate in activities
- Unwillingness to venture into some areas of a building
- Fear of walking to school or of using public transport
- Underachievement
- Books or clothes destroyed
- Possessions and money going missing
- Signs of distress such as crying easily, lack of appetite
- Becoming withdrawn or disruptive and / or aggressive
- Stammering
- Stealing to pay the bully or replace missing possessions
- A variety of physical symptoms including cuts, bruising, aches, pain, faints, headaches, stomach upsets, bedwetting, disrupted sleep patterns
- A marked change in well-established patterns of behaviour

Appendix III

## Definition of Terms

**Bullying -** the abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent to cause distress to another individual or group

**Diversity** - when many different types of things or people are included in something

**Ethos** - the set of beliefs, ideas, etc. about social behaviour and relationships of a person or group

**Intimidate -** to frighten or threaten someone, usually in order to persuade them to do something that you want them to do

**Respect -** politeness, honour and care shown towards someone or something that is considered important