



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date adopted: May 2021
Review Period: 1 year
Next review: May 2022

History of most recent policy reviews

Review Date (annually)	Outcome	Responsible
September 2018	Updated	Standards Committee
October 2019	Updated	Standards Committee- brought to FGB
May 2021	Updated	Standards committee

Anti-bullying Policy

This anti-bullying policy is to be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Behaviour policy
Safeguarding and child protection policy
E-safety policy
Equalities policy

Aims

1. To state what the school identifies as bullying.
2. To explain how the school responds to bullying behaviour.
3. To outline how the school promotes an anti-bullying ethos.
4. To signpost further guidance and advice on bullying.

Definitions

Identifying bullying

The school identifies bullying according to the definition put forward by the Anti-Bullying Alliance which states that bullying is:

'...the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.'

This is in line with guidance from the Department of Education which states:

'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.'

(Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies, 2017, Department for Education)

Types of bullying

Bullying can take many forms. These include, but may not be limited to:

- **Physical** – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- **Verbal** - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- **Emotional** – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- **Online /cyber** – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty/inappropriate text/media messages, social exclusion.
- **Indirect** – Being a bystander of bullying, being complicit in the exploitation of individuals.

The school recognises that examples of these behaviours, although never desirable, accepted or tolerated, can occur in isolation and may not be evidence of bullying. When determining if bullying is taking place the school will always seek to investigate the behaviours in line with the definitions of bullying stated in this policy.

The school takes all cases of bullying seriously and would never seek to minimise the serious impact bullying can have on an individual's mental health and well-being. As such, the school understands that bullying can be identified as a form of peer-on-peer abuse.

The school also recognises that some bullying – particularly cyber-bullying – may occur off site. Whilst the school cannot accept full responsibility for children's actions outside of school, we will always support children and parents with any bullying that occurs outside of school hours or off-site.

Targets of bullying

Anyone may become a target of bullying and the school ensures that everyone understands that nobody deserves to be bullied. The school takes its duties to equalities seriously and recognises that bullying can occur as a result of prejudicial or stereotypical views held by the perpetrator(s). Bullying behaviour is never tolerated in school and this includes any behaviour that is judged to be racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist, ageist etc.

In order to support targets of bullying, all staff are not only trained in recognising the signs of bullying but understand that bullying behaviour should never be tolerated, passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'.

Signs of bullying

Bullying has a negative impact on any individual who has become a target of bullying. Staff are trained in recognising the physical and behavioural indicators that may be displayed by an individual who has become a target of bullying.

These may include:

Physical indicators: scratches, bruises, bite marks, welts, sudden speech disorders, wetting/soiling, signs of self-harm...

Behavioural indicators: depression, withdrawal, aggression, fear of school or social events/situations, low self-esteem, compulsive behaviour, change in character, relationships breakdown, hyper-vigilance, etc.

These indicators do not always mean that bullying is definitely taking place but should be appropriately investigated by a member of staff. Any parent/carer who is concerned about any of these indicators that they may have noticed should feel able to speak to a staff member about their concerns.

Education

Vision and values

The school's vision and values help promote an inclusive school community, with our third core principle of *everyone belongs*, helping to instil a strong understanding in equalities and an anti-bullying ethos throughout the school.

At Air Balloon Hill Primary School we value...

- Engagement
- Responsibility
- Resilience
- Empathy
- Partnerships

... through our GEM powers. Our *ruby* power of 'empathy' plays an important role in empowering our pupils to respect themselves and others in order to create a sustainable and strong anti-bullying ethos across the school.

Our three clear rules of ***be safe, be kind, and be respectful*** also support the children's behaviour and attitudes towards one another.

The curriculum

The school promotes its strong anti-bullying ethos through assemblies, PSHE, focused curriculum weeks, links to the NSPCC, and bespoke class activities such as circle-time and the use of stories that explore themes of friendship and may challenge pre-existing perceptions of groups of people including minorities.

Throughout their time at school children will be taught how to recognise bullying behaviour, how to respond to bullying, how to manage their friendships as well as better understand how to respond to their own feelings that may impact on their actions towards others.

The children are taught to recognise bullying behaviour through the acronym **STOP**. Children understand that bullying behaviour is any unkind, unsafe or disrespectful behaviour that occurs **Several Times On Purpose** with the intent to upset or hurt an individual or group. Children use the acronym **START** to help them remember what to do if they know that bullying is taking place. **Stand tall, Talk, Act, Record, Trust**. (see appendix i)

Each year, the school partakes in the nationally recognised *anti-bullying week* and this will constitute one, out of the six, *school safety weeks* where children explore key issues in staying safe and their rights and responsibilities as equal citizens.

The school's Pupil Ambassadors also help promote the school's anti-bullying ethos by helping to create a child friendly version of this policy as well as having the opportunity to feedback any key issues/ideas to the school's senior leaders about bullying in school.

Safeguarding against bullying

The school has a designated safeguarding team (SGT) which consists of the Assistant Head for Safeguarding and Pastoral (DSL), the Headteacher, the Family Support Worker, the Children's Support Worker and the Assistant Head for Inclusion (SENCO). The SGT plan and help implement the six *school safety weeks* and work throughout the year to support anyone who has become a target of bullying within the school community.

The SGT deliver training to staff about bullying as part of the annual safeguarding training which looks at peer-on-peer abuse and informs staff how to respond to bullying.

The school also has a team of pastoral leaders who work across year groups. These leaders are supported by the Assistant Head for Safeguarding and Pastoral and they may help facilitate support for anyone who has become a target of bullying and/or the perpetrator of the bullying.

Procedures

Reporting cases of bullying

Anyone can report bullying. Children are told that they can report bullying to anyone they consider to be a trusted adult in school. This can include their teacher, a member of support staff, a member of the SGT, a pastoral leader or a senior leader.

Children can report bullying face to face with an adult, or, can post a written concern in the school worry box which is checked regularly by the Children's Support worker.

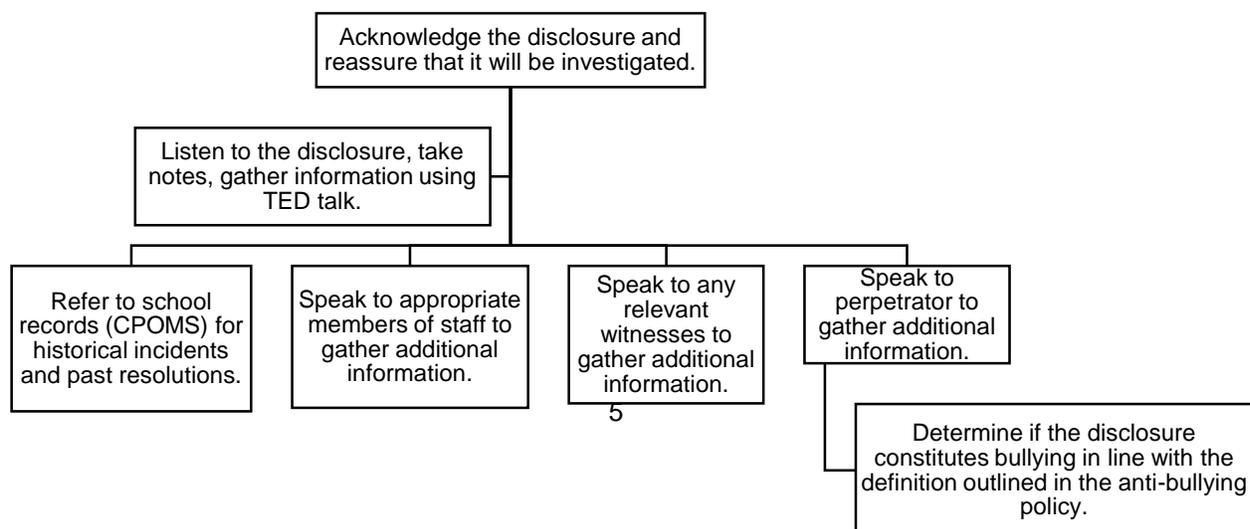
Children are told that if they are made aware that a friend, or other child in the school, is being bullied they should report this to a trusted adult as soon as possible.

Adults can report bullying too. Any parent/carer or family member can report bullying to a member of staff. This can be done face to face or via letter / email.

All reports of bullying are treated seriously and will be investigated by an appropriate member of staff.

Investigating a report of bullying

When a report of bullying has been disclosed, an appropriate member of staff will investigate it thoroughly in order to ascertain if the disclosure constitutes bullying as defined by this policy and help determine the most appropriate course of action. The investigation process is as follows:



If the disclosure is judged to be bullying, because the behaviour has happened several times on purpose and was carried out with an intent in line with this policy's definition of bullying, then the investigating member of staff should refer to this policy to determine the most appropriate way forward.

If the disclosure is judged **not** to be bullying, the investigating member of staff should refer to the school's behaviour policy in order to determine the most appropriate way forward.

All investigations should be reported back to the person who made the disclosure, and any other relevant person, and should be recorded on the school records (CPOMS). When an investigation concludes that bullying has taken place, this should be reported to the school governors along with the resulting school action.

Responding to bullying

When responding to bullying it is important to take into account any individual aspects of the case that may require a specialised response. In all cases of bullying however it is important to make clear that:

1. Bullying is unacceptable and must stop.
2. Support will be provided for the person who was the target of bullying.
3. The perpetrator of the bullying will be subject to consequences/sanctions judged appropriate by the school including support so that his/her behaviour changes.*
4. The school will be open about any lessons that need to be learnt from the bullying and will respond appropriately to safeguard similar bullying incidents from happening again.
5. All incidents of bullying will be recorded and reported to the school governors.

*Any appropriate consequences and/or sanctions may include GEM generators, personal timetables, internal exclusions, fixed term exclusions, permanent exclusions. For more details about these consequences/sanctions please refer to the behaviour policy. Other consequences/sanctions may be issued as appropriate to the specific contexts surrounding the bullying and are at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice is a process that seeks to enable those affected by bullying to move forward. It brings together the person targeted and the perpetrator of the bullying in a safe and respectful space, so that those who have been the target of bullying can have their voice heard, allowing those responsible for causing harm to reflect on their actions so they can make better choices in the future.

It is facilitated by a member of the school's senior leadership team in a sensitive and appropriate manner and is managed in partnership with parents/carers knowledge and understanding of the process.

Restorative Practice follows four important steps of: respect, responsibility, repair and reintegration.

The restorative Practice process only happens after the bullying has been fully investigated and stopped and after all families involved have been made aware of the process and given their consent.

For more information about the restorative justice process please refer to the appendix ii.

Responsibilities

The governing body

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to:

- Review this policy and procedure annually
- Receive regular reports from Head relating to the number of bullying incidents recorded, type, resolution and effectiveness
- Deal with parental complaints where the parents feel that the Head has not taken timely and effective action to resolve an issue of bullying

Statutory Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the school to make sure that all actions concerning bullying are undertaken in accordance with:

- **Children Act 1989 and 2004.**
- **Education Act 2002 and 2011.**
- **Education and Inspection Act 2006 and statutory guidance.**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021).**

The **Teaching Standards** also state that teachers, including headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties and as such follow guidance and advice provided by the Department for Education.

Further reading and guidance

Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2017)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444862/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf

Appendix i

A children's guide to identifying bullying.

We all know that at Air Balloon Hill Primary School we expect everyone to:

- Be safe.
- Be kind.
- Be respectful.

Sadly, sometimes, this doesn't always happen. Sometimes people can behave in ways which are **unsafe**, **unkind** or **disrespectful**. This is never nice and should *always* be reported to a trusted adult so it can get sorted out.

We sometimes call unsafe, unkind, or disrespectful behaviour **bullying**. But, how do you know if it is bullying, or not? Just because someone called you a rude name, doesn't mean they're a bully, does it?

We know it can seem complicated. That's why we use the acronym **STOP** to help us decide if behaviour is bullying or not.

STOP stands for:

Several
Times
On
Purpose

If someone is being unsafe, unkind or disrespectful towards you **several times on purpose** and they know they're hurting you, then it's bullying.

And If you think **STOP**, then you need to **START**.

Stand tall – remember that nobody deserves to be bullied.

Talk – tell somebody about what is happening.

Act – make sure you act in the right way. Don't retaliate or fight back.

Record – Write down what's happened, or take a screenshot to show the bullying taking place.

Trust – make sure you share what's going on with someone you trust. Don't do nothing.

There are lots of adults in school that you can trust. If you think bullying is happening, you must tell an adult.

Remember, if you think **STOP**, then you need to **START**.

Thank you for helping to keep Air Balloon safe from bullying.

Appendix ii

Restorative Practice Procedure

Restorative Practice brings together persons harmed with the person responsible for the harm in a safe respectful place, promoting dialogue and accountability. The aim is that both parties can positively move forward.

These steps are followed:

Respect Responsibility Repair Reintegration

Restorative Practice meetings only occur when facts have been established and any sanction has occurred. It is not appropriate to discuss new facts or apportion blame in this meeting.

Respect

Establish with the targeted person whether they would like to be face to face with the perpetrator or whether they would like to communicate through a third party. If no face to face meeting is preferred collect pupil voice paying particular attention to how the children feel and what they would like to happen next. If a face to face meeting is happening establish conduct rules: both sides will have a chance to talk uninterrupted, confidentiality will be maintained, respectful language will be used etc.

Responsibility

Summarise the incidents that have taken place and give the targeted child the opportunity to explain how they felt. The facilitator can also bring in other information regarding affected individuals (parents, teachers etc). Encourage the perpetrator of the bullying to verbally accept that these events happened.

Repair

Facilitate a formal apology from the perpetrator of the bullying behaviour. Support them to voice fully that they understand how their actions have caused harm. Link this to Ruby Power.

Reintegration

Agree a set of rules to move forward. This could include where to play, groups of friends to support etc. Make sure outcome is communicated to all involved parties, particularly parents. Put in place a clear system so that the targeted child has easy access to support if the problem reoccurs e.g. a key trusted adult. To support reintegration, the pupils' classes may need to have the situation explained so there is closure and they can support appropriately.