



# The Belsteads School Anti-Bullying Policy

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## **DEFINITIONS**

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviours, both physical and psychological. All bullying behaviour has the following four features:

1. It is repetitive and persistent – though sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time, for it can be experienced as part of a continuous pattern and can be extremely threatening and intimidating. This is particularly the case with racist bullying.
2. It is intentionally harmful – though occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all those who are responsible.
3. It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.
4. It causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness and lack of confidence in those who are at the receiving end.

### **The Equality Act 2010**

The new Equality act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces all three previous public sector duties for race, disability and gender and also covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

## **TYPES OF BULLYING**

### **Cyber bullying**

This can be defined as 'the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else'. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages, the size of the audience, perceived anonymity, and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target. Research indicates that cyber bullying is now a feature of many young people's lives. It can also affect members of school staff and other adults.

Cyber bullying takes different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images and manipulation.

### **Homophobic bullying**

This occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual (LGBT) people.

Who experiences homophobic bullying?

- Young people who are LGBT.

- Young people who are thought to be LGBT.
- Young people who are different in some way — they may not act like the other boys or girls.
- Young people who have gay friends or family, or their parents/carers are gay.
- Teachers, who may or may not be LGBT.

### **Sexist or Sexual Bullying**

Sexist and sexual bullying affects both genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls, and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name calling, comments and overt “looks” about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty. In addition, uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery or graffiti may be used.

Pupils identifying as transgender or experiencing gender dysphoria (feeling that they belong to another gender or do not conform with the gender role prescribed to them) can also be targeted by bullies.

### **Racist Bullying**

The school uses the working definitions of *racism* and *racist incident* that were proposed in the report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, 1999. The report defined racism as:

“Conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin”.

Historically, the term *racism* has been used principally in situations where colour and physical appearance are considered to be significant markers of difference. There has virtually always, however, been a cultural element as well – ‘the other’ has been recognised not only by their physical appearance but also in relation to their culture, language and religion.

### **Other types of bullying:**

- Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN/D) and disabilities.
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying of young carers or looked-after children, or otherwise linked to home circumstances

### **Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

To ensure this policy is effective it is essential that:

- The curriculum promotes tolerance of difference and promotes diversity in society in ways in which pupils can feel safe.
- Staff are vigilant to spot possible signs of bullying and feel confident in the actions they need to take when it is brought to their attention.
- A culture of openness and zero tolerance is encouraged in the school that enables and assists pupils to confide in staff if they feel threatened or bullied.
- Safeguarding, anti-bullying and behaviour management are viewed and worked with as

aspects of the same aim i.e. enabling everyone at the school to feel welcome, secure, comfortable and free from threat or harm:

We need to ensure that we react promptly, fairly and effectively. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying, to increase understanding for both victims and bullies and to help build an anti-bullying ethos within the group.

### **All Staff Should Ensure**

1. They are aware of the school's policy and standards for safeguarding and bullying and what they must do if an incident is reported to them.
2. They are aware of the signs of possible bullying (as set out in training).
3. That, in all their dealings with pupils, they give a clear message about being available to listen to concerns about bullying and to act appropriately if concerns are voiced.
4. That their teaching includes clear messages about the unacceptable nature of bullying.

## **ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGIES**

The aims of school anti-bullying strategies and intervention systems are:

- To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- To safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the pupil.

## **STRATEGIC PREVENTATIVE PROCEDURES**

- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
- Use of curriculum opportunities (in particular, PSHE and Citizenship classes can be used to discuss issues around diversity and draw out anti-bullying messages).
- Engaging pupils in tackling bullying and promoting open and honest reporting

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

The School is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs. We recognise the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as victim or a perpetrator.

Parents who believe their children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Where parents have concerns about regarding bullying they should contact the Headteacher.

## **INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

The School will take firm and decisive action to deal with any incident of bullying which is witnessed by or reported to any member of staff. When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a pupil may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated. The School will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying.

The School ensures all reported incidents are responded to promptly and effectively by the following procedures:

- Completion of Bullying Incident Form (located in School Office)
- Discussion of the incident as a staff group and identification of strategies relevant to victim and perpetrator.
- Analysis of reported incidents to look for trends that may require whole school focus.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL, CITIZENSHIP AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSCHE)**

PSCHE provides school staff with a clear opportunity to work on bullying. Within the National Curriculum for PSHE pupils should be taught:

- that there are different types of teasing and bullying; that bullying is wrong; how to help to deal with bullying.
- the consequences of anti-social and aggressive behaviours, such as bullying and racism, on individuals and communities; the nature and consequences of racism, teasing and bullying and aggressive behaviours; how to respond to bullying and ask for help.
- the effects of all types of stereotyping, prejudice, bullying, racism and discrimination and how to challenge them assertively.
- to challenge offending behaviour, bullying, racism and discrimination assertively; to take the initiative in giving and receiving support.