



The Belsteads School Anti-Bullying Policy

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INTRODUCTION

This policy aims to prevent and deal with all forms of bullying so that it improves the safety, happiness, performance and attendance of pupils. It shows that the school cares and makes it clear that bullying behaviour is unacceptable.

DEFINITIONS

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

- 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.
- It is intentionally harmful – though occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all those who are responsible.
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.
- 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:

All Staff Should Ensure

- 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.
- They are aware of the signs of possible bullying.
- 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.
- 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

STRATEGIC REACTIVE PROCEDURES

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.

- No pupil is continuously told to 'ignore' the behaviour and each occurrence is dealt with thoroughly.
- The victim of bullying is listened to and told what is going to happen next.
- The bully will be expected to complete a successful reflection. See behaviour management policy for information on our reflection process.
- A bullying incident form to be completed. DSL and DHT are made aware of the incident.
- Discussion of the incident as a staff group and identification of strategies relevant to victim and bully.
- The victim and bullies parent / guardian will be contacted and passed relevant information. A plan will then be created based on said discussions to protect and support the victim and decrease the challenging behaviour of the bully.
- If the incidents of bullying do not subside, parents may need to be called into the school for a meeting with their child.

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 regarding bullying they should contact the Headteacher.

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.