

ALBURGH WITH DENTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Adopted by the Governing Body: November 2020

Due for review: Autumn Term 2023

Introduction

All children and young people have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. No one should underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person's life. It can cause high levels of distress, affecting young people's well-being, behaviour, academic and social development right through into adulthood.

At Alburgh with Denton Primary School, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. All types of bullying are unacceptable at our school and **will not be tolerated**. All pupils should feel able to tell and when bullying behaviour is brought to our attention, prompt and effective action will be taken. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who is aware of any type of bullying that is taking place is expected to tell a member of staff immediately.

What Is Bullying?

"Bullying behaviour abuses an imbalance of power to repeatedly and intentionally cause emotional or physical harm to another person or group of people. Isolated instances of hurtful behaviour, teasing or arguments between individuals would not be seen as bullying" (Torfaen definition 2008)

Accounts of children and young people, backed up by research, identify bullying as any behaviour that is harmful; repetitive, wilful or persistent, with an imbalance of power that means the person being bullied can feel defenceless. Occasional teasing is not bullying, but if it is intended to cause hurt and continues to happen, it can become bullying behaviour. Throughout life friends come and go, and falling out with friends in childhood and adolescence is common and often not related to bullying behaviour. However, if following the fall out, an individual or group of children are the target of deliberately hurtful action (e.g. rumours are spread via a social networking site) this can become bullying behaviour. (Anti-Bullying Alliance: A Definition of Bullying 2011)

Bullying generally takes one of four forms:

- Indirect/Emotional: Being unfriendly, spreading rumours, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding bags or books)
- Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, slapping or any form of violence
- Verbal: Name-calling, teasing, threats, sarcasm

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- Cyber: All areas of internet misuse, such as nasty and/or threatening emails, misuse of blogs, gaming websites, internet chat rooms and instant messaging, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities

Although not an exhaustive list, common examples of bullying include:

- Racial bullying
- Homophobic bullying
- Bullying based on disability, ability, gender, appearance or circumstance

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be bullied. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported

Schools

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded and given to the head teacher
- The head teacher will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- Class teachers will be kept informed
- Parents will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

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Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the pupil
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the pupil became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- Official warnings to cease offending
- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- Minor fixed-term exclusion
- Major fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, form tutorial time, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

The role of governors

The governing body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.

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The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter. The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Headteacher, and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

The role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The role of the teacher and support staff

All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.

Teachers keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the school. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate it themselves or refer it to the Headteacher.

Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Headteacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.

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In the school, there is an incident log in which staff record all incidents of bullying that occur both in and out of class. We can also record incidents that occur near the school, or on the children's way between school and home. Any adult who witnesses an act of bullying should record it in the log.

When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim, and punishment plus opportunities for reparation for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, we inform the Headteacher and the special needs coordinator. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies, such as the social services.

All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

The role of parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed in the school brochure.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

The role of pupils

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.

Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in the annual pupil questionnaire.

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Prevention

We will use some or all of the following to help raise awareness of and prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing and implementing a set of school rules
- Signing a behaviour contract and Home/School agreement
- Using Art, Drama or Music to reinforce awareness
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- Having regular discussions about bullying and why it matters
- Regular participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Not allowing pupils to have mobile phones

Many children and young people do not speak out when being bullied and may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- uses excuses to miss school (headache, stomach ache etc)
- begins to suffer academically
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises or shows signs of being in a fight
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- changes their eating habits (stops eating or over eats)
- goes to bed earlier than usual
- is unable to sleep or wets the bed
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives unlikely excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a text message or email is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should always be investigated.

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