

# Beech Hill Community Primary School

## Anti-Bullying Policy

**Reviewed by:** A Saddington

**Date:** September 2024

**Next Review:** September 2027

**Date adopted:** September 2024

## Rationale

Beech Hill Community Primary School is committed to providing a supportive, caring and safe environment in which all children are free from the fear of being bullied. Beech Hill promotes an honest and open anti-bullying ethos, in which children, young people and adults are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding and to participate in any activity without fear of intimidation.

As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously. Bullying of any form is not tolerated in our school, whether carried out by a child or an adult. Bullying behaviour is unacceptable in any form. The school has high expectations of all members of our community and we consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff. Any behaviour which undermines this is unacceptable and will be treated as such.

Staff, children, governors and parents or carers will be made aware of the school's position on bullying, the strategies to prevent bullying and how we would deal with any case of bullying.

## Aims

The aims of our anti-bullying strategies and interventions are:

- To prevent, de-escalate or stop any bullying behaviour
- To provide children with a safe and secure environment where there is an understanding that bullying will not be tolerated
- To encourage and allow all our children the opportunity to be individuals and to express their own opinions without fear of ridicule
- To ensure that both children and parents understand the procedures that will be taken when an incident of bullying takes place
- To challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti –bullying ethos in the school.
- To promote inclusion, mutual agreement, self-esteem and self-worth in order to meet the physical, emotional and mental health needs of all members of the school community.
- To raise the standards of behaviour and levels of achievement of all

## Definition

Our school uses the Department for Education definition;

**Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.**

**It can be:**

- **Physical:** hitting, stealing or hiding belongings, sexual assault.
- **Verbal or written:** name calling, insulting, racist remarks, offensive sexual remarks, taunting, mocking, threatening language, producing offensive graffiti.

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- **Indirect/emotional:** spreading nasty stories, excluding from groups, forced joining of groups, graffiti, defacing property, displaying literature or materials of a racist, sexist or pornographic nature.
- **Cyber:** using web pages, offensive or abusive text or email messages, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet. Cyber bullying is illegal under the Malicious Communication Act 1988. The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP) gives support with this.

### Types of bullying

Bullying can take many forms, often fuelled by prejudice. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexualised bullying/harassment
- Child on child abuse
- Bullying via technology, known as online bullying or cyberbullying
- Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics) which may include:
  - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
  - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
  - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
  - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
  - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying

### Signs of Bullying

Staff should be vigilant in looking out for signs of bullying or other child protection issues including:

**Physical Signs:** unexplained bruised, scratches, cuts, missing belongings, damaged clothes, or schoolwork, loss of appetite, stomach aches, headaches, bed wetting.

**Emotional Signs:** losing interest in school, withdrawn, secretive, unusual shows of temper, refusal to say why unhappy, high level of anxiety, mood swings, tearfulness for no reason, a lack of confidence, headaches and stomach aches, signs of depression.

**Behavioural Signs:** asking to be taken to school, coming home for lunch, taking longer to get home, asks for more money, using different routes to school, 'losing' more items than usual, sudden changes in behaviour and mood, concentration difficulties, truancy.

We foster a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is unacceptable. We believe that preventing bullying is the responsibility of our whole school community and when there are incidents of bullying we will work together to deal with the situation and to learn from what has happened.

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## Our strategies to combat bullying include:

- We are a listening and telling school. This is a message that will be promoted at all times and with all audiences.
- There is an agreed collective responsibility to address any incidents of bullying observed.
- The School Council will include bullying as an agenda item at each meeting.
- Peer support system for pupils will be promoted and training provided for both staff and pupils.
- Parents will be encouraged to actively support the policy at parents' evenings by signing the home-school agreement and promoting the School's Behaviour Policy.
- An anti-bullying week will be timetabled each year in order to maintain awareness of the issue through school assemblies and prominent pictorial displays and posters.
- Every opportunity to promote whole school initiatives such as involvement in anti-bullying week, theatre productions and external speakers will be taken.
- Regularly reminding children through PSHCE lessons, role play, circle times, assemblies and through the addressing of individual incidents that bullying is unacceptable
- All staff will receive training on the identification, prevention and management of bullying. At the start of a new school year procedures for dealing with a bullying incident will be discussed at an early staff meeting. The policy will be discussed and then distributed to all new staff.

## Responding to Bullying

Our school uses the 7 Steps approach with the children in the first stage of responding to bullying.

### STAGE 1

#### **Step One – interview with the victim**

When school finds out that bullying has happened the process starts by an empathetic member of staff talking to the victim about feelings. There is no questioning about the incidents but it is necessary to know who was involved.

#### **Step Two – convene a meeting with the people involved**

The designated member of staff arranges to meet with the group of pupils whom the victim identified as being there when they felt unsafe. This will include some bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying.

#### **Step Three – explain the problem**

The group is told about the way the victim is feeling as a result of the bullying. At no time are details discussed or blame allocated to the group.

#### **Step Four – share responsibility**

The staff member does not attribute blame but states that they know that the group are responsible and can do something about it.

#### **Step Five – ask the group for their ideas**

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. Their ideas are noted down and some positive responses are given but the group members are not made to promise to improve behaviour.

#### **Step Six – leave it up to them**

The adult ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. A future meeting is arranged.

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## Step Seven – meet them again individually

About a week later (depending on age of children) the adult discusses first with the victim and then with each student individually about how things have been going. Step 7 should be repeated at various times throughout the coming months to keep the young people involved in the process and to enable the situation to be monitored.

## STAGE 2 (runs concurrently with Stage 1)

Contact Parent(s) / Carer(s) to inform of and discuss the behaviour

## STAGE 3

Contact outside agencies if necessary e.g. Targeted Education Support Services, Start Well, Social Care, Educational Psychologist, Police.

## STAGE 4

Pastoral Support Programme and /or an Early Help

- Bullying incidents will be logged and monitored on a termly basis by the Head, or named member of the SLT. This information will be given to the Governing body each term as part of the Headteacher's Report to Governors
- This policy applies to all school staff, governors, pupils and visitors of the school.
- A Governor will be nominated to have responsibility for maintaining an overview of behavioural and bullying issues.

## Sanctions

Sanctions for bullying are intended to hold pupils who bully accountable for their behaviour and to ensure that they face up to the harm they have caused. They also provide an opportunity for the pupil to put this right.

Sanctions have three main purposes:

- To impress upon the bully that what he/she has done is unacceptable.
- To deter him/her from repeating the behaviour.
- To signal to others that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it.

Once an incident of bullying has been reported sanctions and strategies will be implemented on four levels appropriate to need:

- Individual level – e.g. counselling, sessions allocated with the pastoral team to identify the issues and work on developing a better understanding of behaviours; social skills training (including withdrawal from breaks / lunchtimes as appropriate); sanctions in line with positive discipline policy, the pastoral manager will be directly involved and parents of all children involved will be contacted.
- Class / group level – e.g. group management, social relationships, work with at-risk groups, circle time, additional lessons to tackle specific issues (PSHE), class collective worship.
- Setting level – school approach, e.g. ethos, routines, lunchtime assistant meetings to implement new strategies/ games/ activities, whole school assemblies.
- Parents / community – e.g. good communications with parents/ carers, the local authority, the Governors, the Police, work with local groups.

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## Cyber Bullying

### Prevention

We recognize that the best way to deal with cyber bullying is to prevent it from happening in the first place. By embedding good, safe ICT practice into all our teaching and learning, incidents can be avoided. We recognise we have a shared responsibility to prevent incidents of cyber bullying but the Inclusion Leader has the responsibility for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of anti-cyber bullying strategies.

### Understanding Cyber bullying:

Children are taught how to recognise cyber bullying and their responsibilities to use technology safely. E-safety is integral to teaching and learning practice in the school.

### Record Keeping and Monitoring Safe Practice:

Incidents of cyber bullying will be followed up using the same procedures as other forms of bullying. However, we recognize the value of monitoring internet use on a regular basis as a disincentive for bullies misusing school equipment and systems. Class teachers will complete an e-safety incident form and any incidences are reported to the governing committee that deals with safeguarding. The computing technician will also conduct regular use checks, log any concerns and inform the Headteacher. Please see the e-safeguarding policy for further details.

## Child on child abuse

All children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Staff recognise that while both boys and girls can abuse their peers, it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators of such abuse. Child-on-child abuse is not tolerated, passed off as "banter" or seen as "part of growing up". It is likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyber bullying)
- gender based violence
- sexual assaults
- nudes or semi nudes or
- Initiation / hazing type violence and rituals.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers

Consequently, child-on-child abuse is dealt with as a safeguarding concern, recorded as such and not managed through the systems set out in the school behaviour policy. Victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported through the school's pastoral system and the support will be regularly reviewed. We minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by providing:

- A relevant curriculum, that helps children to develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe.
- Established systems for children to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be taken seriously.

The DSL liaises with other professionals to develop robust risk assessments and appropriate specialist targeted work for children that are identified as posing a potential risk to other children. All staff are aware that children with SEND and / or differences / perceived

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differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of child abuse. We keep a record of known bullying incidents and will keep a record of racist and sexual incidents.

### Supporting pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing immediate pastoral support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the DSL, or an identified emotional adult
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to any further concerns.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support. This may include working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Integrated Children Services or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy. This may include:
  - Removal of play/ lunchtime
  - Close monitoring provided by a specific adult, this could include standing with this adult for the duration of play/ lunchtimes for example
  - internal exclusions
  - removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns)
  - in extreme or repeated cases, fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Integrated Children Services or Early Help or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

### Bullying outside school

The Headteacher has the power to respond to bullying behaviour involving pupils whilst out of school; be it on a school trip, school activity, online or in the community. Conduct that threatens the health and safety of pupils, staff or members of the community will not be tolerated. The Headteacher will consider the evidence available and if the claim is proven will impose sanctions in line with the school's general behaviour policy. In serious cases where an offence may have been committed the Headteacher will contact the local police.

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## **Guidelines for implementing policy:**

- There needs to be recognition that anyone can be a bully or a victim and that bullying can take many forms.
- It is recognised that the Headteacher and Governing Body have a statutory responsibility for school behaviour and discipline, but that all members of the school community accept collective responsibility for the successful implementation of this policy.
- Pupils are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying, whether they are victims or bystanders.
- All staff will respond to student, staff or parental concerns seriously and support the agreed procedures.

If a parent has any concerns about their child they should speak to the class teacher immediately. If a parent thinks bullying is the issue, the matter will be referred to the Behaviour Lead (Mrs Saddington) and/ or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Whittle). The headteacher is always informed of any bullying concerns at Beech Hill and monitors the situation carefully. If a parent feels unable to talk to the class teacher, they can make an appointment to speak directly with the Behaviour Lead and/ or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The school will work with both the child and the parents to ensure that any bullying is stopped and that support is given where needed. Parents should not confront the bully or their parents. This can complicate the situation and distress the pupil. The school will deal directly with all children involved and their parents. Parents will be kept informed of any actions the school is taking. If parents feel that their concern has not been dealt with appropriately they should follow the school's complaints policy.

## **Reviewing the policy:**

This policy is reviewed every three years by the headteacher and the DSL. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders

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