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**Anti-Bullying Policy**

Burton Hathow Preparatory School Including Early Years

* This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies” and supporting documents “Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools”, “Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff” 2014, “Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying” November 2014. It also takes into account the DfE statutory guidance, “Keeping Children Safe in Education” 2019 and [Preventing and tackling bullying](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying), July 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018.

This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to the following:

* + Education and Inspections Act 2006
  + The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
  + Equality Act 2010
  + Children Act 1989
  + Protection from Harassment Act 1997
  + Malicious Communications Act 1988
  + Public Order Act 1986
  + Communications Act 2003
  + Human Rights Act 1998
  + Crime and Disorder Act 1998

***Bullying is a potentially serious and destructive problem which must be identified and dealt with quickly and fairly***

**­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­Statement on Bullying**

Burton Hathow Preparatory School will not allow bullying in any form. 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. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Behaviour which could be considered bullying will be promptly and fairly tackled. Where possible, signs of potential bullying should be identified early, so that action may be taken before the situation becomes more serious.

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

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. 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.

O**bjectives of this Policy**

* All teaching, non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
* All 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.
* Bullying will not be tolerated.

**Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

* is frightened of walking to or from school
* doesn't want to go in the school
* begs to be driven to school
* changes their usual routine
* is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
* becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
* cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
* feels ill in the morning
* begins to do poorly in school work
* comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
* has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
* has unexplained cuts or bruises
* becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
* is bullying other children or siblings
* stops eating
* is frightened to say what's wrong
* gives improbable excuses for any of the above
* is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
* is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

**Types of Bullying**

Bullying involves the wilful misuse of power, it is something which relates to an individual child and is personal to them. Bullying is NOT a one-off event.

Bullying can take many forms: physical, emotional, religious, cultural, racist, sexual, sexist, homophobic, disability, verbal, electronic (cyber-bullying) or a combination of these. Common forms of bullying include:

* Verbal abuse such as name-calling, teasing, sarcasm and spreading rumours.
* Emotional abuse such as excluding a child from social groups and games or tormenting (e.g. hiding books, sporting gear or other personal items, threatening looks and gestures.
* Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, punching, pinching, pushing or any use of violence
* Intimidation that mental or physical retribution may happen
* Blacken someone’s name to adults or peers ( e.g. telling tales)
* Persistent minor physical mistreatment
* Electronic (Cyber) All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse. Mobile phone threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera &video facilities

Each of these is made more serious if they are allowed to continue unchecked

**Policy on Bullying**

All teaching staff, non-teaching staff and pupils should be aware that no form of bullying is acceptable or will be tolerated and that bullying is a serious matter. A member of staff will be designated to deal with the ‘bullying’ incident. They will first need to try and establish whether an incident has or is taking place, following the Burton Hathow Preparatory School procedure.

The school’s serious stance on bullying should be made clear to pupils through school assemblies, house meetings, circle time, the PSHE programme, discussions in forms and when dealing with incidents between individual pupils. Teachers have a duty of care to identify and remedy potential bullying before it becomes serious, by promptly dealing with potential problems. Areas where bullying may occur such as the playground must be observed and supervised to avoid potential problems. Such matters should be discussed at section meetings and the headmaster kept informed.

**Approachability**

Pupils should feel that they can approach any member of staff be they teachers or non-teaching staff about concerns or incidents and that their views are considered important and will be listened to and taken seriously. All allegations must be investigated fairly and as thoroughly as possible.

**Proof**

Possibly the most difficult aspect of behavioural management is in deciding who is telling the truth in cases where allegations are denied. It is most important that:

Children must feel that they are being listened to impartially and being taken seriously when making or responding to allegations. Where conflicting statements have been made and there is no evidence available then both parties should be neither believed nor disbelieved but the ongoing situation must be monitored most closely.

The prevailing atmosphere in the school should make children feel that they are able to admit mistakes and that they will not be punished unfairly for minor transgressions, provided they do not occur again.

Where evidence of an incident is available, the parties involved should be able to explain their version of events in confidence to the teacher involved.

Teachers must use their professional judgement to insure that they treat each case impartially and fairly.

**What counts as Bullying?**

It can be extremely difficult to decide whether an incident counts as bullying and requires dealing with as such or whether it is misbehaviour or just part of the friction that naturally occurs when learning to grow up as part of a community. In making a judgement teachers should endeavour to remember what it is like to be a young child and they should consider:

* Is the behaviour persistent?
* Is the behaviour serious?
* Does the behaviour indicate an imbalance of power?
* Is there an implication of blaming the victim for what has happened?
* Are there different emotional tones- the aggrieved child upset, the alleged bully cool and controlling?
* Is there a lack of concern on the part of the alleged bully for the feelings and concerns of the other child?

*Remember that it may never be possible to “prove” what has actually happened.*

**Identifying and preventing Bullying**

*Nip it in the bud*

**Who are the victims?**

Not all children are equally likely to be victimised by bullying behaviour. Those children who are more prone to be picked on tend to have the following characteristics:

* Thought to be “ different” in some way
* Low self-esteem
* Insecurity
* Lack of social skills
* Inability to pick up on social cues
* Are easily provoked to tears, anger or despair
* Unable to stand up for themselves or non-confrontational
* Some children create the situation themselves by knowingly or unknowingly rubbing up the bully the wrong way then not being able to handle the situation that arises when the balance of power shifts, e.g. barging in on games or interfering uninvited in a closed situation

Children who are NOT bullied tend to have better social skills and conflict management skills. They are more willing to assert themselves about differences without being aggressive or confrontational. They are able to work out compromises and alternative solutions. They tend to be more aware of people’s feelings and are the children who can be most helpful in resolving disputes and assisting other children to get help.

(From *the safe child* programme)

**What are the signs?**

Families are more likely to be told about bullying than teachers; younger pupils are more likely to tell someone. The adult that is told needs to be approachable, especially if they are not a family member, and remain calm, listening closely to what is being said.

However, sometimes a child does not feel able to mention their concerns to even a parent; it may well be that there is a noticeable change in their attitude to school, in which case some of the following may indicate a potential problem:

* Not wanting to come to school
* Crying or feigning illness to come to school, though there may be instances of children with genuine illness stemming from being bullied
* Not joining in with playground games, spending an unusual amount of time on their own
* Not participating in group work or team PE games
* Being short or bad-tempered with other children
* A marked deterioration in classroom performances or effort
* Disruptive and/or uncooperative behaviour

NB Please remember that children may well display these behaviours without being bullied

**Strategies for the Classroom**

**Preventing Bullying**

As soon as children begin to interact with others, we can begin to teach them how to deal with social and formal situations, helping them learn not to be bullies or be bullied. We can teach them how to articulate their feelings, limit and change their behaviour and show them better ways to express their feelings, wishes and needs. Children acquire behaviour from adults and from older children; they do not learn to solve social problems by themselves. We must give them clear guidance and good examples to follow and will be part of the leadership demonstrated by older children.

When early Years children begin to call others names or use unkind words, intervene immediately and consistently. These children will learn the power of exclusion. We begin to hear things like” You’re not my friend and you can’t come to my party”, to which an appropriate response may be “You don’t have to be friends with her today, but it is not right to make her feel bad by saying she cannot come to your party.”

In younger classes, cliques and little groups develop which can be quite exclusionary and cruelly divisive. Children need to hear a clear message from us, the adults, that it is not alright to treat people in this way, cutting them out of the social groups necessary for their development. Children do not have to play with everyone or like everyone but they need to learn to live and let live and that they should not be cruel by excluding others.

Boys and girls who are physically uncoordinated or lack certain social skills are more prone to victimisation. Making fun of, picking on, provoking and other forms of bullying need to be identified in the earliest stages. The message must be crystal clear: this is not acceptable; think about how you would feel if someone did that to you; how could you include the other person and show other children that it is not acceptable to treat people in this way.

Children who are not bullies or victims have a powerful role to play in shaping the behaviour of other children. Teach these children to speak up on behalf of the underdog. They will be good friends and role models if they can learn to speak out with messages such as “don’t treat her that way, it is not nice” or “hitting” is not the way to solve problems, let’s find a teacher and talk about what happened”.

**Why do some children bully others?**

There are plenty of different reasons why a child may become a bully. Some children may turn to bullying as a way of coping with a difficult situation; some of them have been bullied themselves and become aggressive to avoid being bullied again; some a just spoilt rotten and bully to get their own way; some are victims of abuse and take out their humiliation and anger on others; some want to be top dog and are prepared to use aggression and violence to command obedience and loyalty; some humiliate others in the belief that in doing so they look big or cool to their peers.

Whatever the causes of bullying, bullies pick on others as a way of making life better for themselves in some way or other. They are frequently bigger and stronger than their victims and they use intimidation to get what they want. They are often not happy and use bullying as a way of trying to achieve popularity and friends

Sometimes bullies, especially younger ones, do not realise that what they are doing constitutes bullying; perhaps they see their behaviour as mimicking “cool” children on television, perhaps they do believe that they were “just having a laugh” or “she doesn’t mind, she’s my friend”. Nevertheless bullies have to learn that what they were doing is bullying and that their making someone else unhappy is simply unacceptable at Burton preparatory school. They must learn that their behaviour must change immediately and if it does not, there will be consequences. Although they should be given plenty of help and encouragement to change, bullies must not be permitted to get away with tormenting others.

**Helping the Bullying Child to Alter Their Behaviour**

Talk to them, in private and in a firm but fair manner.

Reassure the child that you still like them – it is their behaviour that you do not like, but you will work with them to help them to change this.

Ask them if they can see why their behaviour is causing such concerns; see if they have any ideas why they behave as they do and how they could behave in future that would be more acceptable to everyone.

Ask them what help they think they need to change their behaviour.

Try to find out if there is anything that is troubling them and if there is, begin the process of addressing this.

Work out a way for the child to make amends for their previous conduct.

Set up some sort of reward for good behaviour.

Set limits. See that they understand what is termed bullying and if any signs of this are seen again that these will be stopped instantly. Help them to come up with other non-aggressive ways of reacting.

If there are certain clearly defined situations which lead to bullying, help them to work out and practise alternative ways of behaving.

Parents should have taught their child the difference between assertive and aggressive behaviour before they come to school, but in any case the school must spell out clearly what it deems acceptable and unacceptable responses to certain situations. Furthermore, teachers have a responsibility to guide and advise the pupils by any means reasonably available on how to grow up as part of a community.

Praise the child when they do things well and try to find opportunities for them to shine.

Be realistic when setting goals for the bullying child monitor and manage their behaviour carefully; do not expect perfection but neither should one backtrack on expectations.

Be aware that other children may try to provoke a bully, especially if they know that the bully is trying to reform. Explain to the child that they may be teased and face provocation but that they need to react calmly. Advise them that if there is a problem that they feel they cannot handle they should look for an adult.

**Burton Hathow Preparatory School Procedure**

No matter how good the ethos of the school and the general atmosphere, there will be incidents that require action. The school’s behaviour and discipline policy should be followed in an attempt to stop bullying; the following action will be taken:

A member of staff will be appointed to deal specifically with the reported bullying. This may be the Form Tutor or it may be a member of the Senior Leadership Team or another member of staff, but it must be someone with whom the child feels comfortable.

The member of staff will gather information by talking one-to-one with the bullied child and the bully. If there is more than one bully, each of them must be seen individually. This is time-consuming but must be carried out assiduously.

The school will inform the parents of all children involved if it is decided that bullying has taken place.

Having clarified the facts of the matter by talking to them individually, the member of staff will then talk to both parties together, ask them to express their own views to each other and to agree an appropriate plan of action which will be communicated to all concerned parties, including parents.

Follow-up meetings (individual and together, in case of the children) will take place with the same parties within two weeks to monitor progress.

Additional meetings will take place as necessary. The member of staff is responsible for keeping a “watching brief” on the situation thereafter.

The Head Teacher is to be kept informed from the very first instance and throughout the procedure. This is recorded on the central record to enable patterns to be identified and evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted. It is also used to monitor any impact of bullying on individual pupils.

A written record of all the above should be kept by the member of staff designated to oversee the matter under discussion. Copies are to be made available to the parents concerned. The record should include personal accounts from children old enough to express themselves in writing. Conversations with the children involved may be recorded if the member of Staff, member of the SLT or Head Teacher considers it appropriate. The record of the incident is only to be closed with the specific agreement of all the parties involved.

The school’s behaviour, discipline, rewards and sanctions policy must be followed in all disciplinary matters. Sanctions may be given as considered appropriate to the individual situation. Dependent on the circumstances these may include a report card for a length of time; removal from certain social situations; removal from teams; a behavioural IEP; temporary exclusion or, if felt necessary after consultation between Head and Chair of Directors, permanent exclusion.

Closed records will be treated as confidential and kept by the Head Teacher in an “incidents” file.

**Procedures**

1. Report bullying incidents to staff
2. All cases of bullying, alleged and proven, will be recorded in a confidential file to help identify patterns
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
7. When a child is considered to be suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm then the matter becomes a safeguarding issue and the safeguarding policy and procedure should be followed.

**Outcomes**

1) The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.

2) In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered

3) If possible, the pupils will be reconciled

4) After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place

*Please note ‘kidscape’ website was used as a source to write this policy*