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**Anti-Bullying Policy**

Burton Hathow Preparatory School Including Early Years

**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

*This policy is available upon request from the School Office.*

**Legal Status:**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

* Education and Inspections Act 2006
* Equality Act 2010
* 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
* Education Act 2011
* DfE (2017) ‘Preventing and tackling bullying’
* DfE (2018) ‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges’
* DfE (2018) ‘Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools’
* DfE (2021) ‘Keeping children safe in education (2021)’
* DfE (2020) ‘Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people’

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

* Behavioural Policy
* Cyberbullying Policy
* Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
* Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
* Primary Relationships and Health Education Policy
* Exclusion Policy

**Applies to:**

* The whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the out of school care and extra- curricular activities inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;
* All staff (teaching and support staff), students on placement, the proprietors and volunteers working in the school

**Related documents:**

●  E-Safety Policy including ICT Acceptable Use

●  Anti-Bullying: Parents and Pupils Information Sheets, Anti-Bullying Code

●  The School Rules

●  Behaviour Management Policy (including Sanctions, Rewards, and Exclusions)

●  Equal Opportunities Policy

●  Safeguarding Policy And Procedures including Child Protection

●  Personal, Social, Health, Economic (PSHEE) education and Citizenship.

The member of Staff with overall responsibility for Anti-bullying in the whole school is: Mrs Penny Ford. The member of Staff with overall responsibility for Anti-Bullying in the EYFS is: Miss Jessica South

***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:

* doesn't want to go in the 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

**Definitions of Bullying**

For the purpose of this policy, “bullying” is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

* **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
* **Intent:** The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
* **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
* **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

* Pupils with SEND.
* Pupils who are adopted.
* Pupils suffering from a health problem.
* Pupils with caring responsibilities.

Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

* Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
* Pupils from BAME backgrounds.
* Pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

**Types of Bullying**

Bullying involves the wilful misuse of power, it is something which relates to an individual child or group and is personal to them. Bullying is NOT a one-off event, it may be repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or a carer – it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email,

. 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
* Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.
* Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.
* Homophobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.
* Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person’s gender ‘variance’ or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.
* Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.
* Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.
* Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.
* Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

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, both physical and emotional which may cause psychological damage. 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.

Staff will encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work and all types of bullying will be discussed as part of the curriculum, within dedicated PSHE lessons, form periods and across the curriculum in general. Diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons and the school adhere to the guidelines laid out in the new statutory RSE/RE framework, promoting positive relationships and respect. Seating plans will, where necessary, be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying and potential victims of bullying are placed in working groups with other pupils who do not abuse or take advantage of others.

Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.

All members of the school are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it and staff receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

A safe place, supervised by a teacher, is available for pupils to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone and lunchtime supervisors are vigilant and approachable. There is always a teacher available for children to talk to.

In the younger year groups, 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”.

**SEND and SEMH**

Pupils deemed vulnerable, will meet with their form teacher or with the SENCo once per week to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly.

Form teachersand the SENCo/MHLwill also offer an ‘open door’ policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

Before a vulnerable pupil joins the school, the pupil’s form teacheror class teacherand the DSL will develop a strategy to prevent bullying from happening – this will include giving the pupil a buddy to help integrate them into the school.

The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.

The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn’t negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

**Peer on Peer Abuse**

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline.

To prevent peer-on-peer abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons.

The school will also ensure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in PSHE lessons, RSE and group sessions. Such content will be age and stage of development specific, and tackle issues such as the following:

Healthy relationships

Respectful behaviour

Gender roles, stereotyping and equality

Body confidence and self-esteem

Prejudiced behaviour

That sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong

Addressing cultures of sexual harassment

All staff will be aware that pupils of any age and sex are capable of abusing their peers and will never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

All staff will be aware that peer-on-peer abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting and gender issues, such as girls being sexually touched or assaulted, and boys being subjected to hazing/initiation type of violence which aims to cause physical, emotional or psychological harm.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of pupils with SEND, who are three times more likely to be abused than their peers.

Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the pupil’s SEND and will always explore indicators further.

LGBT children can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, children who are perceived to be LGBT, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBT children.

The school’s response to boy-on-boy and girl-on-girl sexual violence and sexual harassment will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between children of the opposite sex.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers.

If a child has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children’s social care services (CSCS).

**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. The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately
3. Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed, including electronic communication
4. If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to a first aider for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
5. A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
6. A witness is used for serious incidents
7. If appropriate, the alleged bully, the victim and witnesses, are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
8. Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
9. Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete
10. All concerned pupils are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils
11. All cases of bullying, alleged and proven, will be recorded in a confidential file to help identify patterns
12. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
13. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
14. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
15. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
16. 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*