

Cambridge Street School

Anti-Bullying Policy



Embedding anti bullying work in schools (DCFS-00656-2007)
Cyber bullying (DCFS 00658-2007) Homophobic Bullying (DCFS 00668-2007)
This policy takes account of DFE Guidance Preventing and Tackling Bullying which has replaced Safe to Learn – Embedding anti-bullying work in schools.

This policy is updated to respond to the requirements of the equality Act 2010 and considers the guidance of the National Assembly circular 23/03 Respecting Others: Anti-bullying guidance. And Dfe guidance on Preventing and tackling bullying.-Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies

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Statement of Philosophy

- Our school community is based on an ethos of mutual respect and consideration. The school is committed to providing a safe and happy learning environment for all
- We do not tolerate bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination of any kind and work hard to prevent these or to tackle them if they occur
- Bullying is a whole school issue and we take a whole school approach in response. Any member of the community may bully or be a victim of bullying: we regard all incidences of bullying equally seriously and in turn expect all staff, pupils and parents to play their part in preventing and tackling bullying.

Aims of Policy

This policy aims to:

- Try and prevent bullying, as far as possible, and
- Help staff, pupils and parents deal with bullying when it occurs.

What do we mean by bullying?

The Department for Education defines bullying as 'behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either

physically or emotionally’.

This can include:

- Physically hurting, harming or humiliating another person or damaging their property
- Verbal abuse such as name-calling or writing unkind notes
- Emotional manipulation such as excluding someone or spreading malicious rumours about them, building negative alliances based on gossip, or deliberately betraying former confidences to humiliate or isolate another pupil
- Cyber bullying, i.e. via social networking websites, phone calls, text messages, photographs or emails
- Unpleasant remarks or actions related to any of the following:
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 - Race, religion or culture
 - Sex(i.e. talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way)
 - Gender
 - Sexual orientation (e.g. homophobic bullying)
 - Disability
 - Intellectual or other abilities
 - Being adopted or a carer

Any behaviour that a reasonable bystander would say was intended to hurt or upset the victim is wrong and could constitute bullying, including complicity that may fall short of participating directly in the bullying. It is no justification that the perpetrator says or believes that the victim is not upset or hurt by his or her actions or words.

Much bullying is performed in subtle ways, which are not easy to detect; a bully can use a simple look, word or gesture to a victim to signal an intended threat or insult. Some pupils are adept at changing a bullying situation into an apparently harmless one when an adult approaches. This makes it all the more important the victim or another pupil to be able to come forward to report bullying, and for staff and parents to be alert to symptoms of bullying.

Bullying is always hurtful to the victim and damaging to the whole school community. Anyone and everyone who is involved in or witnesses bullying is affected by it. It can cause great distress, unhappiness and psychological damage and at its worst lead to suicide. It can also be a criminal offence, for example if the behaviour amounts to harassment or threatening behaviour.

How does bullying differ from teasing or friendship difficulties?

Sometimes pupils can feel hurt or upset because they have been teased or have fallen out with a friend. This is not the same as bullying. Bullying:

- Is deliberately intended to hurt or humiliate
- Involves a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves
- Is usually persistent
- Often involves no remorse or acknowledgement of the victim’s feelings

School staff are ready to help and support pupils who have fallen out with friends, but such situations will not be treated in the same way as a case of bullying. However, the strategies we use may be similar because we acknowledge that over a period of time the impact on the pupil maybe the same and the situation could become bullying if it escalates.

Preventing Bullying

We aim to prevent bullying by:

- Fostering a whole school ethos of good behaviour, mutual respect, and consideration. We aim to create a safe, happy, and inclusive environment for learning, and encourage pupils to value diversity and difference, protect the vulnerable, and appreciate how their actions might affect others
- Our staff and older pupils setting a good example of how to behave towards each other
- Raising awareness about bullying through opportunities in the curriculum, the wellbeing programme, assemblies, and national events such as Anti Bullying Week, amongst others
- Developing pupils social skills, confidence, resilience and self-esteem; and defining the value of assertiveness in relationships as opposed to aggression, whether direct or indirect
- Making it clear to all that there are effective procedures for reporting, investigating and tackling bullying
- Making it clear to all that incidents of cyber bullying or bullying of any kind that occur off the school premises but have an impact on the classroom environment or relationships between pupils will be pursued with the same seriousness as bullying occurring within school
- Making it as easy as possible for pupils who are being bullied to talk to someone they trust and get help confidentially
- Having a strong pastoral team dedicated to pupil welfare and experienced in dealing with bullying issues. All our staff are trained in recognising and responding to bullying and staff awareness is raised through regular discussion of pupil issues in pastoral meetings. Action is taken to reduce the risk of bullying where and when it is known to be most likely to occur. The member of staff with overall responsibility for anti-bullying work is the deputy head.
- Taking pupils views into account through the school council, and developing the roles that pupils can play in anti-bullying work, for example Year 11 act as Peer Support Prefects
- Ensuring all pupils sign up to the school's Acceptable Use Agreements, which make it clear that cyber bullying is unacceptable. This message is regularly reinforced in lessons and pastoral sessions. [The school also makes more detailed information on how to deal with cyber bullying available to pupils and parents /runs parents information sessions on e-safety etc.]
- Working in line with national guidance, and the requirements of our regulatory bodies.

Being aware – possible signs of bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to go to school or return after a break
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, work that appears to have been copied, or interfered with or spoiled by others
- Belongings suddenly going missing or being damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, sitting in the library instead of going out at playtime)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Inability to concentrate
- Anxiety, depression, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Repressed body language and poor eye contact

- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Reluctance to leave the class room at the end of lessons or school day
- Choosing the company of adults
- Frequent visits to the Office with symptoms such as stomach pains or headaches, especially at particular times or during particular lessons
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Difficulty in sleeping, nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for these symptoms, teachers, parents and fellow pupils should be alert for these possible signs of bullying and contact a member of the pastoral team if they are concerned.

Dealing with Bullying

If you are being bullied

- Stay calm and try to appear confident. Tell the bully to stop and get away from the situation as quickly as you can
- Do not suffer in silence: talk to a member of staff. This could be your class teacher, tutor or head of year, the school wellbeing officer, or any other member of staff you trust. If you are unhappy about talking to a member of staff directly, you could talk to someone in your family, a friend, a prefect or use the school email drop box. Telling does not make you a 'grass' or 'snitch': not telling means that the bullying is likely to continue. Remember you may not be the only victim
- Be assured that we take every report of bullying seriously and will act upon it, even if it occurred outside the school. We will keep records of what has happened, and consult you and support you in whatever action we take
- **Remember being bullied is not your fault - nobody ever deserves to be bullied**

If you know that someone else being bullied

- Talk to a member of staff, so that the school can take steps to help the victim
- Stand up for them – studies show that one of the most effective ways of stopping bullying is for fellow pupils to show their support for the victim
- Be sceptical about rumours concerning other pupils. Don't add to them. Put yourself in the position of the person targeted
- Don't be drawn in to simply standing by. Many perpetrators will not persist in bullying unless they have an audience to play to, and by not taking action it could be argued you are condoning what is happening

What the school will do

The exact course of action will vary with each situation but the main objectives should be that bullying incidents are brought into the open and strategies agreed to help resolve the problem.

- All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated immediately
- Everything that happens will be carefully recorded
- The most important thing is to stop the bullying and ensure the victim is safe
- We aim for a peaceful resolution: revenge is not helpful for the victim or appropriate
- The victim will be supported throughout the process
- Guidance and help will be available for the perpetrator to help change his/ her behaviour
- Staff will monitor the situation to ensure that the bullying does not continue. If bullying recurs, further action will be taken

- In any serious case of bullying the head will be informed and the school will work with the parents of both the victim and the perpetrator. The school will remain in regular contact with parents until the situation is resolved
- A bullying incident will be regarded as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'(ChildrenAct1989).Where this is the case, after the head has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Social Services and in certain cases the police
- The school will keep a log of all bullying incidents which is monitored in order to identify trends and in form preventative work in the school and future development of policies and procedures.

Sanctions

Where pupils do not respond to the measures put in place to resolve the issue it will be necessary to use the sanctions outlined in the school's behaviour policy. Any sanctions imposed will be fair, proportionate and reasonable, take account of any special educational needs or disabilities that pupils may have, and consider the needs of vulnerable pupils.

Cases of severe or persistent bullying may lead to fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Partnership with Parents

We believe that working with parents/guardians is essential to establishing the school's anti-bullying ethos and resolving any issues that arise

- Parents are encouraged to reinforce the principles of the Anti-Bullying Policy at home
- Parents are asked to let the school know directly if they have cause for concern, either on behalf of their own child or because of rumours about others
- In any serious case of bullying parents will be informed by the school and may be invited into discuss the matter. We will keep in regular contact with parents until the issue is resolved

Monitoring and evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy and the school's anti bullying strategies will be evaluated annually through a review of the bullying log and consultation with the school council.

This policy will be reviewed by the School in November 2015.

Key Contacts

- Deputy head with lead responsibility for anti-bullying
- SSL Team
- Wellbeing Officer
- Child line