



# **THE ARRETON & OAKFIELD FEDERATION**

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**COMMITTEE: CCP**

**DATE AGREED: OCTOBER 2018**

**REVIEW DATE: OCTOBER 2019**

As a Federation we take bullying and its impact seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to and we do all that we can to actively promote a zero tolerance to bullying.

‘Bullying’ is defined here as repeated, direct or indirect, damaging or hurtful behaviour which is carried out by a ‘more powerful’ person or group of persons and affects, either physically or emotionally, a ‘less powerful’ person or group of persons. Bullying is different from aggression between people of equal power. However, someone can have less power than others for many reasons – being shy, being different, lacking confidence, having problems at home, or lacking physical strength.

Conflict is a normal part of most relationships because people have different perspectives and priorities. We fully recognise, and ensure that we build into our curriculum and school organisation, good support to help children learn how to deal with conflict constructively . This is achieved through our PSHE curriculum, in particular circle time and through our peer mediation programme and our oldest pupils have the opportunity to train as ‘Peer Mediators’ to support this work. We recognise that most upsetting behaviour between children is NOT bullying but still requires support.

Children can also be hurtful to each other because of thoughtlessness, annoyance, poor boundaries, and experimenting with negative uses of their power without realising the impact.

The good news is that, in partnership with parents and carers, we help children to develop the social-emotional skills that can prevent and stop most bullying and harassment and these skills are also important in building healthy relationships. Learning how to take charge of their own emotional and physical safety, how to act safely and respectfully towards others even if they feel frustrated or upset, how to set boundaries and respect the boundaries of others, and how to advocate effectively to help others, empowers most people and gives them tools to better manage future conflicts and relationship issues. This is achieved by parenting support programmes and our social, emotional curriculum with children in school where more intensive support is needed we have programmes for small groups and 1:1 work with specifically trained staff.

*The bottom line is that everyone has the right to be treated with respect and the responsibility to act respectfully towards others.*

Everyone in the school community, staff, parents and pupils, has a duty to prevent the occurrence of bullying where possible and to deal with any cases of bullying following the agreed guidance.

### **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.

Many of us have encountered bullying at some point in our lives, but we all deal with it differently. The aim of this policy is to work together to ensure that our school is a safe place for children and adults to be; whether the school community is directly or indirectly affected by bullying or not.

### **What Is Bullying?**

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

In other words, bullying is considered to be, “unacceptable behaviour which occurs **‘lots of times, on purpose’.**”

Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time. Bullying can be emotional, physical, racial, sexual, homophobic, direct or indirect verbal, or cyber bullying.

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion
- Culture
- SEN or disability
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances, including Young carers and poverty
- Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying, homophobia

Bullying can take place anywhere at any time.

### **Perpetrators and Victims**

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another.

This can be achieved by:

- The size of the individual,
- The strength of the individual
- The numbers or group size involved
- Anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc.

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying behaviours and approach this in the same way as any other category of Child Abuse; that is, do not wait to be told before you raise concerns or deal directly with the matter. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied; because they may be too young or have a level of Special Educational Needs which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them.

Staff must also be aware of those children who may be vulnerable pupils; those coming from troubled families, or those responding to emotional problems or mental health issues which may bring about a propensity to be unkind to others, or may make them more likely to fall victim to the behaviour of others.

### **Support for pupils can include:**

- Allocated key person (adult in school)
- SEMH interventions in school (e.g. self-esteem groups, anxiety management etc.)
- Parenting support
- Therapeutic support from B4L or CAMHS
- Buddy system to provide peer support

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

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

### **Signs and Symptoms for Parents and Staff**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of any changes in a child's behaviour as this may indicate bullying. However it is important to remember changes in behaviour can also be a sign of other social, emotional and mental health problems'. All concerns should be properly investigated and followed up.

### **HOW DO OUR SCHOOLS ENSURE THAT WE TACKLE BULLYING?**

#### **VALUES AND BELIEFS**

Across the Federation we are committed to combating all bullying behaviour and we believe that :

- All bullying is unacceptable, regardless of how it is delivered or what excuses are given to justify it.
- Bullying has a serious detrimental effect on children who are subjected to it and we will work actively to minimise the risks.
- Support will be offered to any children who have been bullied.
- Support will also be given to anyone found 'bullying' to enable them to make long lasting changes to their behaviour.

#### **AIMS**

Across the Federation we aim to:

- Provide a harmonious and stable environment in which children feel safe and secure.
- Develop a relationship of confidence and trust between adult and pupil.
- Foster in our children an attitude of responsibility for themselves and others.
- Enable our children to experience the power of reconciliation.
- Actively promote an understanding of the difference between 'falling out with friends' and bullying.
- Actively promote the schools zero tolerance of bullying in partnership with parents / carers
- Prevent wherever possible instances in which children are subjected to bullying in any form.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of this bullying policy, actively promote it and know the procedures to take should an incident occur.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the e-Safety Policy, actively promote it and know the procedures to take should a breach of the policy occur.

#### **PROCEDURES**

Each School has a Behaviour Policy that details the rewards and sanctions used by all staff to promote good behaviour and deter/sanction inappropriate behaviour. **Appendix 1** details the procedures followed in each school when dealing with bullying. This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Schools' Behaviour Policies.

#### **INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

The policy together with the Behaviour Policy is available through the school websites. Parents will be asked to support the Federation Schools' approach to behaviour and bullying and the issue of bullying will be highlighted with parents through the school newsletter at least once a year.

Parents will be encouraged to share with school any worries they may have about bullying and will be asked to reinforce the message that children must 'tell someone' if they are unhappy or scared as immediate investigation of problems is the most effective approach.

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## Appendix 1

### The Arreton & Oakfield Federation Schools Procedures for Dealing with Bullying

Our Behaviour Policy details the rewards and sanctions used by all staff to promote good behaviour and deter/sanction inappropriate behaviour. The following guidance should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy.

- Any reported incident of bullying will be taken seriously and acted on immediately following the procedures laid out below.
- All staff will watch carefully for any signs of distress, e.g. illness, deterioration in work, uncharacteristic behaviour, etc. and bring this to the attention of the class teacher and the Family Inclusion Officer or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Children will be made aware of what is appropriate/inappropriate behaviour and will be encouraged to inform an adult immediately of any incident which is causing themselves or someone else harm or distress.
- All staff will make it clear to the children that they will be listened to and will be involved as far as possible in any decisions about actions taken following a bullying incident.
- Where children have been identified as possibly suffering from bullying, all staff will be alerted to keep a particular watch on how they are especially at playtimes and transition times such as going to the cloakroom.

The procedure following a bullying incident is as follows:

1. Incident suspected/detected/reported
2. Member of the teaching staff informed and details recorded on SIMS. Family Inclusion Officer / members of Senior Leadership Team kept informed.
3. Discussion between an appropriate member of staff, who the pupil feels comfortable with, and the pupil who has been the victim of the alleged bullying. Action agreed and explained to the pupil; this will almost always involve the need to discuss the incident with the pupil(s) accused of bullying.
4. Discussion with the alleged perpetrator of the incident unless it is felt that this would be inappropriate at this stage.
5. Parents of all pupils informed of the concerns and actions proposed.
6. Discussions and agreed actions recorded on SIMS.
7. Where the evidence supports the decision that the incident is 'bullying', Stage 5/6 of Sanction Procedure detailed in the School's behaviour policy is carried out with the perpetrator(s). Where the evidence supports the decision that this is not 'bullying' but is 'unacceptable behaviour' the appropriate stage of the Sanctions Procedure will be followed.
8. Record of actions taken placed on SIMS.
9. Support will be agreed for all involved pupils where appropriate, both the 'victim' and 'perpetrator', and actioned as appropriate. These actions will also be recorded on SIMS.
10. All actions will be reviewed at a set point by the Family Inclusion Officer.
11. Situation will be monitored closely by a named member of staff, (usually the class teacher), and the Family Inclusion Officer / Senior Leadership Team.
12. Appropriate on-going support will be offered to the pupils where necessary and may include other agencies such as Barnados.

## Appendix 2

In combatting bullying in school we will:

- a. **Listen** to all pupils and parents and carers and ensure they influence strategies and approaches to prevent, report and respond to incidents of bullying.
- b. **Include everyone** - all pupils, including those with SEN/Disability, are included, valued and participate fully in all aspects of school life.
- c. **Respect** - all school staff are role models to others within the school and show how they treat others.
- d. **Challenge** - all forms of discriminatory language – including disablist language – is challenged and taken seriously.
- e. **Celebrate difference** – difference is actively and visibly celebrated and welcome across the whole school.
- f. **Understand** - all school staff, pupils and parents and carers understand what bullying is and what it isn't.
- g. **Believe** - all pupils, including disabled children and those with SEN, and their parents and carers are acknowledged, believed and taken seriously when reporting incidents of bullying.
- h. **Report bullying** - all pupils within the school and their parents and carers understand how to report incidents of bullying.
- i. **Take action** - responding quickly to all incidents of bullying. Pupils, including disabled pupils and those with SEN, will participate fully in decisions made about them and help to formulate appropriate action to respond to incidents of bullying.
- j. Have a **clear policy** - our school's anti-bullying policy reflects our values and is embedded within other school policies. Our policy is actively promoted to school staff, pupils and their parents and carers.
- k. **Support** – all pupils, parents and carers who have been the victim of bullying, including providing pastoral support where appropriate. Such support could be:
  - Cooperative group work throughout the school, to encourage children to work together, be tolerant of others' ideas, trust others and be more willing to listen.
  - Circle Time - to set time aside for pupils to take part in enjoyable games, activities and discussion in a safe environment where all opinions are valued.
  - Circle of friends - to build relationships around a vulnerable pupil with the pupil's and parent's agreement to offer support and friendship.
  - Befriending - to appoint a specific pupil(s) as a support / friend [appointed by a member of staff]
  - School watch - to allow pupils to improve their environment by taking responsibility for their behaviour and actions.
  - Support group - to involve the bullied pupil, those involved in the bullying and bystanders to form a group to support the bullied pupil. Responsibility for change lies with those involved in the bullying.
  - Mediation by adults - to establish ground rules that will enable the bully and the person being bullied to co-exist in school.