Anti-bullying Policy

Reviewed: September 2025

Anti-bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

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. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Bullying consists of doing anything which is hurtful to other children, either physically or mentally

and with respect to this issue the following points should be noted:

- The school will not tolerate bullying of any kind.
- Everyone connected with the school, in any capacity, will be tolerant of others, regardless of age, size, race, religion, interests, abilities or disabilities.
- Anyone witnessing bullying should inform a member of staff at once.
- Everyone connected with the school will be on the lookout for examples of bullying involving children inside or outside the school.
- Quiet areas will be set aside in the playground for those children who do not wish to play games or run around at playtime or lunchtime.
- Members of the staff will always be available to discuss with the children their worries or concerns.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person systematically over a period of time. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet ,such as email & internet chat room misuse
  Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
  Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera &video facilities
- **Any unfavourable** or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational need.

Low-level disruption and/or the use of offensive language can also have a significant impact on its intended target. If left unchallenged or dismissed, as banter or horseplay, this behaviour can lead to reluctance to report other behaviour.

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.
- 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 on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- 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"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- 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.

We acknowledge that children with SEND, may be more susceptible to all forms of bullying, and are more likely to be targeted due to difficulties they can face in communicating what has happened to them. Therefore, we make certain that SEND children are responded to carefully when they have or show signs of concern.

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to staff
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

1) The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
2) In serious cases, the behaviour policy may be invoked and 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.

Prevention

Strategies in place in school to make children aware of what bullying is and how victims may feel.

- writing a set of school rules
- PSHE work in anti-bullying week
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters

<u>E-safety and bullying</u>

Although the school does not allow pupils to access social networking sites in school and use of e-mail is restricted to RM Unify under supervision, we will endeavour to educate our children in 'cyber-bullying' to ensure their safety outside of school. Any such incidents will not be tolerated by the school and will be dealt with appropriately, in line with this policy.

Bullying outside school premises

Head teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89 (5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in the local area.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The head teacher will consider whether it is appropriate to notify the Police. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

Sexual Harassment

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which would include:

- Sexual comments
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting
- Physical behaviour
- Online conduct

Research shows that the most vulnerable groups at risk of sexual harassment include girls, LGBT+, children perceived as LGBT or SEND.

Sexual harassment creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviour. These behaviours should never be tolerated, passed off as 'banter' or part of growing up.

Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, make them feel intimated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Any reports of Sexual Harassment at Appleton Primary will be taken seriously, and the school will utilise appropriate sanctions, as outlined in the behaviour policy.

Screening, Searching and Confiscation

The Education Act 2011, allows staff to lawfully search electronic devices, without consent or parental permission, if there is a suspicion that the pupil has a device prohibited by school rules, or the staff member has good reason to suspect the device may be used to:

- cause harm,
- disrupt teaching,
- break school rules,
- commit an offence,
- cause personal injury, or
- damage property.

The *No Blame* Approach: a possible strategy

As part of the school's policy on bullying we will be advocating the *'no blame* ' approach. This is a strategy which can be tried as part of a whole school approach to bullying. In some circumstances other strategies may be more appropriate and should not be ruled out.

Step One- Interview with the victim

When the teacher finds out that bullying has happened she starts by talking to the victim about his/her feelings. She does not question him about the incidents but she does need to know who was involved.

Step two - convene a meeting with the people involved
The teacher arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved. This will include some bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying.

Step three - explain the problem
She tells them about the way the victim is feeling and might use a poem, piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise his distress. At no time does she discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

Step four - share responsibility
The teacher does not attribute blame but states that she knows 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. The teacher gives some positive responses but she does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step six - leave it up to them
The teacher ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. She arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

Step seven - meet them again
About a week later the teacher discusses with each student, including the victim, how things have been going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the young people involved in the process.
(some of the ideas in this policy are taken from the kidscape anti-bully policy)

Monitoring
Class teachers have a responsibility to monitor incidents of bullying and the success, or otherwise, of action taken in response to bullying. This information must be fed back to Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator who, along with senior management will be responsible for the overall monitoring of the strategies in place.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by members of the academy trust, and the governing body on a regular basis and at least once every year.

Complaints
If parents/carers are not satisfied with the response to any reports of bullying, they should contact the Headteacher or Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedures.