



POLEGATE
SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Definition of bullying

Bullying is repeated hurtful behaviour which makes other people feel uncomfortable or threatened whether this is intended or not. It can be difficult to defend against this type of behaviour.

'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying, via text messages or the internet, and is often motivated by prejudice. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.'
DFE March 2014

Bullying has many forms

Three main types are:

1 PHYSICAL

Hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings including money

2 VERBAL

Name calling, teasing, insulting, writing unkind notes/text messages/e-mail, racist remarks, homophobic remarks

3 INDIRECT

Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, spreading rumours, nasty looks

CYBER BULLYING

The rapid development of and widespread access to technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur outside the school. Cyber bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with potentially bigger audience. The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber bullying.

People react differently. It is not always possible to tell if someone is hurt or upset.

Possible signs of someone being bullied

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy, nervous, feigning illness or giving excuses to not attend school. They may show changes in their work patterns, lack concentration or truant from school.

Aims

At Polegate School we wish to encourage an environment where independence is valued and individuals can flourish without fear. Every pupil has the right to be safe and happy in Polegate School and be protected if feeling vulnerable. At Polegate we will not tolerate bullying of any kind.

Prevention

Our response to the issues of bullying do not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. We deal with the issue proactively and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This includes lessons about issues of difference, dedicated events, projects and assemblies. We work hard to create an ethos of outstanding behaviour where pupils treat one another and staff with respect. (refer to the Code of Conduct policy)

Encouragement to tell

It is important that we create an atmosphere in the school where students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed and that action taken will be sensitive to their concerns. Staff will always take allegations of bullying seriously and will deal with them promptly and appropriately. Not telling protects the bully or bullies. We fully encourage our pupils to tell if they or someone else is being bullied.

Dealing with a bullying incident

It should be made clear to the targeted pupil that revenge is not appropriate and to the bully that their behaviour is completely unacceptable. Every effort will be made to resolve the problem by involving both parties. We will apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs that a pupil may have and taking account of the needs of vulnerable pupils. We also consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator.

A number of decisions will need to be made which will depend on each individual incident. The following needs to be taken into consideration when dealing with a bullying incident:

- The feelings of the pupil who has been bullied.
- Response to be immediate, appropriate and with a sensitive investigation.
- The targeted child offered appropriate support.
- Pupils involved in the bullying are also offered support.
- Consideration given as to whether involvement of others, including the police is necessary.

Procedures

- A statement will be taken from pupils involved. (On standard Statement Form).
- If there is pupil injury, correct procedures will be followed to ensure the pupil gets necessary medical attention.
- Parents of both parties may be informed of what has happened and how it has been dealt with so far.
- It is important that incidents are recorded.
- Appropriate action will then be taken.
- All Bullying incidents will be logged centrally.
- If the bullying behaviour continues then further sanctions/actions will begin as appropriate.

Possible Sanctions/Action:

- Informal meeting with or between pupils with mediation.
- No-blame approach (see separate guidelines)
- Isolation at breaktimes/lunchtime.
- Involvement of Parent/Carer.
- School detention.
- Report Card.
- Fixed Term exclusion (in Isolation Room)
- Permanent exclusion.

Immediate possible Support/Strategies for the pupils:

- Counselling (refer through Inclusion Team).
- Anti-bullying support groups (refer through Inclusion Team).
- Keeping a diary.
- Buddy support system within class group.
- Self-Assertiveness sessions.
- Encouragement to tell should it re-occur.
- Lunchtime Social Club (refer through Deputy Headteacher)
- Frequent and regular monitoring.

Advice to Pupils

If you are being bullied, or you know that someone else is, please tell staff straight away and it will be dealt with. Not telling means the victim will continue to suffer and the bully will carry on bullying. We all have a responsibility to make sure that bullying is not allowed to continue in our school. Do not suffer in silence.

Advice to pupils on how to deal with bullying is given through circle times, PSHE programme and Anti-bullying displays.

Advice to Parents/Carers

Please contact the school, your child's Class Teacher or Team Leader, as soon as you are aware of any bullying incident either to do with your child or someone else's child. Refer to 'Parent Information Guide'. The school will take your concerns seriously and action will be taken.

Advice to Staff

Polegate School will not tolerate bullying. If bullying is brought to your attention, then you must complete the form (appendix 1.) Ask the students to provide as much detail as they can about the incident and record this. If the member of staff investigating is not the class teacher then ensure that the statement is then passed to the Class Teacher and Team Leader. They will then be aware of the situation and can monitor. After full investigation it may be deemed necessary to inform parents.

Staff and prefects on break duty need to be particularly vigilant at all times: in corridors between lessons, in the playground and the toilets. These are the times and places where targets are more vulnerable and bullying is not easily seen. The presence of staff is a key deterrent to bullying.

Bullying outside the school's premises

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises to such an extent as is 'reasonable' This can relate to bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises such as on school or public transport or in Polegate itself.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or pose a threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

The school will:

- Investigate all reported incident and record.
- Take action as detailed above as required.
- Encourage Parents to report the incidents to the local police and discuss 'trouble spots'
- Provide support as appropriate within the school.
- Map safe routes to school and let pupils know.
- Talk to students about how to avoid or deal with bullying outside the school premises.

Procedures for non-teaching staff when aware of a Bullying incident taking place

Often you may see bullying taking place around the school building, in the dinner queues etc. and it is important that you are aware of what you can do about it.

If a pupil discloses that they are being bullied, or if you notice that a Pupil is being bullied, the following should take place:

- Ask the pupil if they would like something to be done about it. They should be encouraged to make a statement. The bullying will not stop if nothing is said or done.
- If the pupil is in agreement, report it to the Class Teacher who will then refer it to their Team Leader if appropriate.
- You could let the pupil know that a number of actions could take place: For your information this is what we do offer:
 - A quiet informal word with the bully/ies – no sanctions
 - A mediation between both parties – informal, no sanctions
 - A no-blame meeting – formal
 - Pupils could be sanctioned – isolation / exclusion
 - Parents could be involved
- The pupil completes statement. (Statement forms can be found in 'Bullying Log' in Headteacher's office or on the staff drive).
- Member of staff initiates action. Action recorded and dated on statement form.
- Follow up and updates made as and when appropriate.

During the investigation the following is considered:

- Severity of the incident.
- Is it appropriate for the Class Teacher to investigate this bullying incident or is it best dealt with by another member of staff?
- Is the pupil injured?
- Should the parents be involved?
- Should the police be involved?
- Are there any other incidents in the bullying Log (relating to these pupils)

The different sorts of support for students include the following:

- Anti-bullying support group
- Safe spaces at break times
- Referral to outside agency

IMPORTANT: A central bullying log for all year groups is kept in Headteacher's office. Statement / Action sheets are to be found here and all incidents should be recorded with actions (including updates) signed and dated in the Log.

Forms are also kept on the school system in the staff drive.

Procedures for staff when dealing with a Bullying Incident

If a pupil disclosed that they are being bullied or you suspect that bullying is occurring, the following should take place:

- Ask the pupil if they would like something to be done about it. They should be encouraged to make a statement. The bullying will not stop if nothing is said or done.
- If the pupil is in agreement, report it to the Class Teacher who should then take over investigation and actions.
- Explain to the pupil that a number of actions could take place:
 - A quiet informal word with the bully/ies – no sanctions
 - A mediation between both parties – informal, no sanctions
 - No-blame meeting – formal
 - Pupils could be sanctioned – isolation/exclusion
 - Parents could be involved
- Ask pupil how they would like the situation to be dealt with, having given above examples.
- The pupil completes statement. (Statement forms can be found in 'Bullying Log' in Headteacher's office).
- Member of staff initiates action. Action recorded and dated on statement form.
- Follow up and updates made as and when appropriate.

During the investigation the following should be considered:

- Severity of the incident.
- Is it appropriate for the Class Teacher to investigate this bullying incident or is it best dealt with by another member of staff?
- Is the pupils injured?
- Should the parents be involved?
- Should the police be involved?
- Are there any other incidents in the bullying Log (relating to these pupils).

Other Support for students could include:

- **Anti-bullying support group** – See Team Leader.
- **Safe spaces at break times** – See Team Leader.
- **Web Sites:** www.coastkid.org.uk
www.childline.org.uk
www.kidscape.org.uk
- **The AntiBullying Alliance:** founded 2002 by NSPCC, good practice
- **Beat Bullying:** lesson plans for teachers and resources for parents.

Telephone support

The Bullying Line 0800 0520228

Kidscape 020 7730 3300

Childline 0800 1111

Cyber bullying

ChildNet International

Think U Know

Digizen

Advice on Child Internet Safety 1:0