Elm Tree
Primary Academy

Anti-bullying Policy

Date: 22.10.24 WPlant AC CHAIR.

Last updated: 2/9/24

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Staff Responsible: BBandy

Statement of intent

Elm Tree Academy believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour.

This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying. These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the school's Relationships and Regulation Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying.

Legal framework

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

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010 Education Act 2011
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997 DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- DfE (2018) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- Public Order Act 1986 DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- Communications Act 2003 DfE (2019) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- Human Rights Act 1998 DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

This policy operates in conjunction with the Relationships and Regulation Policy, the E-safety Policy, the Safeguarding Policy, The Equal Opportunities policy and the PSHE Policy.

Definition

Bullying can be defined as; "Behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally". (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", March 2014).

Bullying can include: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

This includes the same inappropriate and harmful behaviours expressed via digital devices (cyberbullying) such as the sending of inappropriate messages by phone, text, Instant Messenger,

through websites and social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading images by mobile phone or via the internet.

Forms of Bullying

Bullying can happen to anyone. Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally

- Physically

- Emotionally

- Online (cyber-bullying)

These can be used to target victims for different reasons, such as;

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.

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 additional needs.

-Pupils who are adopted or Children who are Looked After

-Pupils suffering from a health problem.

-Pupils with caring responsibilities.

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.

Roles and Responsibilities

All pupils and adults have a shared responsibility to eliminate bullying from school and circumstances out pupils may find themselves a part of. With this in mind, our approach is as follows:

The role of the Academy Councillors

- Evaluate and review the policy to ensure it is not discriminatory.

- Implement the policy.

- Ensure that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.

- Ensure the school is inclusive.

- Analyse any bullying data to establish patterns and review the policy in light of these.

The role of the Headteacher

- Review and amend the policy.

- Keep a record of all reported bullying incidents to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.

- Analyse the data in the bullying record at regular intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.

- Arrange appropriate training for staff.

- The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

- The Headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, in turn, making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The role of ALL school staff

- Be alert to social dynamics in their class.

- Be available for pupils who wish to report bullying.

- Provide follow-up support after bullying incidents.

- Be alert to possible bullying situations and inform pupils' class team of such observations.

- Refrain from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.

- Understand the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.

- Report any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.

- Staff actively supports anti-bullying strategies by teaching children directly about safeguarding issues and cyber-bullying. Information is regularly sent home to parents/carers to further develop parental awareness of safeguarding issues on the internet and mobile devices.

The role of Parents and Carers

- Informing their child's class team if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.

- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any worrying changes.

The role of Pupils

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.

- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.

- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.

- Keeping evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying.

Statutory Implications

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

The Headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the Headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.

Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include:

violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

Addressing and preventing bulling

Elm Tree Academy has a whole school commitment to eradicating a bullying culture. Any and all incidents relating to bullying are recorded and monitored through electronic systems.

Bullying will be discussed, addressed and taught through many areas of the school curriculum. Whether it is in direct lessons or through snack, playtime, lunch or other transitional opportunities that pupils may want to discuss things on their mind. More specifically bullying will be addressed through:

- The PSHE and RSE curriculum will support and enhance pupil's confidence, build upon their knowledge of rights and wrongs, and give them the tools to help them lead well-grounded and independent lives, wherever possible.

- circle time; where emotions and social situations can be discussed, modelled and reviewed as a small group

- Problem solving, collaborative and co-operation games through the use of circle or reflection time, will help pupils to develop trust and will encourage them to appreciate the feelings of others.

- A high ratio of adults to pupils in the dining hall or at playtimes to support and supervise where necessary.

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.

Signs of bullying

Staff, along with other stakeholders, will be alert to the followings signs that may indicate a pupil may be the victim of bullying:

Being frightened to travel to or from school	Asking to be driven to school
Truancy	Unwillingness to attend school
Becoming anxious or lacking confidence	Saying that they are feeling unwell in the morning
Decreased involvement in school work	Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
Missing possessions	Missing dinner money
Asking for extra money or stealing	Cuts or bruises
Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages	Lack of appetite
Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices	Change in behaviour and attitude at home or school

Although the above signs might not be an indication of bullying, they may be due to a deeper social, emotional or mental health issue and so are still worth investigating. In addition, staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a person is likely to have bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to the pupil becoming aggravated

- They have been the victim of domestic abuse

- Their academic performance has started to fall, which has meant they are stressed

- If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's class team, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision by providing relevant training and support for all staff. Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. If a member of staff is unsure about whether an incident(s) of bullying has taken place, discuss with a member of SLT or DSL to determine whether it is an incident of bullying.

Peer on peer sexual abuse

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

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 our pupils all of whom have an EHCP. 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 have better relationships with some adults, more than others and this may be who they choose to disclose an incident to. Please refer to our safeguarding policy where pupils will be supported and reassured throughout, that nothing can be kept confidentially if they or someone else is in danger of harm.

Any and all incidents of peer on peer abuse MUST be recorded.

Cyber bullying

Elm Tree Academy has an E-safety policy which outlines the school's approach to cyber-bullying. We have a zero-tolerance approach to any bullying, including cyberbullying. If a child(ren) are victims of cyber-bullying, the procedure is to talk to the child to establish the facts, talk with the other party/ parties involved and ALWAYS record to report to SLT and/or DSL.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, Elm Tree Academy has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices without parental consent where there is good reason to do so.

We receive updates on new government papers and technology, allowing us to keep up to date with new technologies, apps and trends to increase staff awareness and knowledge.

Involvement of Pupils and Parents/Carers

We will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.

- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.

- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.

- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.

- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.

Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.