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Anti-bullying Strategy

Park View Primary Academy

Policy for Anti-Bullying and Harassment

Definition - Bullying:

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour (including aggression); repeated often over a period of time which is difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

A person is bullied if he or she is exposed regularly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more persons.

Bullying is a behaviour which can be defined as the repeated attack, (physical, psychological, social or verbal) by those in a position of power, which is formally or situationally defined, on those who are powerless to resist. This behaviour has the intention of causing distress for gain or gratification.

Bullying can be an attitude rather than an act. Behaviour can be identified as bullying only by measuring the effect the acts have on the vulnerable child.

Bullying is different from random or individual acts of aggression and is not accidental. Bullying is not isolated incidents arising from poor communication and understanding between children.

Definition - Harassment:

Harassment is statutorily defined as, any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance, words, conduct or action, usually repeated or persistent that, being directed at a specific person, annoys, alarms, or causes substantial emotional distress in that person and serves no purpose.

Targeting others, with the apparent intention of causing distress, embarrassment, or other discomfort; or with a view to the violation of the dignity of a person on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, gender or sexual orientation.

Harassment occurs when one person continually or deliberately offends another with actions (such as comments intended to hurt, offend or conflict with another user's beliefs)

Bullying and harassment can take a number of forms, but the three main types are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings, damaging personal property.
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks including text messaging/emails, writing offensive graffiti.
- Indirect – spreading rumours, exclusion from social groups.

Aims and Objectives

Bullying and harassment are wrong and damaging to individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it by developing a whole school ethos in which bullying and harassment is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all children can learn without anxiety.

This policy aims to produce a consistent response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

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We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying and harassment, making clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the prevention and eradication of bullying and harassment in our school.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying and harassment.

Preventative Action

Ensuring all staff are aware of and trained to follow the school's anti-bullying and harassment policy.

Assessing the extent of the problem through surveys and discussions with parents and pupils.

Continuing to provide many opportunities to promote the policy, including during assemblies and collective worship. Projects, role-plays or stories can indicate what pupils can do to prevent bullying.

Learning Mentor involvement including focused peer support groups, restorative practice and family support.

Worry boxes in all classrooms, accessible to all pupils in a confidential manner.

Nurture Groups and Social Skills Groups offering a safe and supportive environment for pupils to voice any concerns or worries or talk confidentially.

Staff setting an example, which is firm, respects those who are different and avoids being domineering, manipulative or bullying, reduces conflict.

Curriculum:-

PHSCE – Weekly PHSCE sessions looking at and dealing with social and emotional development for all children. We as a school observe 'National Anti-Bullying Week'. PHSCE and Circle Time sessions must not be a naming and shaming session and must have a clear and relevant purpose

History - Exploring and understanding the impact of racism, intimidation, persecution throughout history.

Literacy - Exploring feelings and emotions in texts, such as isolation, intimidation and abuse through texts, lessons, discussions and visiting theatre groups dealing directly with bullying.

Who are the victims?

Any child can be a victim. A likely indicator of bullying is when a child's demeanor or behaviour changes. There is a range of behaviours which we need to be aware of in case they either provide a catalyst to bullying or are an indicator of a potential bullying and harassment situation.

Indicators can include extreme nervousness, reluctance to come to school, depression; inability to cope; social/communication disorders; hygiene problems; very poorly dressed; not easily make friends; poor communication; clumsiness; worrying about bigger children; poor physical skills; feeling like they should always be polite and not speak out.

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Natural victims or those provoking bullying: some children want attention at all costs and tease, name call and provoke others and then tell staff when others retaliate [This is a very small group of children].

Social prejudice, cultural and minority group victims: staff should be aware of name calling and the impact of this and any groups that are formed that are specific, at all times integration and inclusion should be paramount

Who are the bullies?

Any child is a potential bully. They usually have little empathy with their victims, nor feelings of guilt. They often have problems at home or educational problems and have poor attitudes to school or authority. They are often, but not always, physically bigger and stronger, well co-ordinated, and they may enjoy conflict and aggression. They may be loud, rude and very bossy. Some may have been bullied themselves and have very low self-esteem. They may feel the only way to gain that is to bully others.

PROCEDURES:

A clear procedure for children

The victims

Everyone needs to know exactly what to do if there is a problem. The victims are encouraged to tell the following people in these situations: -

- <u>In the classroom</u> - the teacher or a member of the support staff. It is an established routine that the children can tell a member of staff or write down their concerns and put them in the class worry box.
- <u>In the playground</u> – the staff on duty (where necessary incidents will be passed on to the class teacher).
- <u>During the Midday Break</u> – the support staff or lunchtime supervisors. These incidents are then communicated to the teachers.
- <u>On the way to school or on the way home</u> – parents or carers, the class teacher, a member of the support staff, another member of staff, another pupil.

The silent majority

Other children witnessing bullying are aware that they should also "tell" the above people just as the victim should do. The reasons why this is necessary are explained to pupils at every opportunity.

A clear procedure for staff

Staff in our school take all forms of bullying and harassment seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place.

Should there be any incident of bullying staff document everything they have witnessed or that has been disclosed to them by the victim, a witness or a parent/carer. This is recorded on a Behaviour Incident Form. Concerns are passed to the Learning Mentor who will take action to prevent further incidents.

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Intervention Procedures

Park View Primary takes a problem solving approach. The parents/carers will be informed that their child will be participating in this process and will be consulted throughout. All actions will be clearly documented.

No Blame 'Restorative Practice' – How It Works

What is the "No Blame" support group approach?

When bullying has been observed or reported then the "No Blame" approach offers a simple seven-step procedure, which can be used by a teacher or other facilitator. Each step has been carefully planned as a single part of the whole and variations may undermine the success of the method.

The steps are summarised below:

- Step one – Talk with the victim.

When the facilitator finds out that bullying has happened, she/he starts by talking to the victim. During this conversation the listener encourages the victim to describe how he/she feels with reflective comments such as, "That must be very hard for you", "So you have felt really upset".

The purpose is not to discover factual evidence about this or other events; if the victim wants to include evidence in the account this is always reframed to establish the resulting distress. For example, a comment like, "They have all been ignoring me, nobody will talk to me" might be replied to with a response like, "So, you felt really lonely and you were upset that you had nobody to talk to".

It is important that the victim understands and gives consent to the process. Sometimes there may be a fear that it could lead to further victimisation but when the non-punitive aspect is fully explained the victim usually feels safe, and relieved that something is being done. He/she may want the perpetrators to understand how much distress has been caused. Talking to someone else who has been through the experience might give further reassurance.

The facilitator should end the meeting by:

Checking that nothing confidential has been discussed which should not be disclosed to the group;

Asking the victim to suggest the names of those involved, some colluders or observers and some friends who will make up the group;

Inviting the victim to produce a piece of writing or a picture which will illustrate his unhappiness;

Offering the victim an opportunity to talk again at any time during the procedure if things are not going well.

The victim is not invited to join the group to present his/her own account, as this could provoke accusation, denial or justification and undermine the problem-solving approach.

- Step two – Convene a meeting with the people involved.

The facilitator arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved and suggested by the victim. A group of six to eight works well.

Version 1.0

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This is an opportunity for the facilitator to use his/her judgement to balance the group so that helpful and reliable young people are included alongside those whose behaviour has been causing distress. The aim is to use the strengths of group members to bring about the best outcome.

- Step three – Explain the problem.

The facilitator starts by telling the group that he/she has a problem – he/she is worried about "John" who is having a very hard time at the moment. The facilitator recounts the story of the victim's unhappiness and uses the piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise his/her distress. At no time does the facilitator discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

- Step four – Share responsibility.

When the account is finished, the listeners may look downcast or uncomfortable and be uncertain about the reason for the meeting. Some may be anxious about possible punishment. The facilitator makes a change in the mood here by stating explicitly that:

There is a joint responsibility to help John to be happy and safe.

The group has been convened to help solve the problem.

- Step five – Ask the group members for their ideas.

Group members are usually genuinely moved by the account of John's distress and relieved that they are not in trouble. No-one has been pushed into a defensive corner by accusations and the power of the group has shifted from the "bully leader" to the group as a whole, whose members withdraw consent for the behaviour to continue.

Each member of the group is then encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. These ideas are stated in the "I" language of intention. "I will walk to school with him". "I will ask him to sit with me at dinner". Ideas are owned by the group members and not imposed by the facilitator. The facilitator makes positive responses, but does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

- Step six – Leave it up to them.

The facilitator ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. No written record is made – it is left as a matter of trust. The facilitator thanks them, expresses confidence in a positive outcome and arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

- Step seven – Meet them again.

About a week later, the facilitator 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.

These meetings are with one group member at a time so that each can give a statement about his/her contribution without creating a competitive atmosphere. It does not matter if everyone has not kept to his intention, as long as the bullying has stopped. The victim does not have to become the most popular person in school, just to be safe and happy.

The entire process showing the seven steps is available as a training video Michael's Story – The No Blame Approach. Maines and Robinson, 1992. A fuller account of the development of the work is published in a book "Crying for Help". Robinson and Maines 1997 Lucky Duck publishing Limited.

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In 1996-8 Kingston-upon-Hull Behaviour Support Service started a project to support schools with anti-bullying work. They used a variation of the No Blame Approach and followed up 50 cases. They had an immediate 80% success rate and with further support all cases were successful or partially successful. The

article appeared in Educational Psychology in Practice April 1998.

Incidents that are deemed to be bullying will be recorded on a 'Behaviour Incident Form' and parents/carers of the perpetrator will be informed if this action has been taken.

The SLT

• It is the responsibility of the Principal to implement the school anti- bullying and harassment strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying and harassment.

• The Principal reports annually to the EAB about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying and harassment policy. The Learning Mentor informs and record the number of recorded incidents of bullying in any one term.

• If the seven step problem solving approach has not been successful, the Principal or Vice Principal will implement the School's behaviour management procedures. This will involve the perpetrator and his/her parents/carers meeting with the Principal and/or Vice Principal and other relevant staff to resolve the situation.

The role of the EAB

• The EAB supports the Principal in all attempts to eliminate bullying and harassment from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the EAB does not allow bullying and harassment to take place in our school, and that any incidents that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

• The EAB monitors the incidents of bullying and harassment that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The EAB require the Principal to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and harassment and to report to the EAB on request about the effectiveness of school's strategies.

The role of the parents

• Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

• Contact with parents is essential and we listen keenly to their views. They will be able to contribute important information and feedback to the Academy, but also become a significant part of a helpful answer to the problem.

• We are able to give advice to parents about possible signs of bullying and harassment and how they can help. We help parents to understand that even bullies need their self-esteem raised.

• Parents have a responsibility to support the academy's anti-bullying and harassment policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the Academy. The chances of success are greatest when we find common ground.

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Staff training

Training is available, over time, for all staff. Using these guidelines, Lunchtime Supervisors receive advice and have discussions through their meetings with Learning Mentor.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring by the Learning Mentor and Class Teachers identifies progress and enables follow-up, showing whether the policy is really effective.

 Using a whole school approach to bullying, schools typically find that:

- Staff are more aware and vigilant in their response to bullying;
- Fewer pupils report being bullied or that they are bullying others;
- More pupils say that they would not join in bullying someone else;
- More pupils would tell a member of staff if they were being bullied;

Awareness raising increases pupils' understanding of bullying and makes them more likely to report incidents.

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