



Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed: 24 July 2023

By: Headteacher & Deputy Headteacher

Review Cycle: Annual

STATUTORY POLICY

WEBSITE POLICY

Apple Orchard School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Apple Orchard School is a safe caring and positive environment dedicated to supporting individual needs and seeking effective change to send our children and young people forward into society.

ANTI-BULLYING RATIONALE

The School has a responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for all our students, and indeed staff, and tackling bullying is a part of that responsibility. All staff, both teaching and nonteaching have an important part to play in this.

Bullying is long-standing violence, either physical or psychological, conducted by an individual or a group, directed against another individual who is not able to defend himself/herself in an actual situation.

Bullying is unacceptable.

There are no circumstances in which it can be condoned. We know that bullying interferes with social development, it can hinder the child's ability to perform at school; and at worse it can be a major contributory factor to serious childhood problems. It does not build a child's character, nor should it be an inevitable part of growing up. It is an unpleasant and, at times, a devastating experience that can be controlled by vigilant teachers and parents.

Bullying may occur in or around the school. An alert teacher who not only listens to what the students say, but notices what is not verbalised, can detect bullying, and take positive steps to prevent it.

Finally, it is important to remember that children do not seek to be bullied and that those being bullied need to be reassured that it is not an indication of weakness.

Apple Orchard School overtly promotes the value of each individual and the need for tolerance and mutual respect. We actively campaign against bullying and as a community we acknowledge our responsibility to protect all individuals, both students and staff, in our school and to act promptly if any cases of bullying are discovered.

As in any community, there is always a possibility that some form of bullying may occur. It is essential that we do our utmost to prevent bullying from taking place in our school and to encourage an ethos where bullying is acknowledged as totally wrong, and the reporting of bullying is viewed as the correct and responsible action. No individual, student, or staff, should have to accept any form of intimidating behaviour, verbal or physical, and such anti-social behaviour has no place in our school.

We are committed to ensure that each child can benefit to the full, from all the opportunities available at Apple Orchard School. We guarantee that any cases of bullying will always be investigated, eradicated if possible, and the issues resolved.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Any form of behaviour which isolates, humiliates, belittles, or which mentally or physically hurts another person.

Bullying is an abuse of power, physical or mental, which causes distress or loss of self-esteem to the victim. Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour.

It can be –

PHYSICAL - A child can be threatened, punched, pushed, kicked, hit, spat at, tripped up or attacked in some other way.

VERBAL - Verbal abuse can take the form of name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours or persistent teasing. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, physical appearance, social disability, or any individual characteristics.

EXCLUSION - A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussion, conversations or activities, by those they believe to be their friends.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT - Students may have their property damaged or stolen. Threats may be used by the bully to force the student to hand over property or money to the bully.

CYBER -BULLYING - Bullying may take place through text messaging, Instant Messaging, mobile phones, Facebook or similar social networking media.

INCIDENTS OFF THE SCHOOL PREMISES - The School will take steps to see that any bullying that occurs outside school does not spill over into the school.

POLICY GUIDELINES

All reports and/incidents of bullying to be taken seriously. If anyone witnesses, is told of or is aware of a bullying incident he/she should pass on the information to the Headteacher. The seriousness of the problem will determine whether the House Managers/ Principal Manager is involved.

PROMOTION OF POLICY

PSHE, whole school meetings, student voice meetings, house meetings and group therapy are used to promote a policy of anti-bullying.

SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

Through all our communication with students we indicate our disapproval of any form of bullying and our conscious affirmation of the uniqueness and worth of each individual in our community. In all our handovers and lessons (particularly Personal and Social Education) we confirm that bullying is wrong and that it will not be tolerated in our community.

FURTHERMORE, WE AIM TO:

- ensure that all students have the confidence not to suffer in silence – the confidence to disclose.
- encourage students to treat everyone with respect.
- use opportunities to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards one another, e.g., in the PSHE programme.
- encourage students to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes to other people; this includes a review of what friendship really is.
- organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying.
- have a firm but fair discipline structure where the rules are few, simple and easy to understand.
- deal quickly, firmly, and fairly with any complaints, involving care staff where necessary.

THE SCHOOL WILL ALWAYS TREAT BULLYING AS A SERIOUS OFFENCE AND TAKE EVERY POSSIBLE ACTION TO ERADICATE IT FROM OUR COMMUNITY.

PROMOTION OF STUDENT'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS BEING BULLIED TAKE ACTION, TELL SOMEONE - DON'T SUFFER IN SILENCE!

Never think that silence is the best policy and that the bullying will just go away or that the situation will get worse if you report it. If bullies are identified, they will be dealt with and you will be helping to prevent the bullying from being done to someone else. Your positive action in reporting any bullying is something to be proud of.

THESE GUIDELINES WILL HELP:

- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is WRONG!
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Be assertive – try to ignore the bullying and say NO firmly. Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or a member of staff.
- Stay with a group of people. There is safety in numbers.
- Fighting back may make things worse. You could get hurt or blamed for starting the trouble. Don't fight back.

Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim more unhappy and on their own. If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers will always take bullying seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse. Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

HOW CAN WE STOP BULLYING?

Tell on the bullies - it's not 'telling tales', it's standing up for your rights as a person.

Ask for help - don't take the law into your own hands, you could make things worse and could end up getting into trouble yourself.

Counselling - good advice and support may help bullies change their way.

Listen to the victims - a victim needs to be given time and support.

Take it seriously - all incidents will be investigated, and appropriate measures taken.

Are you a bully? - if you are then you should expect to be punished and your care staff informed of your behaviour.

STRATEGY IN CASE OF BULLYING

Headteacher to evaluate the report or complaint.

All incidents, however trivial, should be recorded on a Cause for Concern Form and passed on. Only then can a pattern be identified.

Reassure student/s that the matter will be dealt with urgently.

Interview student/s being bullied and/or student/s who is/are accused of bullying and any potential witnesses and put appropriate strategies into action.

Take written signed statements from all those involved. All statements should be completed in private in an appropriate location.

Assure both bully and victim that behaviour vis-à-vis each other will be observed.

If appropriate, bully and victim should meet with the Headteacher, and if applicable the House Manager, to resolve difficulties. Where appropriate either whole school meeting to be called and led Headteacher to discuss the particular form of bullying – on grounds that 'there is no such thing as an innocent bystander'.

Where appropriate the PSHE Programme, in-house boys' meetings, or specific Restorative Justice meeting, may be used to address a particular issue. If bullying is considered to have caused emotional damage, it may be necessary for the bully and the victim to have counselling.

CARE STAFF'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING:

AS A CARER:

Always take an active role in your young person's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent, etc. Look for unusual behaviour in your young people. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard. If you feel your young person may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the School IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously, and appropriate action will follow.

Tell the young person there is nothing wrong with him. It is not his fault that he is being bullied. It is important that you advise the young person not to fight back. It can make matters worse. Make sure your young person is fully aware of the School policy concerning bullying and assure him that he must not be afraid to ask for help.

The School has designated a member of staff, Rebecca Smale, Headteacher, who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Carers or students may approach her in confidence if they have serious concerns about the welfare of a student.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED

If bullying is suspected, we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully, and any witnesses.

If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:

HELP AND SUPPORT WILL BE GIVEN AS IS APPROPRIATE TO BOTH THE VICTIMS AND THE BULLIES:

We support the victims in the following ways:

- by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about their experience with teacher, teaching assistant, any other staff member.
 - by informing the victim's social worker / guardian where appropriate.
 - by offering continued support when they feel they need it.
 - by arranging for them to be escorted when they feel they need it.
 - by arranging for them to be escorted to and from the school premises.
 - by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.
- We also discipline, yet try to help the bullies in the following ways:

- by talking about what has happened, to discover why they have become involved.
- by informing the bullies' carers.
- by continuing to work with the bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.

- by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

DISCIPLINARY STEPS:

- The bully(ies) will be warned officially to stop offending and may have to apologise to their victim.
- The bully (ies') care staff and possibly social workers will be informed.
- They may be excluded from the recreational areas at break and lunch times.
- If they do not stop bullying, they may be excluded, for a fixed period.

RECORDING BULLYING INCIDENTS (CONCERNS) IN SCHOOL

All cases of suspected bullying are investigated thoroughly with consultation with victims, suspected perpetrators, and witnesses. Action will be taken as and where appropriate and parents will always be kept informed.

The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will record details of any bullying incident using a Cause for Concern Form which is kept as record of the incident, investigations and subsequent action taken. Similarly, incidents of a racial or religious nature (so called religious hate or race hate) are also recorded and are dealt with in the same through way as bullying incidents.

The school has a zero tolerance towards any form of discrimination and works tirelessly to promote tolerance and mutual respect amongst all the students.

ANTI-BULLYING PROGRAMMES IN PSHE

The PSHE Programme is a central part of the school's Anti-Bullying strategy. The PSHE programme is delivered in all year groups and as part of the "Stay Safe" theme, extensive time is given to antibullying issues. This includes particular focus on the prevalence of cyber bullying in society today.

ANTI-BULLYING - GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

BULLYING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AT APPLE ORCHARD SCHOOL

This is the message that we must get over to our students. We should tell them this in words and in our actions.

As a staff we can help by the following means:

- Actively supporting the school anti-bullying policy and ensuring that students do not suffer in silence.
- Being aware of bullying in our classrooms and around the school.
- Reporting any incidents or suspicions as soon as possible. Examples of bullying include physical aggression, threats, demanding money, damaging someone's property, spreading rumours, name-calling and deliberately leaving someone out.

- Giving any young person who has been bullied our help and support.
- Report any serious concerns to the Headteacher.

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF:

Watch for early signs of distress in students – deterioration in work, spurious illness, isolation, the desire to remain with adults, erratic attendance. Whilst this behaviour may be symptomatic of other problems, it may be the early signs of bullying. Take all incidents of bullying seriously.

Remain calm: you are in charge.

Reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun and give the bully control of the situation.

OFFER THE VICTIM IMMEDIATE SUPPORT BY:

- moving closer to those involved – make your presence known.
- taking action as quickly as possible
- separating those involved (avoiding physical contact unless necessary, and then using only the minimum force necessary to prevent further harm being inflicted)
- removing either bully or victim, depending on circumstances, away from the scene
- reassuring the victim that staff can and will help.

The bully must be told by the member of staff directly involved that his behaviour is unacceptable. Reacting aggressively gives the message that it is all right to bully if you have the power. Disapproval expressed in a calm; rational way is much more likely to be effective. All incidents, however trivial, should be recorded and passed to the Headteacher. Only then can a pattern be identified. In the event of a serious bullying incident, immediate referral should be made to the Headteacher. Serious bullying incidents inside or outside the classroom should be dealt with initially by the member of staff on hand. In both cases the Headteacher must be informed, and she will liaise with the House Managers over the action to be taken. The school has a responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for all our students, and indeed staff, and tackling bullying is part of that responsibility. All staff, both teaching and nonteaching, have an important part to play in this.

BULLYING INCIDENTS INVOLVING STAFF

Bullying may occur between professional teaching staff, support staff and other adult staff within the school community. Staff may feel threatened by an individual or group of students. The school recognises that such incidents may occur, and all such incidents will be taken very seriously and will not be tolerated. In the first instance, staff should report their concerns to a senior colleague, a member of the Senior Leadership Team (Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, SENCO). In the event of the issue remaining unresolved or persistent bullying, staff may refer to the grievance procedure as set out in the staff contract.