

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed by Mr D Mckeon

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Version Control

Current version	Previous version	Summary of changes made
[May 2022]		Existing policy re-written May 2022. To be reviewed May 2023

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. Principles

Little Lever School takes bullying very seriously and is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable, whether it is in the school or on off-site activities. We recognise that bullying can occur, and if bullying does occur, all students should report it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

The Trust is committed to working with pupils and parents to provide a learning environment that is secure and supportive so that all individuals can develop academically and socially free from fear of ridicule, harassment or physical threat.

Incidents of bullying will always be taken seriously and followed up by staff.

Parents have an essential role to play in counteracting bullying. Where bullying is clearly established, parents of both victim and perpetrator will always be contacted and the school will seek to involve them in securing solutions.

2. What is bullying?

Whilst there is no legal definition of bullying, the Gov.Uk website define bullying in schools as behaviour that is repeatedly intending to hurt someone, either physically or emotionally. Bullying results in pain and distress to the affected person. It is usually repeated, often over a period of time and often at a time when it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

There are a number of types of bullying:

- Emotional: excluding from a group, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating
- Physical: hitting, punching, pinching, kicking or taking someone's belongings
- Verbal: name-calling, insulting, indirect bullying through spreading stories about someone, threats or making fun of someone's size, shape, appearance etc.
- Racist: racial taunts, gestures, making fun of someone's religion
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Ability based: because of learning ability or physical ability
- Cyber bullying: using social media in an inappropriate manner relating to offensive messages or images (individually or within group settings)
- Mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.

Bullying may also be prejudice-based, and may focus on:

- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Body image
- Homophobia or prejudice against LGBTQ+ students
- Looked After children
- Race and ethnicity
- Religion and belief
- Sectarianism

- Sex and gender
- Disabilities
- Young carers
- Social and economic prejudice
- Equality and diversity prejudice.

What bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not an occasional falling out with friends, a one-off negative comment or an argument that might develop. Children do sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When problems of this kind arise, it should not be classed as bullying. It is an important part of a child's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns or an altercation between young people. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships. However, the school takes all incidents which undermine the safety and well-being of students very seriously.

3. Signs of bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Changes to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, or not attending after-school enrichment activities)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Self-harming
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away.

4. Why is it essential to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to suffer from bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Whenever the opportunity arises, it must be made profoundly clear that bullying will not be tolerated at Little Lever School. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all students so that they can grow and learn in a relaxed and safe setting. Tackling bullying is the responsibility of all members of the school community. We tackle bullying as an issue because we believe that:

- Bullying makes people unhappy and leads to low self-esteem

- Students who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their studies
- Some students avoid being bullied by not attending school
- Students who observe unchallenged bullying behaviour may copy this anti-social behaviour.

5. Measures the school puts in place to counteract the potential for bullying

- Ensure that staff are trained effectively in the matter.
- All staff must report any incidences of bullying so that it can be tackled swiftly and effectively.
- The school ensures effective supervision of pupils before school, at social time and after school.
- Regular pupil voice surveys review the effectiveness of the school's measures in counteracting bullying and identifying 'hot spots' around the site.
- The school will always use opportunities within the school curriculum to discuss aspects of bullying, to emphasise how serious an issue it is deemed, and to explore appropriate ways of behaving towards each other.
- Teachers will ensure that they do not use teaching materials or equipment which might portray a negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, gender, sexuality ability/disability etc.
- Teachers will encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect, in line with our core value of being kind.
- On the school intranet, restrict access to certain websites and monitor e-mail traffic through security software.
- Regulate the use of mobile phones during the school day through being a Mobile-Free School.

6. Action to be taken when bullying is suspected

All staff have a responsibility to tackle bullying. If bullying is suspected staff will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses and take statements. It is recognised that in some situations 'victims' may exaggerate or invent bullying incidents and members of staff need to be aware of this.

If a child is being bullied or feels at risk of being bullied there are many ways in which they can report this. They may report this to their Form Tutor initially, or their Year Leader, or any member of staff who can then take the appropriate course of action. Students can also discreetly email the stayingsafe@little-lever.bolton.sch.uk address if they feel more comfortable reporting it in this way which is checked by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If parents suspect the child is being bullied their first port of call should be the Year Leader, who in some circumstances may refer it to a member of the Senior Leadership Team designated to the specific year group.

Social networking sites are sometimes used for bullying and any threats made on such a site and acted on in school will be classed as pre-meditated and are likely to result in a more severe sanction.

If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken in consultation with the Year Leader or member of the Senior Leadership Team designated to the specific year group:

FOR THE VICTIM:

- Help, support and counselling (where appropriate) will be given as required
- Parents will be contacted as soon as possible
- Practical steps to reassure the victim will be explored.

FOR THE BULLY:

- Investigation to take place to ascertain what happened and to discover why they became involved
- Inform the bully's parent/carer
- Restorative work to be completed with the bully (where consent is given from the victim).
- Appropriate action will be taken by the Year Leader / Senior Leader with regard to consequences. Bullying is a very serious issue in school and will not be tolerated. This should be reflected in the consequence that is served. Ultimately, if pupils do not respond to the punishments issued and continue to bully then they will be recommended for permanent exclusion.

6. Training

All staff need regular training in identifying and addressing bullying and this will happen through the school's safeguarding training procedures at least annually for new staff joining the school.

7. Communicating the policy to parents and pupils

PARENTS:

- In the prospectus
- On the school website

PUPILS:

- The school's approach to eradicating bullying will be promoted at the start of each academic year to raise the issue, secure commitment and communicate the school's disapproval of bullying behaviour
- Throughout the year during assemblies
- Through the Life Chances programme
- Pupil planner
- School intranet

8. Monitoring

- The school record any incidents logged as bullying (in its many forms) on a central spreadsheet. This record is updated when any referrals for this kind of behaviour are logged so that appropriate action can be taken and detailed analysis can take place

9. Additional support for students and families.

It is always important that students and families are able to access support even when they are not in school. The following websites and helplines are useful sources of support and information:

- ChildLine: ChildLine is the UK's free, confidential helpline for children and young people. They offer advice and support, by phone and online, 24 hours a day. Call 0800 1111. They have a designated page for bullying issues that includes a new video about building up confidence after bullying.
- Direct Gov: Information for young people on cyberbullying, bullying on social networks, Internet and email bullying, bullying on mobile phones, bullying at school, what to do about bullying, and information and advice for people who are bullying others and want to stop.
- EACH: EACH has a freephone Helpline for children experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or harassment: 0808 1000 143. It's open Monday to Friday 10am-5pm.
- Victim Support: They offer support to young people affected by crime. Their Children and Young People's (CYP) Service also deals with cases of bullying; offering advice and working with professionals to ensure young people get the support they need. Their support line is 0808 1689 111.
- Childline (<https://www.childline.org.uk/>): information about bullying.
- Kidscape (<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>): information for young people about bullying.
- If someone makes you feel uncomfortable or upset online, talk to an adult you can trust, such as a relative or a teacher. If you would prefer to talk to someone in confidence you can contact Childline (0800 1111).