

Leverton Church of England Academy



Anti-Bullying Policy

January 2018

Policy updated	By Miss R Chadwick & Mrs J Bailey January 2018
Adopted by Governing Body	March 2018
Next Review date	September 2020

Statement of intent

Leverton Church of England 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 a number of 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 Behavioural Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents/carers and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero tolerance policy for bullying at Leverton Church of England Academy.

Legal framework

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

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

This policy has been written in accordance with DfE advice, including, but not limited to:

- DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (2017)

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school's:

- Behaviour Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Transgender Policy

What is bullying?

As a school we define bullying as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically or emotionally harming another person or group.

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.

Everyone has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy in our school and we should treat everyone with consideration.

- **Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.**

What types of bullying are there?

- Emotional (being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening behaviour)
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing)

- Physical (pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence)
- Extortion (demanding money/goods with threats)
- Cyber (all areas of internet, email and internet chatroom misuse.) Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. This can be known as “virtual bullying” and can occur in or outside school. Cyber bullying can happen 24/7. Misuse of associated technology: camera and video facilities including those on mobile phones.
- Racist (racial taunts, graffiti, gestures)
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments)
- Homophobic (because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality)
- Transphobic (based on another person's gender ‘variance’ or not conforming to dominant gender roles)

Signs of bullying

A person may indicate by signs or behaviours that they are being bullied. Everyone should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if the person:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school or changes route
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Becomes aggressive, abusive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Starts stammering
- Threatens or attempts suicide or attempts self-harm
- Threatens or attempts to run away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Performance in school work begins to drop
- Comes home with clothes torn, property damaged or ‘missing’
- Asks for money or starts stealing money
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home ‘starving’
- Bullying others
- Changes in eating habits
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Nervous or jumpy when receiving calls or messages
- Gives improbable excuses for their behaviour.
- Lack of eye contact
- Missing possessions

What causes Bullying?

People bully for different reasons. The reasons could be:

- to feel powerful
- jealousy
- to feel good about themselves
- to be in control
- because they want something (attention, possession or friends)

- to look good in front of other people
- to feel popular
- because of peer pressure
- to be big/clever
- because they are being bullied themselves
- because they see and pick on an easy target (small, won't tell anyone, lonely or different in some way)

How can we prevent bullying?

- The school clearly communicates a whole school commitment to addressing bullying through PHSE lessons, assemblies, e-safety curriculum, class discussions and the whole school ethos
- All incidents are treated seriously and investigated in a timely manner by an appropriate member of staff
- All staff understand the importance of listening to all children's concerns
- Regular praise of positive and supportive behaviour
- Seating arrangements in class will be considered in a way that prevents instances of bullying
- All staff members are aware of the school's anti-bullying policy & procedures

Staff principles

- Prevention is at the forefront of the school's Anti-bullying Policy.
- Staff treat reports of bullying very seriously.
- Staff do not ignore signs of suspected bullying.
- Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another is always challenged and never ignored.
- Staff take action immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.
- Staff always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to. If the member of staff believes the pupil is in serious danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the **designated safeguarding lead** immediately.
- Follow-up support is given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

Roles & responsibilities

The role of Governors

The governing body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy. The governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask for the matter to be investigated further. In this case they should refer to the school's Complaints Procedure.

The role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school's anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use a class circle time as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished. Whole school assemblies may also be used to set standards and expectations on behaviour and to give a message to the whole school on anti-bullying themes. The school uses the SEAL lessons to support learning.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so 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 the Teacher and Support Staff

All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.

Teachers keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the school. Positive behaviour is promoted using the school's behaviour policy and one off incidents are dealt with by following the usual sanctions. However, if teachers witness an act of bullying, they will investigate it themselves and inform the Headteacher of the outcomes. In clear cases of bullying, the matter will be referred to the Headteacher. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied (the victim). Parents of both the victim and the aggressor will be informed by the teacher or Headteacher wherever necessary – particularly where acts of bullying have continued after the initial incident has been dealt with.

When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim and sanctions for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. Support is provided for both children. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, we inform the Headteacher and this can lead to exclusion for a fixed period or even lead to permanent exclusion.

In all cases, staff will invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere. The use of SEAL lessons also support learning.

All children are actively taught to say 'No!' to bullies and walk away. They are asked to tell someone they trust about what has happened. The person they tell can then help them to seek further help from an adult or if it is a member of staff that the child has chosen to tell, that the incident will be treated with sensitivity and fairness. All staff are aware of the school's Behaviour Policy and sanctions to use with children who are actively involved in bullying.

The role of 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. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school. They can also support the school by being a good role model themselves ensuring that they apply the ethos values of love, forgiveness and respect when dealing with any situation themselves.

On the school premises it is expected that all parents will behave with dignity and respect and will avoid any situations of confrontation or unpleasantness with other adults.

Parental Bullying

Unfortunately it is not unknown for a vulnerable child and his or her family to be bullied by other parents, whether wittingly or otherwise. This can take the form of encouraging ostracisation by other parents and children and actually verbally abusing the parents or children themselves.

This is totally unacceptable behaviour and will not be tolerated at our school. Any parent engaging in such bullying behaviour towards other children or families runs the risk of being excluded from the school site – if necessary with the backing of a court order.

As a church school we operate from a position of tolerance and forgiveness and expect our parents to respect this. We have a duty to educate children from all backgrounds and of all

abilities, including those who are emotionally vulnerable and behaviourally challenging. We are an inclusive school and are proud to be so.

The role of Pupils

All pupils have the right to feel safe. Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are or think they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.

Pupils are also encouraged not to take the role of bystander but to stand up and speak up if they identify any bullying behaviours within the school.

Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in PSHE lessons through circle time.

Procedures

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:

- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately
- If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to a trained first aider for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
- A witness is used for serious incidents
- If appropriate, the alleged bully, the victim and witnesses, are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete
- All concerned pupils are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils

Sanctions

- If the Headteacher, or member of staff carrying out the investigation, is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.
- The pupil will be informed of the sanction to be used (in line with the school behaviour policy)
- Parents/cares will be notified of the bullying incident and the actions being taken

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; and 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 National Association of Head Teachers has guidelines that recommend headteachers must 'satisfy themselves' that their school's Anti-Bullying 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.