

Anti-Bullying Policy



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Aims

- Prevent, de-escalate and/ or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- React to bullying incidents in a reasonable proportionate and consistent way.
- Safeguard the pupils who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the pupils.
- Apply disciplinary sanction to the pupils causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experiences.
- Educate the whole school community (pupils, staff, parents and Trustees) about the bullying, by providing both the awareness strategies to recognise it and procedures to deal with it.

What is bullying?

Every pupil should be able to learn in a school environment free from bullying of any kind, and in which they feel safe and supported. There is no place for bullying in our schools and communities and each of us involved in education has a role in creating a culture in school where bullying is not tolerated. No pupils deserve to suffer the pain and indignity that bullying can cause. We recognise the negative impact it has on the educational experiences and wider development of so many of our pupils. Bullying has no place anywhere in the school community, and this applies to bullying of pupils and teachers.

Providing safe and happy places to learn is essential to achieving school improvement, raising achievement and attendance, promoting equality and diversity, and ensuring the safety and well – being of all members of the school community.

The government defines bullying as:

Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated overtime, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying includes: name – calling; taunting; mocking; making offensive comments; kicking hitting; pushing; taking belongings; inappropriate text messaging and emailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from the groups; and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

Although sometimes occurring between two individuals in isolation, it quite often takes place in the presence of others. Bullying can take place between pupils and staff, or between staff, by individuals or groups, face to face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods.

What does the law say schools should and can do about bullying?

a) The law requires that head teachers must:

- Determine the more detailed measures (rules, reward, sanctions and behaviour management strategies) on behaviour and discipline that form the school's behaviour policy. The policy determined by the head teacher must include measures to be taken with a view to "encourage good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying amongst pupils".
- Publicise the measures in the behaviour policy and draw them to the attention of pupils, parents and staff at least once a year.
- Determine and ensure the implementation of a policy for the pastoral care of the pupils.
- Ensure the maintenance of good order and discipline at all times during the school day and whenever the pupils are engaged in authorised school activities, whether on the school premises or elsewhere.

b) The law requires that teachers must:

- Promote the general progress and well-being of individual pupils and of any class or group of pupils assigned to them, which includes ensuring as far as possible that pupils are free from bullying and harassment; and all staff must apply the school rewards and sanctions lawfully.

What do we know about bullies and those who are bullied?

- Pupils may be reluctant to report bullying for fear of repeat harm and because of a concern that "nothing can be done". It is therefore important that schools show they can support pupils to prevent harm, that bullying is not tolerated, and that there are solutions which work.
- Pupils may not report bullying because they may feel it is something within them which is at fault. Pupils therefore need to receive a clear message from schools that nobody ever deserves to be bullied.
- The way that a school deals with the bullying of pupils by staff will also have an impact on the confidence of pupils to report bullying – it is important that schools demonstrate that bullying is a whole – school issue and that the bullying of any member of the school community will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively.
- Pupils with learning disabilities or communication difficulties may not understand that they are being bullied or may have difficulty in explaining that they are being bullied. School staff should look for signs of bullying and act if they suspect a pupil is being bullied.
- Pupils not directly involved in bullying can be unsure of what to do. Different roles within bullying have been identified:

- a) The ring-leader, the person who through their social power can direct bullying activity.

- b) Assistants / associates, who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring-leader),
 - c) Reinforcers, who give positive feedback to the bully, perhaps by smiling or laughing.
 - d) Outsiders/ bystanders, who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour.
 - e) Defenders, who try to intervene to stop the bullying or comfort pupils who experience bullying.
- It should be noted, however that the same pupil can adopt different roles at different times, or indeed at the same time (a bullied pupil might be bullying another pupil at the same time, or a seeming “reinforcer” might become a “defender” when the ring –leader is not around).
- Some pupils may be more vulnerable than others. It is important that we are sensitive to pupils who because of their behaviours or circumstances may be vulnerable. Deteriorating attendance, poor punctuality, lack of progress and diminishing achievement can be indicators that the pupil is vulnerable in some way and susceptible to (or suffering already from) bullying.
- Pupils being bullied may also demonstrate emotional and behavioural problems, physical problems such as headaches and stomach pains, or signs of depression. Bullying is a deeply damaging activity, for both the person being bullied and the person conducting the bullying, and its legacy can follow young people into adulthood.
- Early identification of pupils at risk can help us enable them to develop more effective strategies for responding to, and preventing, incidents. Induction meetings and other processes can be used to help identify specific needs or likely concerns so these can be taken into account when we develop their anti-bullying strategies.
- Some bullying behaviour by pupils is linked to deeper issues. As should be the case when responding to those who are bullied, understanding the emotional health and wellbeing of these pupils is key to selecting the right strategies and to engaging the right external support where is needed (for example, in relation to issues of domestic violence or safeguarding issues).

Procedures for staff

All staff need to know how to respond to a bullying incident:

All bullying incidents must be reported immediately in writing to the Pastoral Co-ordinator who will keep a log of it.

- ❖ Minor incidents may be dealt with by procedures laid down in the behaviour policy but persistent incidents need to be dealt under the cloak of the Anti – Bullying Policy.
- ❖ If a pupil or a parent reports an incident, this needs to be taken seriously and act upon immediately. It should not be dismissed; the veracity of the complaint should be established.
- ❖ If an incident is reported, staff must be extra vigilant and may need to investigate by collecting statements from pupils, other teachers, lunchtime organiser, etc.
- ❖ The Pastoral Co-ordinator (under the supervision of the Senior Management Team) will establish facts and decide on a suitable action to take.
- ❖ Parents of the victim and the bullies must be kept informed throughout.
- ❖ If bullying continues, the Pastoral Co-ordinator must report the incident to the Head teacher for further action.
- ❖ In case of persistent bullying, the Head teacher and Trustees will consider further action, including exclusion. Exclusion as a response to bullying should be used sparingly and always as a last resort.

Strategy for dealing with bullying

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too – that is why they bully.

- ❖ Discussions at length with the victim. This will require patience and understanding. Remember – Listen, believe and act.
- ❖ Identify the bully/ bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible. Do an effective and fair investigation.
- ❖ Discussions with the bully. Confront them with the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/ incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at the school, deter her from repeating that behaviour and signal to other pupils that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it. If they own up, then follow the procedure outlined in the behaviour policy.

- ❖ Sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from activities, isolation during break and lunchtimes, exclusion from school, depending on the perceived severity of the incident (s).
- ❖ If they do not own up, investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, continue with the procedure. Pupils usually own up if presented with all the facts.
- ❖ Separate discussions with parents of bully and victim.
- ❖ Continue monitoring the situation by observing at break/ lunchtimes and having discussions with the victim to ensure no repetition.
- ❖ As the behaviour of the bully (hopefully) improves. Then favoured activities can be reinstated, and the pupils should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the pupils' self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.

In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identities of bullies, at Afifah we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils.
- All staff listen, believe and act.
- Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be a perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's form teacher immediately.

Curriculum organisation and management Co-ordination

The Anti-bullying policy will be co-ordinated by the Head teacher, SMT and the Pastoral Coordinator who will liaise with both teaching and non-teaching staff.

Delivery

- As part of the PSHE element of the curriculum
- By dealing with specific issues as they are relevant
- Through story, drama and visual aids
- Assemblies, Islamic study circles and school council.

Teaching methods

A mixture of whole class, groups and individual teaching will be adopted according to need.

Resources

Are in PSHE schemes of work.

Staff training

The head teacher is responsible for organising staff training to support the implementation of this policy.

Specific issues working with parents

The school firmly believes in a partnership with parents in order to deal effectively with cases of bullying and to re-educate' the bullies whilst supporting the recipient of the bullying.

Confidentiality

This will be maintained where appropriate.

Equal Opportunities

The Anti-bullying policy follows the guidelines laid down in our Equality policy and the Equality Act of 2010 (as amended), Behaviour policy and Safeguarding policy.

Appendices

Where bullying can occur:

- Classroom
- Elsewhere in the school e.g. toilets
- Playground
- To and from school
- After school clubs
- On trips
- At school events held at other venues

How can a school find out if bullying is happening?

- Listening to pupils
- Reports from parents
- Reports from community
- Observations by adults in school
- Year assemblies and circle time

Possible signs and symptoms – these symptoms may be an indication of bullying but there can be many other explanations for changes of behaviour:

- General change in behaviour
- Unwillingness to go to school
- Bed wetting/ wetting themselves
- Disrupted sleep patterns
- Poor school performance
- Continually complaining
- Becoming withdrawn or over sensitive
- Aggressive or disruptive behaviour
- Change in eating patterns
- Physical signs bruises, scratches, torn clothing
- Attention seeking – e.g. faking illnesses
- Damage to or loss of equipment/ possessions

Curriculum issues to be explored:

What is bullying?

What causes people to bully each other?

How does it feel to be bullied?

What is the effect of bullying behaviour on other pupils?

What should one do if one witnesses bullying behaviour?

Why should we not bully?

What can we do to stop bullying?

What sanctions should be in place to prevent bullying behaviour?

Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy

In reviewing this policy and its effectiveness we should hope to find:

- All the staff are more aware of the issues involved.
- Any reported incidents of bullying are dealt with to the satisfaction of pupils/ parents concerned.

- The school understands and acknowledges what types of bullying are an ongoing concern, and creates strategies to reduce such bullying.