



Anti-Bullying Policy



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STATEMENT OF INTENT

No matter how effective the school's Good Behaviour Policy is in preventing bullying, there remains a risk that it might occur.

Vickerstown Primary School has produced this policy to deal with bullying and offer guidance in the event of it happening.

All children and young people at Vickerstown Primary School are entitled to learn in a safe

and supportive environment. This means they should be free from all forms of bullying behaviour. Our anti-bullying policy outlines how instances of bullying will be dealt with by the school and strategies put in place 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 responses to bullying. Under s.89, our school must have measures in place encourage good behaviour and **prevent all forms of bullying** amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents/carers and pupils will work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at our school. There will be a zero tolerance policy in place at Vickerstown Primary School.

OUR INTENTIONS BEHIND THIS POLICY

To provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear, which is conducive to the achievement of individual aspirations.

To reduce and eradicate wherever possible instances in which pupils are subject to any form of bullying, harassment or victimisation leading to them feeling frightened, excluded or unhappy.

To promote safety for all groups of pupils regardless of sexuality or gender identity, including the use of language.

To prevent all forms of prejudice based bullying including homophobic and transphobia.

To respond effectively to all instances of bullying that are reported to staff.

To eliminate discrimination and foster good relations between persons who share protected characteristic and those who do not. Protected characteristics are - disability, race, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, sexual orientation (including transgender).

To establish a means of dealing with bullying and of providing support to pupils who have been bullied.

To ensure that all pupils, parents and staff are aware of the policy and that they work together to fulfil their obligations to it.

To provide support for pupils who are accused of bullying, who may be experiencing problems of their own.

What is bullying?

Bullying is persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another. It is often difficult for a victim to defend themselves against bullying.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs but frequent and happen over a period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator 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.

What does bullying look/sound like?

Many different kinds of behaviours can be considered bullying. Bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance / religion / ethnicity / gender / sexual-orientation / home life / culture / disability or special educational needs are all just some of the types of bullying which can occur.

- **Verbal** - name calling, mimicry, teasing, insulting, spreading rumours, swearing, making threats.
- **Physical** - any unwanted or inappropriate touching, physical intimidation, hitting, pushing, kicking, pinching, poking, damaging or taking of belongings, deliberate pushing and shoving, threats of violence and extortion.
- **Emotional** - spreading rumours, deliberate exclusion from groups, tormenting, ridiculing, isolating, refusing to work with another pupil, revealing personal information, threatening, inciting or coercing others to treat an individual in a manner that could be considered bullying.
- **Cyber** - threats and intimidation, harassment/'cyber-stalking', defamation, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation and unauthorised publication of private information or images. (It can include messages intended as jokes, but which have a harmful or upsetting effect.)

Legal issues related to bullying

Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Duty (5 April 2011), the school 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; foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, schools could have charges brought against them if they allow the rights of children and young people at their school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The National Association of Head Teachers has acknowledged this, adding to their guidelines that headteachers must 'satisfy themselves' that their school's anti-bullying policy complies with the HRA 1998. Head Teachers 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 could be considered criminal offences:

Under the Malicious Communications Act it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

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 public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.

Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

Prevention

- Staff will encourage pupil co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work.
- Bullying should be discussed as part of the curriculum and diversity, difference and respect for others should be promoted and celebrated through various lessons.
- Changing and organising seating arrangements in class can help to prevent instances of bullying.
- Potential victims of bullying should be drawn into working groups with children who do not abuse or take advantage of them.
- Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events (for example, drama productions, sporting activities, school clubs, etc)
- All members of the school community should be made aware of the school's bullying policies.
- All staff members should have received some training on identifying and dealing with bullying.
- A safe, supervised place, such as the library area or learning street, should be available for pupils to go at lunch if they are involved in conflict with their peers or wish to avoid a bully.

Action taken to combat bullying

- Two members of staff Mrs Michelle Phizacklea, HeadTeacher and Mrs Kim Robinson, School Counsellor are trained to deliver "Kidsafe" series of workshops with pupils.
- All issues raised by pupils or parents are taken seriously and are investigated.
- Pupils who are victims of bullying are supported and no one should feel frightened to report incidents. An open, caring climate has been established where pupils know that their concern will be treated sensitively and confidentially.
- Positive behaviour will be promoted through circle time, assemblies, PSHE lessons.
- Vickerstown Primary School Council allows issues and concerns about behaviour (including bullying) to be discussed on a regular basis.
- Termly meetings with the Head teacher and/or Deputy Head and Midday Supervisors take place to discuss relevant issues.
- Currently Midday Supervisors are attached to Key Stage groups, with one additional member of the team and two Key Stage playtime staff supervisors provide appropriate supervision in the playground.
- Key Stage, class and whole school Anti-Bullying Assemblies provide an opportunity for issues to be addressed without children being named.
- Structured Class / Year group discussions provide opportunities to disclose confidentially pupils who are kind and caring, but also any who are thought not to be.
- Curriculum work will be provided to encourage pupils to express their feelings e.g. creative writing, role-play about feelings and stories.
- Parents will be informed of relevant incidents involving their children.
- Sanctions will be imposed where bullying is known e.g. privileges will be withdrawn.
- Pupils will be encouraged to talk with each other.
- Where bullying is of a racist nature, we will report this to the LA using the Bullying/Racial Incident Report form (Appendix 1).
- All incidents will be recorded in the Racist Incident Monitoring file kept in the Head Teacher's office.
- Regular follow up sessions between victim and aggressor will be held with victims and, if relevant, their parents.
- This policy will be evaluated by the number of incidents that are reported over a given period.

Appendix 1



Vickerstown Primary School

Bullying/Racist Incident Report Form

Pupil	
DOB	

Incident details:

Action taken:

Member of staff reporting concern.....

Signed.....

Date.....

Time.....

(This record should be stored in the Bullying/Racist Incident File in the Head Teacher's office)

Organisations which can help:

Children's Legal Centre, Tel: 01206 873 820

(Mon-Fri 10 am -12.30 pm and 2 pm - 4.30 pm). Publications and free advice line on legal issues.

Kidscape, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W ODH.

Tel: 0207 730 3300 Fax: 0207 730 7081

Has a wide range of publications for young people, parents and teachers. Bullying counsellor available Monday to Friday, 10-4.

Parentline Plus, 520 Highgate Studios, 53-79 Highgate Road, Kentish Town,

London NW5 1TL. Tel: 0808 800 2222.

National helpline for parents (Mon-Fri 9-9; Sat 9.30-5; Sun 10-3).

Resources for parents and families about bullying:

ALEXANDER, J. Your child bullying: Practical and easy to follow advice.

Element Books, 1998.

ELLIOTT, M. 101 Ways to deal with bullying - A guide for parents.

Hodder and Stoughton, 1997.

KIDSCAPE. Keeping safe: A practical guide to talking with children.

Kidscape, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W ODH, 1990.

LAWSON, S. Helping children cope with bullying.

Sheldon Press, 1994.

LINDENFIELD, G. Confident children: A parents' guide to helping children feel good. Thorsens, 1994.

MELLOR A. Bullying and how to fight it: A guide for families.

Scottish Council for Research in Education, 15 St John Street, Edinburgh EH5 5JR, 1993.

PEARCE J. Fighting, teasing and bullying: Simple and effective ways to help your child.

Wellingborough: Thorsons, 1989.

TRAIN, A. The bullying problem: How to deal with difficult children.

Condor Book, Souvenir Press, 1995.

This information sheet was prepared by the Department for Education and Employment and has been adapted with their permission. Their full antibullying pack can be found at

www.DfES.gov.uk/bullying/index.shtml

Advisory Centre for Education, IC Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London N5 2DQ

Tel: 0207 704 9822 Tel helpline: 0207 354 8321 (Mon-Fri 2-5 pm).

Advice line for parents on all matters concerning schools

Anti Bullying Campaign, 185 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 2UF.

Tel: 0207 378 1446 (9.30 am - 5.00 pm).

Advice line for parents and children

CYBER BULLYING

Children are taught to "stay safe in cyber space" and understand that cyber bullying is the use of ICT, particularly mobile phones and the internet deliberately to upset or be hurtful to someone.

Some instances are known to be unintentional. Cyber bullying can also be the result of not thinking (something sent as a joke may be deeply upsetting or offensive to the recipient) or a lack of awareness of the consequences - for example saying something negative.

People who cyber bully may attempt to remain anonymous. This can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person cyber bullying may never be in the same physical space as their target. It can happen 24/7 and is an invasion of home and personal space. **What should we as individuals do about it?**

Always respect others - be careful what you say online and what images you send.

Think before you send - whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever.

Treat your password like your toothbrush - keep it to yourself. Only give your mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends.

Block the bully - learn how to block or report someone who is behaving badly.

Don't retaliate or reply!

Save the evidence - learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations.

Make sure you tell: an adult you trust, or call a helpline like Child Line on 0800 1111 in confidence; the provider of the service; check the service.

Finally, don't just stand there - if you see cyber bullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying.

How would you like it if no-one stood up for you?

What can we, as a school, do to help?

At Vickerstown Primary School we will do 4 things:

Educate the children about safe use of the internet through Kidsafe trained staff and strategies to ensure no one suffers in silence.

Support the person being cyber bullied

Investigate incidents

Work with the cyber bully and implement sanctions

Education Law:

The school community has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA2006) outlines legal powers which relate directly to cyber bullying. The EIA also provides a defence for school staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils

to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and therefore not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

The Head Teacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

Follow-up:

The progress of both the bully and the victim should be monitored by their class Teachers, trusted adult or school Counsellor, **Mrs Kim Robinson**. One-on-one sessions to discuss how they are getting on may be appropriate.

If the incidence was sufficiently serious, follow-up correspondence with parents a month after the incidence may be necessary. This should be from **Mrs Michelle Phizacklea**, Head Teacher or class Teacher.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Being listened to (having an immediate opportunity to meet with their head of year or a member of staff of their choice).
- Being reassured.
- Being offered continued support.
- Being offered counselling where appropriate.

Pupils who have bullied others will be supported by:

- Receiving a consequence to their actions.
- Being able to discuss what happened.
- Reflecting on why they became involved.
- Understanding what they did wrong and why they need to change.
- Appropriate assistance from parents/carers.

Bullying outside of the school

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, the teacher can only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member.

Head Teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Head Teachers the power

Actions/Sanctions:

Conventional sanctions may be pursued. In addition to this however, the following actions should be taken. Discretion can be used.

Appropriate action to deal with the bully:

- If you are satisfied that bullying did take place, help the pupil to understand the consequences of their actions and warn them that there must be no further intimidation. Inform them of the type of sanction to be used in this instance and future sanctions if the bullying continues.
 - If possible, try for reconciliation and a genuine apology from the pupil. This can be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. (Discretion should be used here; victims should never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully.)
 - Realise that some pupils do not appreciate the distress they are causing and are willing to change their behaviour.
 - Try to reach agreement on reasonable long-term behaviour.
 - Prepare the pupil to face their peer group - discuss what they will say to others.
 - Inform parents about bullying incidents and what action is being taken.
- Face-to-face meetings between the class Teacher and Mrs Michelle Phizacklea, Head Teacher may be appropriate.
- Class Teachers will informally monitor pupil over the next half.

Appropriate actions to deal with the victim:

- The class Teachers should check informally on a weekly basis for a month after the complaint of bullying.
- If necessary, break up the group dynamics by asking staff to assign places in classes and in the form room.
- Encourage the victim to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.
- Encourage the victim to broaden their friendship groups by joining a lunch time or after-school club or activity.

Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff to be alert to possible harassment of pupils and deal with incidents of bullying as the highest priority. Other specific responsibilities are stated below.

The governors will (evaluate and review) the anti-bullying policy, and will ensure that it is non-discriminatory.

Mrs Michelle Phizacklea, the Head Teacher will review and amend the policy, using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in the previous year to improve procedures and taking account of new legislation and government guidance. The Head Teacher will keep a record of all reported incidents and provide appropriate training for staff members.

Class teachers will correspond and/or meet with parents where necessary. They will also provide a point of contact when more serious bullying incidents occur.

Class teachers and other staff will be alert to social dynamics in their class and available for pupils who wish to report bullying. They will also provide follow-up support following bullying incidents.

All staff will ensure that they are alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, such observations will be discussed during class meetings. Throughout the year, the composition of groups shows sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.

The school Counsellor, **Mrs Kim Robinson**, will offer emotional support to the victims of bullying incidents, and will alert **Mrs Michelle Phizacklea**, Head Teacher and the class Teacher of any relevant issues discussed which the pupil would like to be passed on.

Parents/carers should inform their child's class teacher if they are concerned that their child may be being bullied/involved in bullying.

Pupils should inform a staff member if they witness bullying, or are a victim of bullying. They should not respond to bullying by making counter-threats, walking away from any dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents. Pupils should be advised to retain all evidence of cyber-bullying as evidence.

Procedures for dealing with bullying:

Minor incidents: will be reported to the pupils' class Teacher who should investigate the incident, set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator.

Serious incidents: the procedure outlined below will be adopted by all staff in serious incidents.

Interviews:

- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all to be interviewed separately.
- Try to ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils interviewed, for example by texting.
- If a pupil is injured, take the pupil immediately for first aid treatment. For more serious injuries a medical opinion might be needed in which case the parents would immediately be informed.
- Use a room that allows you to interview in privacy. A witness is recommended for serious incidents.
- If appropriate, and necessary, ask all parties (bully, victim, witnesses) to write down details. This may need prompting with questions from you to obtain the full picture.
- Avoid making premature assumptions. It is important not to be judgemental at this stage. Listen carefully to all accounts, be non-confrontational and do not attach blame until your investigation is complete.
- Staff are encouraged to adopt a 'problem-solving' approach, asking the bully to suggest ways they could have improved the situation, and, if the victim has provoked the bullying incident, helping them to understand and explain more appropriate ways of behaving.
- Inform all pupils concerned that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils.

Record keeping:

- The teacher who conducted the interviews should write out a brief summary of the incident using the bullying/racist concerns forms. A separate interview sheet should be completed for each pupil involved and the written statements of each part should be included.
- This record should then be forwarded on to **Mrs Michelle Phizacklea**, Head Teacher, who is responsible for holding all records centrally.