

NORTHENDEN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

POLICY DOCUMENT

Policy Title	ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
Policy Area	LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
Updated	September 2017
Governing Body	Spring 2018
Review Date	September 2019
Policy Author(s)	Ian Beard

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NORTHENDEN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

POLICY : ANTI-BULLYING

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 POLICY AIMS / EXPECTED OUTCOMES

This document makes clear the school's policy and procedures which collectively aim to ensure that bullying in all of its forms is understood as an intentional, harmful and hurtful action towards others and that incidents of bullying are prevented and, when they do occur, are dealt with appropriately and swiftly by staff, including senior leaders.

The policy has the following aims and expected outcomes:

- children are aware of the ways in which their behaviours can affect others, particularly when these behaviours intentionally cause emotional or physical harm, including over a long period of time;
- children are aware that Northenden Community School does not tolerate or condone bullying in any form;
- children are aware that they have the right to enjoy school life and should be protected from physical or emotional harm from others;
- staff know how to deal with incidents of bullying or seek advice when they are faced with uncertainties regarding the detrimental behaviour of one or more children towards others;
- staff know how to investigate alleged bullying, including procedures for involving the victim, the perpetrator and their parents;
- the victims of bullying are supported, including being given an opportunity to express their views about the ways in which the actions of another child have affected them and the restorative justice that might be appropriate;
- the perpetrators of bullying are given an opportunity to recognise the impact of their behaviours on others and consider how the victim may be offered justice and a restored sense of safety and security at school.

1.2 SCHOOL ETHOS AND VALUES, including BRITISH VALUES

The school is committed to providing children in our care a high-quality environment in which to learn, grow and be safe. All of our policies and practices are based on three broad vision statements or key aims. They are:

- **Respect for each other**
- **Quality and Success for All**
- **A Caring Community**

The school is also committed to the promotion of **British Values** which aim to develop a understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance (we prefer the term understanding) of those of different faiths and beliefs. The school is also committed to the **Rights of the Child** (as defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) and is working towards becoming a Rights Respecting School.

1.3 LEGISLATION and GUIDANCE

The school's **Anti-Bullying Policy** and the responsibilities of staff and governors at the school are underpinned by the following legislation:

- **Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006** which provides that maintained schools must have measures to 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.
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**
- **Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, July 2017)**

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, any person who sends an electronic communication 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, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.

1.4 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES / DOCUMENTS

This policy has links to the following school policies and documents:

- Behaviour Policy, including Exclusions Policy
- Equality Policy and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy (see Behaviour)
- ICT and E-Safety Policy
- Northenden Against Bullying : A Guide for Parents (2014)
- Safeguarding Policy

2. **BULLYING**

2.1 Bullying Definition

Bullying is defined as an intentional, usually repeated, hurtful action by one person or group or people towards another.

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups (e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities), the imbalance of power or the need for control over others, jealousy (academic, economic or otherwise), or actual or perceived differences between children. Bullying can manifest itself in a number of ways; physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone) or by having access to a group or the capacity to isolate someone socially. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

2.2 Examples of Bullying

Bullying can occur in many different ways, including:

- hitting, pushing, kicking or punching someone;
- calling someone names;
- using offensive language;
- leaving someone out of a game, event or activity;
- encouraging other children not to play with someone;
- talking about someone behind their back;
- using a nickname which is clearly aimed at undermining someone;
- making fun of, laughing at or humiliating someone;
- making fun of someone's appearance, size or clothing;
- regularly invading someone else's personal space;
- name-calling someone's family members;
- making someone feel threatened or frightened;
- teasing someone and 'winding them up' to get a reaction;
- being hurtful to someone because of a protected characteristic (see Equality Act);
- spreading rumours about someone (whether they are true or not);
- not sharing resources or leaving someone out of an activity;
- dominating or intimidating someone;
- blackmailing someone;
- encouraging other children to break friends with someone;
- stealing someone else's belongings;
- sending nasty messages to someone via a text message or social media;
- belittling someone's actions, work or efforts in class.

The above is not an exhaustive list. Each case of potential bullying will have a different context or circumstances and effect.

2.3 What is not Bullying?

In defining bullying, it is very important to recognise that some inappropriate actions and behaviours of children towards each other and the breach of school rules are not bullying. For example, although inappropriate and contrary to the school's Code of Behaviour, the following would not be identified as bullying:

- a one-off incident, fight or squabble between one or more children;
- a falling out between friends (which may involve physical actions or hurtful words);
- an argument about a game;
- a disagreement between classmates;
- an accidental scratch or bump;
- an uncharacteristic physical assault on another child.

When dealing with such incidents, staff will determine the extent to which an incident may be determined as bullying, particularly if the victim reports that hurtful actions have been repeated over a period of time. Although ensuring children's physical safety is a priority, staff must also recognise that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying. When investigating a report of bullying by a child or parents, the school will usually refer to "potential bullying" until it has been proven that actual bullying has taken place. Children will often report that they have been "bullied" when this has not been established. Staff must take care to determine the facts and investigate the matter before they use the term 'bullying'.

3. EQUALITY ACT : PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The school recognises its duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and its general responsibility to protect from bullying and abuse those who may directly or indirectly have a protected characteristic under the Equality Act or are associated with someone, for example a family member, who does. These groups of people are generally more vulnerable to bullying than others and may not feel they can or be able to defend themselves or communicate their feelings or experience as effectively as others. The protected characteristics are:

- **sex**
- **race**
- **disability**
- **religion or belief**
- **sexual orientation**
- **gender reassignment**

The Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need 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.

The school does not tolerate and will treat as bullying any hurtful or derogatory words or actions which are aimed specifically at a person because of their protected characteristics or their association with someone who has a protected characteristic. The school does not tolerate and will treat as bullying inappropriate and insulting comments, slurs, language or attacks which are aimed, directly or indirectly, at undermining

- boys or girls, men or women;
- people of different races, countries or ethnicities;
- people with Special Educational Needs or disabilities;
- people with different religious beliefs or practices;
- people's sexuality or perceived sexuality, including any homophobic insults;
- people who have reassigned or wish to reassign their gender;
- people from disadvantaged or poorer economic backgrounds.

3.1 Racial Bullying

Racial bullying in schools can range from ill-considered remarks, which are not intended to be hurtful, to deliberate physical attacks causing serious injury. Racist bullying can be identified by the motivation of the bully, the language used, and/or by the fact that victims are singled out because of the colour of their skin, the way they talk, their ethnic grouping or by their religious or cultural practices. The school does not tolerate bullying aimed at undermining someone's race, ethnic or cultural background. Such bullying might include:

- calling someone names, teasing or humiliating them using racially offensive language;
- making fun of their clothes, accent, food, etc.;
- refusing to work or cooperate with someone because of their ethnicity;
- vandalism of property, offensive graffiti or displaying racist symbols.

3.2 Disability and SEND Bullying

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are particularly vulnerable to bullying and are often not able to assert or defend themselves or make sense of their experience to communicate it effectively. Bullying may take the form of teasing, name-calling or mimicking relating to a child's special need or disability or physical actions towards the child which cannot be easily be defended given a child's disability, e.g. removing their spectacles, pushing their wheelchair inappropriately, insulting their academic ability, mimicking their speech.

Disablist bullying is a specific form of bullying motivated by prejudice against disabled people. This can be related to a perceived or actual disability/additional need. By perceived, we mean that some children may treat a physical or 'behavioural' characteristic of another child as a disability, and exclude or bully because of that, even though the child him/herself does not consider they have a disability. The other children may regard this characteristic as a disability either through genuine misunderstanding or because of an intolerance of difference. Examples of disablist bullying can include:

- being called mean names linked to a disability/additional need;
- being left out because of their perceived or actual disability/additional need;
- being spat at or kicked because of their perceived or actual disability/additional need.

3.3 Religious or Faith Bullying

The school does not tolerate bullying which is aimed at undermining a person's religious beliefs or practice. Bullying of this kind include mimicking or making fun of someone's religious practices, e.g. touching the Rimal/turban of a Sikh child.

3.4 Homophobic Bullying

Homophobic bullying is behaviour or language that makes a child or young person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their perceived or actual sexual orientation. Not all young LGB (Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual) young people experience homophobic bullying and not all homophobic bullying is directed at young LGB people. Homophobic bullying often occurs as a result of others' prejudice (or ignorance) being directed at a child or young person because they are lesbian, gay or bisexual; they are perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual (because of their behaviours or mannerisms); have LGB friends or family members; or they are perceived as different.

The school does not tolerate bullying which is aimed at undermining a person's sexual orientation or the sexual orientation of a member of their family. The school will challenge the use of language which clearly aims to undermine LGB people, for example, the use of the word "gay" as an insult or derogatory term. Examples of homophobic bullying can include:

- calling someone names, teasing or humiliating them using homophobic language;
- mocking or imitating someone's voice, mannerisms, clothes, etc;
- refusing to work or cooperate with someone because of their real or perceived sexual orientation;
- outing someone (telling their family and/or friends they are lesbian, gay or bisexual, whether they are or not) or spreading rumours about their sexual orientation;
- inappropriate sexual comments or gestures.

3.5 Transphobic Bullying

Transphobic bullying often occurs as a result of others' prejudice being directed at a child or young person because they are or are perceived to be transgender; they do not fit with traditional gender norms (eg. boys with long hair or wearing make-up, girls playing team sports); they have transgender friends or family members; or they are perceived as being different. Examples of transphobic bullying can include:

- calling someone names, teasing or humiliating them using transphobic language;
- using incorrect pronouns (eg. he/she, him/her) to humiliate someone;
- refusing to work or cooperate with someone because of their real or perceived gender identity;
- inappropriate sexual comments or gestures.

3.6 Vulnerable Pupils

Bullying can happen to all children and young people and it can affect their social, mental and emotional health. School staff should support all pupils who are bullied. This means being alert to the effect any form of bullying can have and being especially alert to where it may have a severe impact. There is evidence to suggest that pupils that are badly bullied in school are more likely to be bullied out of school, for instance either on their way to or from school or through cyberbullying. Some pupils are more likely to be the target of bullying because of the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. For example those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem or those with caring responsibilities may be more likely to experience bullying because of difference. Children in care that are frequently on the move may also be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer. These young people are often the same young people who might need greater support to deal with the impact of bullying, for example those who are going through a personal or family crisis. In addition children with special educational needs or disabilities can often lack the social or communication skills to report such incidents so it is important that staff are alert to the potential bullying this group faces and that their mechanisms for reporting are accessible to all. There will also be a range of other local or individual factors that result in some children being more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others.

4. CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is an increasingly common form of bullying behaviour which happens on social networks, online games and mobile phones. Cyberbullying can include spreading rumours about someone, or posting nasty or embarrassing messages, images or videos. Children may know who' is bullying them online – it may be an extension of offline peer bullying - or they may be targeted by someone using a fake or anonymous account. It is easy for someone to be anonymous online and this may increase the likelihood of engaging in bullying behaviour. Cyberbullying can happen at any time or anywhere - a child can be bullied when they are alone at home. Cyberbullying includes:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages;
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos;
- 'trolling' - the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games;
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child;
- encouraging young people to self-harm;

- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll;
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name;
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting;
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

5. SIGNS OF BULLYING

Adults in school should be aware of the signs of potential bullying which may include a child:

- displaying physical marks or injuries;
- looking worried or anxious;
- returning from playtime upset or sad;
- showing a lack of enthusiasm for playtime or for school;
- asking to remain indoors during playtimes;
- being unusually clingy;
- wanting to be alone or being withdrawn;
- playing on their own more than they used to;
- wanting parents to accompany them to the classroom;
- wanting to change their appearance or lose weight;
- being isolated from their usual friends;
- standing or playing on their own ;
- looking lost, upset or bewildered during playtime;
- attaching themselves to an adult at playtimes.

6. BULLYING OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

School staff members have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include 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. The headteacher 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. While school staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

7. ALLEGATIONS OF BULLYING

7.1 Allegations of Bullying by Pupils (Victim)

All children at Northenden Community School are encouraged and reminded to tell an adult if their day is spoilt by others, if their right to enjoy school life is undermined or they think they are being bullied in any way. Despite this encouragement, children who are being bullied may not report that they are being bullied because:

- they are frightened of the response of the bully;
- they want to keep the problem to themselves;
- they do not want to 'tell tales' or lose friends;
- they do not know who to tell or what to say;
- they are not sure that they are being bullied;
- they are used to the actions of the bully and it has become part of their daily school life;
- they are trying to reduce the bullying by appeasing the bully in some way;
- they are hoping that they can be friends with the bully (who may be a popular child);
- they are embarrassed that they are not strong enough to cope with what is happening;
- they are vulnerable in some way and find it difficult to communicate their feelings.

When a child does report potential bullying, members of staff should:

- listen carefully, taking notes if appropriate;
- not dismiss the situation or suggest that it is not happening or not bullying;
- recognise that a situation may be potential bullying even if it appears to be trivial;
- not suggest to the children that they should resolve the issues themselves or simply stay away from the perpetrator;
- not make assumptions that the alleged perpetrator (who may show positive behaviour in front of staff or during lessons) could not behave in this way towards another child.

7.2 Allegations of Bullying Reported by Other Pupils/Peers

Children at Northenden are encouraged to speak up on behalf of their friends and peers and not be bystanders or condone someone else's poor behaviour towards others. The reasons that other children may not report bullying of their peers are similar to those set out in 7.1 above.

When a child reports that another child has or is being bullied, staff should:

- listen carefully, taking notes if appropriate;
- not dismiss the report on the basis that the child has not reported it themselves;
- recognise that a situation may be potential bullying even if it appears to be trivial;
- not make assumptions that the alleged perpetrator could not behave in this way towards another child.

7.3 Allegations of Bullying Reported by Parents

The school values the partnership with parents and welcomes clear communication about bullying. Where a parent alleges that their child has been or is being bullied, staff should:

- listen carefully, taking notes if appropriate;
- consider a written report, letter or note if available;
- not make assumptions or share comments about the alleged perpetrator;

- offer to investigate the matter swiftly and refer the matter to senior leaders;
- refer the matter to or seek advice from senior leaders;
- discourage the parents from dealing with matters themselves, including contacting or confronting the parents of the alleged perpetrator;
- assure the parents of the best attention of the school to the matter and give them a timescale within which the matter will be investigated and the outcomes reported back to them.

8. INVESTIGATION

When a member of staff observes bullying behaviour for themselves, receives a report of bullying from a child or receives a report or concern of bullying from a parent, the member of staff should:

- report the matter and/or seek advice from the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher;
- make a decision with the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher as to how the matter is to be investigated, including the most appropriate approach and staff member to investigate the matter with the child (noting that the class teacher is often the best person to investigate, particularly for younger children as they know the child best);
- communicate (if not already done so or if report did not originate from parents) with the victim's parents, explaining what has been reported by their child and how the matter is to be investigated, including seeking the views of the child and the parents;
- talk to the victim and try to determine the ways in which the child thinks he or she has been mistreated or bullied by an individual or group of children, how often, when and where incidents have occurred, how the child is feeling and if any other members of staff have tried to intervene or help;
- ask questions of the victim, including trying to determine specific incidents or facts, particularly if the victim is confused or shares mixed examples;
- talk separately to any witnesses named by the victim and members of staff;
- reassure the victim that they will be supported and that the school wants them to have good relationships with everyone at school and feel safe;
- talk to the alleged bully, presenting the suggestions and evidence which has been gathered, and giving them a chance to respond;
- offer the victim the opportunity to tell the perpetrator how they feel and explain why they feel hurt or bullied;
- where bullying is substantiated, arrange to meet (with SLT support if preferred) with the perpetrator's parents and explain the outcomes of the investigation;
- agree with SLT an appropriate restorative approach and/or sanction (the perpetrator must know that bullying is a breach of the school's rules and unacceptable)
- agree a restorative approach, if appropriate, with the victim and parents.

9. RESOLUTIONS, SANCTIONS AND RESTORATIVE APPROACHES

When it has been concluded that bullying has occurred, it is important to support the victim, ensuring that they can recover from the physically or emotionally hurtful actions which have occurred. In seeking a resolution, the member of staff should:

- ask the victim what they would like to happen next;
- ask the victim if they would like to talk about the matter with the bully;
- be given an opportunity with a mediator to talk to the bully and explain their feelings.
- be given the support of their peers, parents or other persons they wish to draw upon

The victim may need to recognise that the perpetrator may not want to restore their relationship or friendship. In this case, it is important that the victim is not left isolated and that steps are taken to

ensure that the victim is enabled to play with friends at playtime, for example, and engage with other children if they have been isolated.

10. INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT

10.1 Support for the Victim

In all cases schools have a responsibility to support children who are bullied and make appropriate provision for a child's needs. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from a teacher that knows the pupil well, asking one or more staff members to provide support, providing formal counselling, engaging with parents, referring to local authority children's services, completing an Early Help Assessment or referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

When bullying has been identified, the matter investigated and the issues have been initially resolved, the victim will be offered the ongoing support of one or more members of staff in restoring relationships with the bully or other children (particularly where a child has been isolated) and in monitoring further incidents. Members of staff will 'check in' with the victim on a regular basis, usually after playtimes and lunchtimes, to monitor the effectiveness of any intervention. Parents will also be asked to report any further upset or continuation of the hurtful activity. Similarly, members of staff will monitor the subsequent actions and behaviour of the bully towards the victim and other children.

10.2 Support for the Perpetrator

Where appropriate, the school will apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may be offered support to address specific circumstances or motivations which lead to the bullying behaviour.

11. RECORD KEEPING

The school will keep records of reports of bullying and how individual cases have been resolved. These will be kept securely in both paper and electronic form, including using the CPOMS system. Records will be used to monitor the outcomes of individual cases and the effectiveness of the school's support. Records will also be used over time to evaluate the school's policy and to identify patterns of bullying which may need to be addressed and prevented more effectively by the school.

12. BULLYING PREVENTION

The most effective way in which the school and parents can encourage and promote positive and respectful relationships between children and prevent bullying in or out of school is to reinforce the benefits of friendship and good citizenship and behaviour towards others. This is done in school through:

- the school's ethos and commitment to British Values, including respecting difference;
- the school's Code of Conduct and expectations of children's behaviour;
- the school's curriculum, particularly the PSHCE curriculum;
- the opportunities children have to work together and form positive relationships;
- encouraging positive play at break times and lunch times;
- developing the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL);

- general assemblies and stories promoting friendship and respect;
- themed assemblies and special events, including anti-bullying week;
- developing positive relationships between pupils, staff and parents;
- messages and reminders about the right way to behave;
- making clear to parents the school's intolerance of bullying;
- using the resources available from specific organisations, e.g. Stonewall;
- providing staff training to enable staff to discuss difficult issues and resolve conflict.

13. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

13.1 The Governing Body will:

- ensure that the school reviews and updates its anti-bullying policy on a regular (at least bi-annually) basis, particularly in the context of new technologies;
- monitor the effectiveness of the policy by reference to the Headteachers' reports to the Governing Body;
- appointment a governor responsible for Anti-Bullying (this to be the named governor for Safeguarding or another governor).

13.2 The Headteacher will:

- maintain and review the school's Anti-Bullying policy;
- ensure that the policy is understood by all staff;
- provide guidance and support to parents via the school's website;
- monitor patterns of bullying by reference to the records kept by the school
- aim to address all forms of bullying and
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy in preventing bullying in all forms and dealing with bullying swiftly and effectively.

13.3 Staff will:

- implement the Anti-Bullying Policy;
- seek advice and undertake training where appropriate;
- be vigilant for the signs of bullying;
- treat reported cases of bullying seriously, taking the time to listen to pupils and parents;
- promote effective relationships between pupils;
- aim to prevent bullying behaviour via their teaching;
- support pupils who have been bullied;
- support pupils who are perpetrators of bullying to modify their behaviour.

13.4 Parents will be expected to:

- support the school in the implementation of this policy;
- report concerns about bullying to a member of staff;
- attend any meetings regarding their child;
- support the school in resolving any bullying issues regarding their child;
- refrain from dealing with issues themselves, e.g. directly with parents or pupils.