

Central Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

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Date Adopted

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Review Date

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Introduction.

All children, whatever their race, sex, beliefs, and physical and mental abilities, have the right to grow up unharmed, to have the opportunity to develop fully and to have their basic needs met. They should be respected in body and mind, and their safety and wellbeing ensured, and their personal dignity guaranteed. The responsibility to protect the rights of children rests with us all, and this is particularly so in respect of bullying where an approach which involves the whole school is essential.

These sentiments are reflected in the *WAG document: WG36832 Digital ISBN 978 1 83876 912 3 'Rights, respect, equality: Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools'* and in accordance with this, all staff at our school believe that children have the basic right to receive education in a caring, supportive and safe environment, free from oppression, humiliation and abuse.

Research bears out the conclusion that in every school; there is the potential for some pupils to engage in cruel practices and negative behaviour towards their peers. The fact that incidents of bullying have not been reported to staff does not mean they are not happening. It is therefore the duty of every member of staff to remain vigilant and ensure that learning takes place in an atmosphere, which is caring and positive.

Aims of Policy.

The purpose of promoting, supporting and maintaining this policy is to guarantee that children feel safe, secure, confident and happy within Central Primary School's environment and understand that any concerns they have are being addressed with care and consideration. Denying that bullying occurs in a school only makes it harder for children to tell you that there is a problem. Central Primary School's community is therefore committed to:

- ✓ Prevention - sending out a clear message that negative behaviour is anti-social, unacceptable and will not be tolerated by the school.
- ✓ Promoting a positive ethos within our school, which fosters the development of skills and self-esteem of young people, will therefore be our goal raising awareness - by making pupils, staff and parents aware of the different forms of bullying, and having clear statements of responsibility for pupil care and welfare.
- ✓ Sharing information - by encouraging pupils to confide in staff and or parents / carers, having clear procedures for dealing with matters of concern.
- ✓ Developing procedures - by having clear lines of communication and referral for incidents and information and referring the matter to relevant staff.
- ✓ Monitoring the situation - by ensuring that all staff are vigilant, and that the policy is reviewed on a regular basis and responding in an appropriate manner to all concerns that are raised.
- ✓ Support - providing young people who have experienced bullying with the support they need.

When referring to the roles played in bullying incidents it is preferable not to label children and young people as a 'victim' or 'bully' because:

- learners are often encouraged to 'hate bullying' which can then translate into hating individuals who bully. It is a label a child or young person can internalise and live up to, or it can impede their ability to change their behaviour. By not labelling someone a bully, space opens up to help them change their unacceptable behaviour and use their power or leadership in other ways. It is helpful to separate the person from the behaviour to allow the person to change. Their behaviour is disliked or unacceptable, but they are not hated as individuals
- labelling learners 'victims' can entrench their 'otherness' and ensure they are not accepted by their peers. They are seen as weak and many children and young people avoid them for fear of being seen in the same way. Some targeted children or young people begin to believe it is their fault they are bullied and see themselves as a victim.

To reflect this the policy uses the terms 'target' and 'perpetrator'. There are many roles played by all who are involved, including bystanders who witness bullying. It is not always clear-cut.

What is Bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying in Wales or indeed Great Britain. Therefore the definition used in this policy builds upon widely used principles established in the United Kingdom since 1993. For the purposes of this policy, bullying is defined as:

“Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts others either physically or emotionally.”

Bullying differs from an argument, a fight or friendship fallout in that it:

- is deliberate or intentional
- is generally repeated over time
- involves a perceived imbalance of power between perpetrator and target
- causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness, humiliation and powerlessness.

Types of bullying

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- being called nasty names, teased, made fun of, threatened or put down
- being hit, kicked, punched, tripped up or knocked over
- having belongings stolen or deliberately damaged
- having rumours or gossip spread about you or people talking about you behind your back
- being left out, excluded or isolated
- being forced to do something you don't want to do or that you know is wrong.

Online bullying

This is bullying behaviour that is displayed through technology such as mobile/smart phones or the internet. This could include:

- hurtful, embarrassing or threatening material posted online (e.g. on social media)
- nasty messages sent as text messages, e-mails or via other websites or apps
- being excluded from an online game or chat forum
- fake profiles on a social network to make fun of others
- misuse of intimate explicit images of the person targeted (the target). Either an individual child or a group can inflict the distress or hurt.

Prejudice-related bullying

Prejudice-related bullying is when the bullying is focused on what is different about a person's identity. It can be targeted at one person or a whole group of people because they are thought to be different, whether this is true or not. This is known as prejudice. Prejudice-related bullying involves aspects of a person's identity such as:

- race
- religion or beliefs
- culture or family background
- disability / ALN (Additional Learning Needs)
- gender identity – the way someone looks or acts
- sexual orientation – whether someone is heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual (who someone is attracted to)
- sex – because of someone's gender (often in a form of harassment).

All hate incidents are accurately recorded and reviewed as part of our monitoring procedures to prevent discrimination. We work closely with the Local Authority, who frequently monitor hate incidents in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010.

We work closely with all families to ensure the right support, at the right time, is provided for the learner to ensure the best outcomes for that child or young person. Under the PSED we ensure appropriate and effective action is taken to remove or minimise disadvantages encountered by learners due to having protected characteristics.

When is it NOT bullying?

The following examples are examples of unacceptable behaviour but are not examples of bullying:

- a disagreement or 'falling out'
- an argument or one-off fight
- relationship issues where children or young people need to learn how to get along better

- someone being 'nasty' with unkind or disrespectful words or action.

It is important to emphasise that *all* unacceptable behaviour at Central Primary School is challenged, whether bullying or not. We consider appropriate action for dealing with *all* unacceptable behaviour, whether bullying or not.

Staff at Central Primary School recognise that a one-off incident can leave a learner traumatised and nervous of reprisals or future recurrence. We intervene immediately whether it is bullying or any other one-off negative behaviour. One-off incidents that do not appear to be the start of bullying are handled as inappropriate behaviour and addressed under our 'Positive Relationships at Central' policy.

Whole School Approach

All members of the school community have a responsibility for preventing and addressing bullying. As a school community at Central Primary School, we will attempt to eliminate this problem by:

Developing an appropriate ethos - *Bully proofing our School*

We acknowledge that a poor educational environment and school ethos can have a detrimental influence on behaviour. Staff will therefore endeavour to ensure there is an emphasis on promoting positive behaviour, creating a culture of praise, social awareness and a healthy work ethic in the school. We will seek to do this by using the following **strategies to reduce bullying**:

- Creating good order conducive to learning in all classes.
- Providing in all subjects work suitable to the needs of all pupils.
- Creating interest by adopting a variety of teaching methods and sound meaningful assessment of achievements, always emphasising the positive.
- Promote co-operative learning and group work - sharing out responsibilities equally.
- Providing throughout the school year, social, cultural and sporting activities, which encourage pupil motivation and enhance well-being.
- Minimise comparisons between children on things such as sport and academic skills and value other skills.
- Organising the school community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying.
- Promoting the virtues of individuality, tolerance, social responsibility and consideration for others.
- Good communication with parents and others.
- Promoting care of younger pupils by older ones.
- Fostering a sense of belonging.
- By introducing adult and peer mediation, buddies, group work, circle time activities and through School Council events and meetings.
- Actively involving parents in the Anti-Bullying Policy.

We recognise that one-off lessons or short 'blitz'-type activities are less likely to succeed than work embedded in the curriculum that progressively addresses relationships, positive behaviour and resilience. Our 'Relationships and Sexuality Education' stresses the importance of respect, both self-respect and respect for

others. It emphasises the development of interpersonal skills and demonstrates how being assertive is much more effective than being aggressive.

In all classes, teachers seek to establish and develop an atmosphere of openness and trust in partnership with pupils, which makes it possible to explore and discuss issues with confidence. We use many **curricular approaches** through opportunities that arise in RVE (Religion, Values and Ethics), across all 6 'Areas of Learning Experiences' (AoLEs) and school assembly time. The use of theatre groups, interactive cd's, the local Police Liaison Officer, Police Core Programme, School Beat and close links with the various departments in the comprehensive school all offer an alternative and often valuable source of information and partnership.

All school staff, teaching and non - teaching, watch out for and challenge bullying behaviour where it is seen. Effective, active supervision is one of the most important strategies in the prevention of bullying. Increased supervision at problem times is used where appropriate intervals, checking cloakrooms and toilets etc. The school regularly reviews general practice in order to identify any aspects that might allow or encourage bullying.

Encouraging the reporting of bullying incidents

- We ensure that pupils know how important it is to report bullying they have witnessed or suffered.
- Leaflets, and LEA advice sheets and information regarding bullying are distributed at certain key times to parents and children when pupils may be at greater risk of experiencing difficulties, e.g. starting school, moving to a new school or at the beginning of each school session, if the school feel this is appropriate.
- Pupils are assured that their concerns will be responded to with sensitivity and dealt with rapidly. All reports will be taken seriously, and those who bully, or threaten to bully will experience the disciplinary measures detailed in this policy.
- Confidentiality for anyone who shares information is always respected.
- Lines of communication and referral are clear and efficient.
- Opportunities for pupils to communicate concerns about bullying is also provided e.g. circle time, pupil surveys, suggestion boxes, School Council.

Recording Incidents of Bullying

We record and closely monitor all incidents of alleged bullying directly onto our MyConcern Safeguarding system. All logs comply with relevant data protection requirements. Our robust approach to recording incidents of bullying informs our self-evaluation processes and helps us to take pro-active steps which challenge bullying.

Hate incidents are always reported to the Local Authority.

Dealing with Bullying

Pupils, parents, governors and school staff all have responsibilities in tackling this problem. The occurrence of bullying will hopefully be minimised if staff, pupils and parents work in partnership to fulfil the recommendations of this policy.

Possible alert **signs and symbols** to look out for which can sometimes suggest bullying is taking place include:

- Poor attendance, truancy.
- Spending a particular day at home sick.
- Turning up late for class.
- Loss of pens, books, equipment, school bags, clothes, dinner money.
- Unexplained bruises, scratches, torn clothes.
- Child becoming withdrawn, anxious / nervous.
- Mood swings.
- Tantrums or loss of control when bullied.
- Fear of travelling to or from school, either on foot or by bus.
- Fear of being around the school at break times and lunch times.
- Underachievement, deterioration in work progressively or suddenly.
- Defacing of work.
- Stops eating, sleeping, etc.

This list is not exhaustive, and it must be recognised that these signs may be indicative of problems other than bullying. Sometimes there are no overt signs of bullying and all parties concerned are required to remain switched on to any unusual happenings around them. Loss of privileges, behaviour monitoring via the drawing up of school contracts or behaviour timetables may be used with pupils who have been bullying or suspected of this. This procedure can enable schools to monitor behaviour in class, and can also enable parents to keep in touch and make comments too. It should be used as a means of encouraging good behaviour and rewards can be built into the process.

Central Primary School is fully committed to combating and eradicating bullying in all its many guises. Positive Behaviour will be promoted in all relevant school communications. The whole school community are made aware of their duties and responsibilities with regard to meeting this aim effectively and efficiently.

The effectiveness of this Policy is reviewed on a regular basis to meet changing needs and circumstances. Feedback derived from pupil and parent questionnaires, School Council and discussions with staff and parents is also taken into consideration, and acted upon.

Bullying and safeguarding

Some cases of bullying might be a safeguarding matter or require involvement of the police. Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child (or young person) is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, we report our concerns to the local authority's social services department.

ADVICE TO PUPILS - WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED

Remember that your silence is the bullies' greatest weapon.

- DON'T suffer in silence. Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and it is WRONG. DO NOT tolerate any form of bullying -even if it seems to be minor.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be an individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset, and ignore comments / teasing where possible.
- It is hard, but a perpetrator thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of people/ friends. Bullies usually pick on pupils who are on their own.
- Be ASSERTIVE - make the perpetrator aware of the fact that their behaviour is unacceptable. Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher / member of staff and TELL WHAT HAS HAPPENED.
- DON'T react or fight back - this can make matters worse. It is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. If you feel you are unable to do this, then approach a friend or parent. Contact *Childline* if all else fails (0800 44 1111).
- Your complaint will be taken seriously when the school become aware of it, and the perpetrator will be dealt with in such a way that will put an end to the bullying and will not make matters worse for you.

ADVICE TO PUPILS - IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED.

- TAKE ACTION. Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the perpetrator. It makes the target feel more unhappy and alone.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with bullying without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a perpetrator.

ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS.

- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has been, who they have spent time with, how lunchtime was spent etc.
- Inform the school IMMEDIATELY if you suspect that your child, or another is being bullied. Ask for an appointment with your child's class teacher in order to share your concerns. They are in the best position to monitor any unwanted behaviours day to day. Your complaint will be treated seriously, will be shared with senior leaders and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back, as this is a breach of the school's behaviour rules and may make matters worse. Such behaviour may be contrary to your child's nature. More positively encourage your child to recruit friends. A child who has friends is less likely to be bullied. Work WITH the school so the child gets a consistent message.
- Offer immediate support and tell your child that there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not their fault that they are being bullied.
- Keep a written record. This will be painful, but it will provide supportive evidence regarding who, what, when and where.

- Contact Pupil, Parent Support (01639 763599) if you are not satisfied with how the school is handling a particular incident.

If parents suspect their child of bullying, the school encourages them to:

- Remain calm, setting a good example.
- Try to find out why their child is doing it.
- Ask for help. The school can put parents in touch with expert help.
- Set realistic, firm guidelines and rules to help the child control behaviour.
- Ensure the child apologises, either in person or in writing to the bullied child.
- Help the child find something he / she can do well. Children who bully tend to need to achieve some success to make them feel good about themselves and change behaviour.

ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR TEACHERS AND NON-TEACHING STAFF WORKING IN THE SCHOOL.

Non - teaching Staff.

Non teaching staff should actively discourage negative behaviour where they find it, and offer support to the child who is the focus for the bullying. They should take note of the circumstances and information received, and record the matter directly onto the MyConcern system after reporting it directly to the Class Teacher, SMT or Headteacher at the earliest opportunity.

Teaching Staff.

No exact formula can be given as it depends on the incident and how the teacher becomes aware of it. However, the following general points should apply in most instances:

- Remain sensitised to early signs of distress, and high-risk periods when bullying may be more likely to occur, as identified.
- Be accessible to pupils if they wish to discuss problems.
- Respond to reports of bullying in a sensitive manner by listening carefully and making written notes of information received.
- Offering practical support and exercising professional judgement on immediate responses to situations.
- Record the matter directly onto the MyConcern system after reporting it directly to the Class Teacher, SMT or Headteacher at the earliest opportunity.

Headteacher / Member of Staff will:

- Regularly highlight the school bullying procedures.
- Establish the facts of each case.
- Ensure the appropriate disciplinary sanction is used as per the school's Positive Relationship at Central Policy.
- Record incidents directly onto MyConcern.
- Follow up and monitor incidents.
- Contact and keep all parties informed of developments (as appropriate to circumstances), e.g. parents, teachers, governors, LEA.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN DEALING WITH NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR.

Procedure.

The process is objective where the school aims to correct bullying behaviour by working with the perpetrator and target. Staff should explain clearly to all parties what is happening. Thereafter, staff should endeavour to monitor and support both the perpetrator and the target:

- 1) Target is interviewed.
- 2) Witnesses are interviewed.
- 3) Perpetrator is interviewed.
- 4) Problem is explained as fact, not accusation.
- 5) The perpetrator's responsibility to change is stressed.
- 6) The target is asked for solutions / suggestions.
- 7) A review meeting is arranged for the following week.
- 8) A review meeting is held with the perpetrator.

This process will be initiated as quickly as possible to resolve the problem speedily, and reduce the anxiety of all parties concerned. Where possible, staff will aim to effect reconciliation between those involved. This has been shown to be an enduring solution in such situations. In doing this, all parties will be encouraged to see the matter from each other's perspective. Help and advice will be given to all concerned. Incidents of a less serious nature can be addressed using circle time activities or discussed in class as a topic without naming anyone to find out how the pupils think the problem can be solved.

If the bullying is significant or continues, then the following sanctions may be imposed. The nature / seriousness of the bullying will determine which sanctions will be employed. The school prides itself in being firm, but fair regarding sanctions.

All investigations into bullying are recorded using our Safeguarding System, 'MyConcern' and shared with relevant staff.

SANCTIONS / DISCIPLINARY MEASURES.

- REFLECTION - Pupil is supervised during breaks to reflect on the child's own behaviour, and consequences.
- INFORM PARENTS - Parents are informed face to face or by telephone by the class teacher.
- MEETING WITH PARENTS - If bullying persists, parents are invited to the school to discuss future action.
- INVOLVING OUTSIDE AGENCIES - This is an extremely serious step, and further action may be considered necessary, such as involvement of LEA, Social Services or Police.
- TEMPORARY EXCLUSION- Pupil is excluded for a fixed period.
- PERMANENT EXCLUSION - Pupil is permanently excluded from school.

Review

We regularly review our anti-bullying policy and strategy, at least every three years. Our whole school community is included in the reviewing process as this ensures ownership and secures a more successful implementation.

This anti-bullying policy links to broader school policies such as positive relationships, behaviour, safeguarding, attendance and discipline etc.