AYSCOUGHFEE HALL SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This School Policy has regard to:

- **The most recent version of Working Together to Safeguard Children**
- **Behaviour in Schools**
- **Searching, Screening and Confiscation (DFE)**
- **The Equality Act 2010**
- **Preventing and Tackling Bullying DfE July 2017**
- **Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and school staff 2014.**
- **The most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education.**
- **Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations**

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Aims and Objectives

At Ayscoughfee Hall School, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Every student has the right to be safe and happy in school and to be protected when they are feeling vulnerable. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. When bullying occurs, all pupils should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a staff member.

The purpose of this policy is to inform all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, parents and pupils what bullying is, how seriously we take it and the school procedures when bullying is reported. Pupils and parents are assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. Staff awareness is raised by discussion and training. Bullying is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable and clear anti- bullying strategies are in place e.g. exploring issues through our PHSE curriculum, taking part in Anti-Bullying Week each year and the school's focus on 'kindness' which is promoted strongly across the school throughout the year.

Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Acceptable Use of IT Policy	Mobile Phone Policy & Leaflet
Allergen Safety & Anaphylaxis Policy	Online Safety Policy
Artificial Intelligence Policy	Parental Complaints Policy
Behaviour Policy	Parent Social Media Policy
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Exclusion Policy	

Definition

Bullying is, '**Behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally**.' (DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2017).

Bullying may be motivated by prejudice against particular groups and may be physical, psychological or verbal in nature. It is usually conscious and wilful and commonly consists of repeated acts of aggression and/or manipulation. Bullying can take a number of forms – both physical and non-physical, either in combination or isolation. It may occur directly or online such as social media, mobile phones, text messages etc.

Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting impact on their lives well into adulthood. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, we can help to create safe, disciplined environments where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential. The school will respond and take action against any concern raised regarding bullying, this may be a single incident and not necessarily repeated. This will assist the school to spot patterns and to ensure the single incident does not become the first of a series.

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- **Cultural** - discriminating on the grounds of a person's background or different views
- **Cyber** - the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the Internet, deliberately to upset someone else.
- **Disability** - discriminating due to someone's physical or mental disability
- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- **Homophobic** - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Religious** - discriminating on the grounds of a person's religious beliefs
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Gender** - targeting another for being a member of a particular gender - impacting on the individual person and on all men and women
- **Social Isolation** - behaviour leading to social isolation, including gossip spreading gossip and encouraging others to ignore another
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing and the use of 'banter'.
- **Medical Condition or Allergy Related Bullying** – targeting a pupil because of a medical condition, allergy or disability. This may include teasing, exclusion, threatening behaviour, interference with medication, deliberate exposure to allergens, pretending to trigger an allergic reaction, or making a pupil feel unsafe because of their medical needs.
- **Extortion** – demanding money / goods with threats

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The school adopts a zero-tolerance approach to discriminatory language and prejudicial behaviour. All incidents are challenged, recorded and addressed appropriately, whether or not they meet the definition of bullying.

Where bullying concerns indicate a safeguarding risk, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed and appropriate safeguarding procedures followed.

Bullying and Child-on-Child Abuse

The school recognises that some incidents of bullying may also constitute child-on-child abuse. This can include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, online abuse, discriminatory behaviour, harmful sexual behaviour, or the sharing of inappropriate images or content. Any behaviour that causes harm, distress, intimidation or fear to another pupil will be taken seriously.

All reports of child-on-child abuse will be responded to promptly, sensitively and in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff will consider the needs and safety of all children involved and make appropriate referrals where there is a risk of significant harm. The school adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of any kind and will provide support for both the child experiencing harm and the child displaying concerning behaviour.

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Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A pupil may indicate by signs or patterns of behaviour that they are being bullied. They may;

- be unwilling to go to school/be frightened of walking to school
- feel ill in the morning and complain of tummy / head aches
- begin to do poorly in schoolwork
- become withdrawn, start stammering
- regularly have books or clothes destroyed or stolen
- become distressed, stop eating, overeat
- cry easily or have nightmares/wet the bed
- become tired and listless due to inability to sleep
- become disruptive or aggressive
- have possessions go ‘missing’
- be frightened to say what is wrong
- have frequent injuries and unexplained bruises
- run away
- self-harm
- ask for or start stealing money
- is afraid to use the Internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- have improbable excuses for any of the above

This is not an exhaustive list and staff should be alert to any changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate that something is wrong. These signs and behaviour traits could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

The Prevention of Bullying

Bullying is wrong and can cause serious psychological damage to individual or groups of children. The prevention of bullying is always our primary goal and we aim to achieve this in a variety of ways:

- Having a robust PSHE curriculum which equips the children to know how to recognise bullying, how to report bullying and who to approach for support if they feel they are being bullied.
- Exploring issues through the curriculum, including through PSHE, assemblies and participation in Anti-Bullying week.
- Having an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave.
- Actively celebrating the importance of being kind to each other. Our Year 6 Kindness Ambassadors give weekly kindness certificates to Infant and Junior children, they meet regularly with the Headteacher to discuss ideas for promoting the message that if we are kind to each other, we should not have bullying in school.
- The awarding of House Points, Star of the Day and Stars of The Week are not only for academic success but can be seen as small acts of kindness, rewarded for a general helpful attitude, fundraising efforts or for generosity of time for example.
- The celebration of personal and moral values.
- Listening to pupils, taking seriously their concerns and acting on these promptly.
- Adopting a problem-solving approach, using a variety of methods, that involves working with both the pupil experiencing bullying and perpetrator to modify and improve behaviour.
- Making staff fully aware of our anti-bullying policy and the expectations and procedures within.
- Gathering and recording information about bullying incidents so as to effectively develop strategies to prevent bullying from occurring.
- Where cyberbullying is concerned, educating and engaging parents on the principles of online safety so they know the dangers of what unsupervised internet access can create.
- Ensuring school online safety systems are secure and robust. Using filtering and monitoring systems to ensure pupils cannot access social networking sites etc. that may facilitate cyberbullying and regularly checking the effectiveness of these systems.
- Monitoring filtering and monitoring reports daily (via email alert) and weekly (via reports) to identify any unacceptable behaviour.
- Encouraging parents to check what their children are doing online and using parental controls on their electronic devices to minimise the likelihood of children behaving inappropriately online.
- Promoting awareness of allergies and anaphylaxis so that pupils understand the importance of respecting measures put in place to keep others safe and understand the potentially serious consequences of allergen exposure.

That culture extends beyond the classroom to the corridors, the dining hall, the playground, and beyond the school gates and includes online behaviour. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced and modelled by staff.

The school recognises that bullying can take place outside the school environment, including on the way to and from school, during extracurricular activities and online. Where bullying outside school impacts on a pupil's safety, wellbeing or education, the school will investigate

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the incident and take appropriate action in accordance with its Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Safeguarding policies.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

The Governing Body is responsible for overseeing the safety of everyone in the school. They will monitor trends in bullying, as reported by the Headteacher on a half-termly basis, review anonymised incident data where available, challenge leaders on the effectiveness of the School's approach to managing bullying and ensure resources and training are available to staff as required

Staff

Training raises the awareness of staff, so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and available sources of support are understood. The school invests in training to ensure that all staff are well-equipped to understand, investigate and work to prevent bullying. Teachers are trained to use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all, helping pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour.

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

- If staff witness an act of bullying, they will initially investigate it themselves, in conjunction with the class teacher of the children involved.
- The bullying behaviour will be logged using the school's My Concern system and the Headteacher, or Deputy Headteacher in her absence, will be informed.
- During any investigation, care must be promoted for the pupil experiencing bullying and for the child(ren) showing alleged bullying behaviour.
- Where an incident involves sexual violence or harassment, staff will refer to Child Protection procedures in line with the most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement and ensure all staff are aware of the school Anti-Bullying Policy and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the Board of Governors about the effectiveness of the policy.

Under usual circumstances the Headteacher will investigate any incidence of bullying, however in her absence this role may be delegated to the Deputy Headteacher.

The Headteacher will ensure that all children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour in our school. This is delivered through assemblies, PSHE curriculum, national Anti-Bullying week and specific localised work if an incident occurs.

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying. The Headteacher will be informed of specific behaviour issues and persistent bullying incidents by any concerned member of staff and through logging on My Concern.

Pupils
An atmosphere of trust, caring and respect in the classroom is essential. This is augmented

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by the use of educational elements such as personal, social, health and economic education, (PSHE) and with discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language. As well as assemblies, projects, drama, stories, literature, historical events and current affairs to stimulate discussion. We take part in Anti Bullying week and specific work on anti-bullying is carried out with the older pupils, such as the Kidscape 'Anti-Bullying Champion' programme which educates children about how to avoid, prevent and handle incidents of bullying.

Pupils are encouraged to tell someone if they are experiencing bullying or are worried about another child. They can speak to their class teacher, any trusted adult in school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), tell their parents or carers, use the worry box in their classroom, or seek support from a trusted friend to help them share their concerns. If the bullying continues, pupils are encouraged to keep telling an adult until they feel heard and supported.

Pupils are also encouraged to share their views and concerns through pupil questionnaires, the School Council and discussions with staff. Children who witness bullying, or behaviour they think may be bullying, should report it to a trusted adult, their class teacher, the DSL/DDSL, or use the school's reporting systems, so that support can be provided and appropriate action taken.

The Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. Parents should be prepared to talk about the signs and symptoms that they have observed and any suspicions they have about those carrying out the bullying.

Parents must leave the initial investigation to the school and not contact/discuss the incident with other parents via social media etc. (Please refer to the school's Parent Social Media Policy).

Roles and Responsibilities and Procedures to Follow when Bullying is Reported

The procedure for dealing with any incident of poor behaviour is detailed in the school's Behaviour Policy. Should an investigation into an alleged bullying incident be found not to be bullying, then this does not mean that the incident is closed. It will be dealt with under the Behaviour Policy. Patterns of behaviour that may lead to bullying are recorded by class teachers on My Concern. These incidents are monitored and may be discussed at staff meetings.

Children can be reluctant to 'tell' on their friends and classmates and pupils experiencing bullying can be reluctant to come forward. Although this is addressed in the PSHE and Assembly Programme, teachers must be vigilant at all times and report a bullying incident, including cyber-bullying and bullying outside school, or any concerns they may have about a child to the Headteacher immediately. The Headteacher will record any incidents of bullying, liaising with staff and ensure this is monitored.

Class Teachers

A Class Teacher is best placed to talk to a child who is displaying any symptoms of being bullied or about whom they have concerns. They should first report their concerns to the Headteacher and discuss the best course of action. The conversation with the child should take place in a familiar place, which could be the classroom, but with no other children present and without the likelihood of interruption. However, the teacher should take sensible steps to protect themselves from allegations (*see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).*

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Parents

Parents may be the first to notice symptoms that their child is being bullied and may report their concerns to the class teacher or Headteacher. Parents are made aware that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied, including support for the child. Parents should feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and we expect parents to reinforce the value of good behaviour at home. However, great care should be taken that the term 'bullying' is not used out of context or incorrectly. Children can find life in a large community quite hard and do not always behave as we may wish. There is a wide band of unacceptable behaviour that is not bullying.

Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and it is important that all concerns about bullying are reported to her immediately. The Headteacher works closely with the Deputy Head who may assist the Headteacher in the investigation of any incident.
Once a case of bullying has been reported, the Headteacher will discuss the matter with the class teacher of the pupil experiencing bullying and decide on the course of action to ascertain the facts. The class teacher may ask the child to talk to the Headteacher and will, if possible, be present during the talk.

The Headteacher or class teacher may need to interview other children, including the alleged perpetrator. It may be that asking all children to write down their account of an incident is helpful in
getting a clear picture of an incident and frees the children from the fear of 'telling'.

Once the facts are clear, the Headteacher will discuss the incident with the parents of all children concerned. Should it emerge that this is a case of bullying then the Headteacher will see the perpetrator's parents in person and will discuss with them the school's response. The child will also be asked to join the discussion and will be informed of the Headteacher's decision. The Headteacher will also discuss the bullying incident with the pupil experiencing bullying's parents and later with the pupil experiencing bullying present. The Headteacher, with the Deputy Head and the class teacher will put in place a programme of support for the pupil experiencing bullying and also the perpetrator, with the emphasis being on restorative practices and education around modifying and improving behaviour.

The incident will always be recorded on My Concern, with a record of the sanctions imposed. Records are kept in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted and to enable patterns to be identified.

If there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy should be implemented. If there is a disclosure about child-on-child abuse, all children involved whether perpetrator or pupil experiencing bullying are treated as being 'at risk' An external agency such as Lincolnshire Children Services, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or Police may be contacted.

After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, the matter will be discussed at a Staff Meeting and any necessary measures put in place to prevent any repetition.

Sanctions (*see Behaviour Policy*)

Disciplinary sanctions will be imposed that reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect. Should a repetition occur, the nature of the sanction will escalate. For minor incidents, a letter of apology or the return of property may be sufficient, but other sanctions

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such as time off the playground may be appropriate. If a child displays an on-going lack of response to sanctions and shows an unwillingness to alter their behaviour choices, support from outside agencies may be sought, reduced timetables, or even fixed or permanent exclusion will be considered (see the Exclusion Policy). Where incidents of bullying arise in relation to protected characteristics, sanctions will be applied as per the Equality and Diversity Policy. All incidents of this nature will be recorded and reported to the Governing Body.

Deliberately exposing a pupil to a known allergen, threatening a pupil with an allergen, or interfering with emergency medication such as an adrenaline auto-injector will be treated as a serious behaviour and safeguarding concern and may result in significant sanctions

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and also covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It 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; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Schools are now required to comply with the Equality Duty.

Communication and Monitoring

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will analyse bullying data termly to identify patterns, trends, vulnerable groups, locations and any issues relating to protected characteristics, using the information to inform preventative strategies.

The school's policies on behaviour and bullying are communicated to parents and are available on the School's Website. Parents are therefore aware of the school's attitude to bullying and feel confident in coming to report any concerns that they may have.

The Headteacher with the Senior Management Team will review this policy every year; with reference to any incidents of bullying, how they were dealt with and the success of the school's policy on prevention of bullying. It is the responsibility of the School Governing Body to monitor the policy review process and ratify this policy accordingly. Cases of serious bullying will be discussed with the Governor responsible for Safeguarding and bullying is reported to the Board of Governors half termly at full Board meetings.

This policy has been updated and will be used in draft form pending formal ratification by the Board of Governors.

Any reference to the word 'School' implicitly includes all its associated clubs/activities including Kids Club. This policy also applies to EYFS

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