



# Anti-bullying Policy

Policy Owner: Gareth Allen

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Taken to Governors: 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015

Date of next review: June 2016

## **Introduction**

This policy is based upon Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Department for Education document "Preventing and Tackling Bullying - Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies" October 2014. It promotes British values (democracy, British Law, individual liberty, mutual respect, tolerance of those of different faiths, beliefs and cultures). The school's ethos and vision strongly reflect belief that bullying must be challenged in which ever form it may appear.

## **Ethos and Vision**

Brackenfield is a child centred school where functional literacy is embedded as our core purpose. We empower each member of our community to reach their full potential - academically, socially and **behaviourally**, whatever their starting point and whatever their individual need. We ensure that the learning environment we create is bespoke, enhanced and personal. We ensure all our staff are trained to understand and facilitate the needs of our students. We will keep our students **safe** and develop their understanding of safety in the wider world. We allow our students, whatever their communication requirements, to have a **voice**.

Brackenfield is a place where:

- Opportunities for kindness are never missed
- Your needs will be met with dignity, privacy and sensitivity
- The best learning opportunities are promoted in a tension free environment
- We learn from everyone to understand each other
- Learning is bespoke and personal to you
- Everyone has a voice

## **Rationale**

The staff and governors at Brackenfield recognise the importance of creating an environment in which positive behaviour and mutual respect for all is encouraged and reinforced. Upholding and encouraging positive behaviour is an integral part of the school, which imparts appropriate and relevant social skills to students allowing them to participate fully in learning; promoting fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and belief.

Pupils contribute to the development of the policy through the school council, assemblies and discussions. The school council will develop a Student friendly version to be displayed in classrooms and display boards around the school. When pupils and staff feel safe and secure this has a positive impact on teaching and learning. Through positive management strategies, the curriculum, individual educational and behaviour programmes all pupils, whatever their ability, are supported to access all aspects of the school community.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parents/carers, LA and outside agencies and appointing an Anti-bullying coordinator who will have general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy.

The Anti -bullying Coordinator in our school is: Assistant Head for Behaviour and Safety  
Their responsibilities are:

- Policy development and review involving pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and relevant local agencies
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review
- Managing bullying incidents
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour
- Ensuring anti-bullying lessons, events and assemblies occur throughout the school year

#### Our staff will

- Foster in our pupils self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Report suspected cases of bullying to The Head Teacher, or Assistant Head for Behaviour and Safety.
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, using the appropriate forms and report back to them promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
- This reporting back may be done by a member of the senior management team after consultation.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.
- Only small groups of pupils that are well supervised are on the playground at break times
- Lunchtimes are supervised by staff who encourage positive interactions between pupils
- The curriculum will support our anti bullying ethos in the following areas
  - PSHE and COPE
  - ICT
  - Citizenship
  - Religious Education
  - whole school assemblies

The nominated Governor with the responsibility for Anti-bullying (Behaviour and Safety) is: Mr Leigh Thomas.

#### We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Will not be enticed into engaging in bullying activities.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
- Advising their children to report any bullying to their class teacher, or a member of staff they feel most comfortable with, and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils.
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken.
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying and speak to a member of the SLT.
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth, point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

Everyone should:

- Work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying and provide a safe, happy environment.

### **Definition of Bullying**

‘Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally’.

*Safe to Learn: embedding anti bullying work in schools (2007).*

How does bullying differ from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.
- It is usually persistent.

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent - if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of sexual, sexist, racist or homophobic bullying and when children with disabilities are involved. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required.

What does bullying look like?

Bullying can include:

- name calling
- taunting
- mocking
- making offensive comments
- physical assault
- taking or damaging belongings
- cyber bullying - inappropriate text messaging and e mailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet
- producing offensive graffiti

- gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- excluding people from groups.
- Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'.
- Why are children and young people bullied?
- Specific types of bullying include:
  - bullying related to race, religion or culture
  - bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities
  - bullying related to appearance or health
  - bullying relating to sexual orientation
  - bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
  - sexist or sexual bullying

There is no hierarchy of bullying - all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Bullying can take place between:

- young people
- young people and staff
- between staff
- individuals or groups

Certain groups of pupils are known to be particularly vulnerable to bullying by others: these may include pupils with special educational needs such as learning or physical disabilities; young carers, Looked After children, those from ethnic and racial minority groups and those young people who may be perceived as lesbian, gay, bi- sexual, transgender or questioning their gender role.

### **Reporting and Responding to Bullying**

Our school has clear and well-publicised systems to report bullying for the whole school community (including staff, parents/carers, children and young people) this includes those who are the victims of bullying or have witnessed bullying behaviour (bystanders).

Outline the systems of reporting for

- Children and young people in school
  - Directly to members of staff (either in person or by phone/ email)
  - To a classmate or school council member
  - To an anti-bullying ambassador
  - Via the "Reporting Bullying" form
  - During therapies/ counselling sessions
- Parents/carers
  - Directly to a member of staff (either in person or by phone/ email)
  - Writing to the child's class team or member of the senior leadership
- All staff and visitors
  - Directly to a member of staff (either in person or by phone/ email)
  - Via the "Reporting Bullying" form
  - Writing to the child's class team or member of the senior leadership
  - Cause for Concern form
- Bystanders
  - Directly to a member of staff (either in person or by phone/ email)
  - Writing to the child's class team or member of the senior leadership

### **Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying**

Where a bullying incident is reported the following steps will be undertaken and be fully investigated.

- Steps taken to support and respond to the needs of both bullied and bullying pupils. This may be time out, sessions with specifically trained staff who may support them.
- Records are kept which can support the school to see patterns of behaviour and proactively support young people
- All relevant parties interviewed
- Parents are informed
- A range of responses appropriate to the situation: - solution focused, restorative approach, circle of friends, individual work with victim, perpetrator, referral to outside agencies if appropriate
- Referral to Behaviour policy and school sanctions and how these may be applied including what actions may be taken if bullying persists
- Follow up especially keeping in touch with the person who reported the situation, parents/carers
- Support for the victim and the bully.
- Contacting relevant professionals eg. EWO, MAT, Social Care, Educational Psychology, CAHMS.
- Restorative approaches may be used.
- In incidences of extreme violence and physical assault the police may be involved.

### **Recording Bullying and Evaluating the Policy**

Bullying incidents will be recorded on Integris by the member of staff who deals with the incident and this will be notified to and held by the Anti-bullying coordinator. The Anti-bullying coordinator will then in conjunction with the reporting staff member will record the incident(s) using the appropriate forms (see appendix 1). The information we hold will be used to ensure individual incidents are followed up. It will also be used to identify trends and inform preventative work in school and development of the policy.

This information will be presented to the governors in an anonymous format as part of the annual report. The policy will be reviewed and updated annually. The policy review will be linked to the School Improvement Plan, working towards a more inclusive and harmonious ethos across the school community.

### **Strategies for Preventing Bullying**

As part of our on-going commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils we at Brackenfield Special School have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour.

Include here your strategies both as part of the curriculum and across the whole school for example

- Restorative Approaches
- Involvement in Healthy Schools
- Anti-Bullying week annually in November.
- PSHE/citizenship
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as Cyberbullying and internet safety
- Student voice via the school councillor
- Parent groups/extended schools
- Peer mentoring schemes
- Playground Buddying
- Parent information events/information
- Staff training and development for all staff
- Counselling and/or Mediation

## **Continuous professional development of staff**

Brackenfield School is committed to supporting staff to remain confident and knowledgeable in relation to our commitment to minimise bullying in school. This may be through internal training, external training providers or one to one information gathering sessions. This will be on an individual need basis.

### **Links with other policies**

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Equalities Policy - Race, Sexist, Sexual, Transphobic, Homophobia, SEN and Disability PSHE and Citizenship Policy
- Complaints policy
- Confidentiality Policy