

Brine Leas School

An Academy

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

Brine Leas School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for any member of the school community. The school community is made up of students, parents/guardians/carers, governors and all staff.

Every member of this community has the right to feel secure, equally valued and respected. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable but if it does take place, people should be able to tell someone in the knowledge that incidents will be dealt with effectively and promptly. It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to address and/or report incidents of bullying.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

- To create a clear and agreed understanding of what bullying is and how Brine Leas School responds should it arise.
- To provide a safe and positive environment for all members of the school community.
- To offer support to those who experience bullying and ensure they are listened to.
- To establish a culture where bullying in all its forms, discrimination and harassment is unacceptable
- To help those engaging in bullying behaviour by applying appropriate sanctions and providing learning opportunities to help them face up to and repair the harm they have caused.
- To communicate with parents/guardians/carers and other appropriate members of the school community or other external agencies in support of an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically, verbally or emotionally.

Bullying isn't when children and young people of similar age and size find themselves in conflict, without an imbalance of power or use of intimidation.

Brine Leas School defines bullying as any incident, which is perceived to be such by the victim or any other person. It is any words or actions that are meant to hurt a person or their feelings and which are repeated over time and are difficult to deal with.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive students can be drawn in by group pressure.

Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No student should have to accept this type of behaviour.

Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a student best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at School.

The list below gives different types of bullying:-

1. **Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures). Including exclusion of anyone new to a school or group, or exclusion of a child because of the action/behaviour of their parent.
2. **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
3. **Verbal:** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, or personality, etc.
4. **Racist:** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
5. **Sexual:** This is bullying that a specific sexual dimension or a sexual dynamic and it may be physical, verbal or non-verbal/psychological.
6. **Sexist:** this is bullying based on sexist attitudes that when expressed demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender
7. **Homophobic:** This is teasing people for being gay or for being perceived as gay, calling them anti-gay names, **even in jest**, spreading rumours about people's sexual orientation for the purpose of making fun of them, hitting, intimidation, and isolating people who are believed to be gay.
8. **Cyber:** This includes sending malicious letters, e-mails, text messages and e-mailing photographs using mobile phones
9. **Faith** based bullying because of religious faith
10. **Young people with a disability** can be bullied everywhere they go, including at school, in the park, on the bus, in the street and at out-of-school clubs. They are more likely to be bullied by other children because they are seen as 'different' and as 'easy targets' by bullies.
11. **Transphobic:** This stems from a hatred or fear of people who are transgender. Transgender is an umbrella term that describes people whose sense of their gender or gender identity is seen as being different to typical gender norms.
12. **Indirect bullying:** Spreading of rumours, excluding someone from social groups

THE IMPORTANCE OF BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Bullying is harmful. Each individual has the right to be treated with respect in an environment where bullying is regarded as an anti-social act. Those who choose to bully need to learn different ways of behaving.

We will take all instances related to any of the above types of bullying seriously, and treat each case individually, analysing each incident and take appropriate action. We will 'follow up' on each case.

ADVICE TO STUDENTS IF THEY ARE BEING BULLIED

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is wrong!
- b) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- e) Be assertive. Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- f) Fighting back may make things worse.
- g) It is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.

Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED

- a) Take action. Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- b) If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately. Adults have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.

ADVICE TO PARENTS IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED

- a) Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may take unusual absences, become shy, nervous, feign illness, truant from school, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- b) Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc.
- c) If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the School immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- d) It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- e) Tell your own son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
- f) Make sure your child is fully aware of the School policy concerning bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.

ADVICE TO PARENTS OF A CHILD WHO IS BULLYING

We encourage parents/carers to contact the school for pastoral support and guidance if they are concerned that their child may in fact be a perpetrator of any bullying behaviour. This can help us to prevent an escalation in behaviour, help your child to understand the impact of their behaviour and explore the reasons behind this behaviour. The aim of this will be to support your child in changing their behaviours and prevent any further unkind/intolerant behaviours from occurring.

If you do think that child is involved in this type of behaviour, then it is important that you remain calm and get their side of their story.

- Do not get angry or they may shut off and not want to talk.
- Find out how they felt, what lead up to these incidents and what they feel would help to resolve this.
- Explore the feelings of the person who has been bullied and ask your child how they think they would be feeling.
- Get them to put their feet in the other student's shoes, to understand the impact of bullying and how it can cause long term issues.
- Letting your child know to expect some form of sanctions or consequences is essential too and remind them that this could impact on their future choices.
- Explore any reasons behind such behaviour, has there been any recent changes or difficulties your child has had to face.

If the bullying is serious, violent or threats have been made, the family of the person who has been bullied may involve the police. The school may also take serious steps, so it is important to understand this and convey this to your child.

AS A SCHOOL

It is the responsibility for all staff/students/parents and carers to be aware of the effect of bullying on the individual. Prevention is clearly the strategy of choice and needs to be addressed vigorously by a variety of techniques in order to prevent bullying and promote respect and fair play.

At whole school level:-

- Through assemblies to communicate School's bullying prevention stance.
- The work student safeguarding student group do to promote how the community can work together to prevent its occurrence. These opportunities will also celebrate the bullying prevention work of the school.
- At class-room level – during tutor time, PSHE and co-operative Learning and the active teaching of social and emotional skills within these contexts.
- At supervisory level – all staff engaged in this activity will be familiar with the Bullying Prevention Policy.
- Break times/lunch times will be adequately supervised to reduce the risk of bullying incidents.
- Anonymous report bullying tab on the school website.

- We will deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- We will not use teaching materials or equipment which give a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc.
- We encourage students to treat everyone with respect.
- We will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school.
- We will challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination; verbal and physical; and promote equality and good relationships.
- We will work in partnership with parents and the wider community to challenge prejudice and discrimination and establish, promote and disseminate good practices.
- We will work to develop an understanding of the importance of the diversity and difference.
- We will complete and record bullying incidents using the SCIES anti bullying process.
- The pastoral team will provide mentoring and mediation intervention where appropriate to both victim and bully and sanctions where appropriate.
- We will ensure that parents/carers are informed and updated in respect of bullying prevention and intervention within the school.

AS GOVERNORS

We will:-

- a) ensure that the school complies with all relevant legislation;
- b) ensure that the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.
- c) Monitor the number of incidents reported

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:-

- is frightened of walking to or from school;
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus;
- begs to be driven to school;
- changes their usual routine;
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic);
- begins to truant;
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- feels ill in the morning;

- begins to do badly in school work;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing";
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully);
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost";
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- comes home hungry (money / lunch has been stolen);
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber-message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

INTERVENTION

All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of students will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall within the school's definition of bullying.

A record will be made of any incident and passed on to the pastoral team.

REPORTING AND RECORDING

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be initially dealt with by the member of staff who has noticed it or has been approached with a disclosure by students or parents.

Details of the incident must be recorded on CPOMS and forwarded to pastoral team to ensure that an effective and fair investigation is made and a clear account of the incident is recorded. Those involved or implicated will be interviewed and listened to. Incident forms will be completed. Parents/carers will be kept informed by the pastoral team. Sanctions and support will be put in place as appropriate and outcomes monitored to prevent recurrence of the bullying behaviour. The pastoral Team are to ensure that each identified incident of bullying will be entered onto the schools bullying log. Each incident will be reviewed at fixed periods to ensure that further incidents have not occurred and that the resolution is clear.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to be advised of all identified bullying incidents and they will be reported termly at governors meetings

In all cases of bullying within the school community we ask parents/carers to allow the school to deal with the situation as an impartial investigator, mediator and ultimately resolve the situation. If parents/carers get involved this can escalate the situation and have a detrimental impact on resolution.

SUPPORT

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:-

- Access to confidential reporting.
- Discussing the experience with a trusted adult.
- Being reassured that the bullying will be taken seriously and investigated.
- Being offered support, for example by counselling or befriending etc.

Students who have bullied will be helped to face up to the harm they have caused and learn from it by:-

- Discussing the incident to account for their behaviour.
- Establishing the wrong-doing and being provided with an opportunity to put right any harm they have caused.
- Receiving counselling or external training from the appropriate agencies.

SANCTIONS

The School will respond to incidents of bullying in a proportionate way. When sanctions are deemed to be necessary they will be applied fairly and consistently. A range of disciplinary options may be considered, including:-

- restorative conversation;
- informing the parents/guardians of the bullies;
- monitoring by the pastoral team;
- removal from class/group;
- loss of lunch-time privileges including lunchtime exclusion;
- restorative community payback;
- loss of right to have a phone in school;
- withdrawal of ICT access rights if this facility is being used to bully;
- internal exclusion;
- alternative educational provision;
- fixed periods of exclusion.

Restorative justice may be offered as an alternative, when appropriate, as a means of mediation.

PARENTS/CARERS

Parents and/or carers will:-

- Liaise with the pastoral team and, where possible, provide specific information to assist in the investigation of the incident, maintain contact with the School to keep track of progress.
- Liaise with the pastoral team if their child is bullying, to establish an understanding of their role in helping their child to learn about the consequences of their actions.
- Support the School in its efforts to help deal with their child's behaviour.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION REVIEW

The School will review this policy in line with its standard policy review schedule, or sooner if required, to assess its implementation and effectiveness.

The views of students, staff, parents and carers will be drawn upon to instigate changes and improvements where necessary.

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