

***Alder Community High School
A Specialist Maths and Computing College***



Anti-Bullying Policy

(Reviewed June 2013)

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1. Legal requirements of Governors

Bullying is wrong. It is anti-social. It is not excusable. It is not inevitable. The Governing Body believes that all members of the school community have the right to work and develop as individuals in a supportive, caring and safe environment. It also believes that the school has a moral responsibility to promote good citizenship through the example it sets.

The law states that schools have a legal duty to counter bullying amongst its students. Furthermore, all schools have a 'duty of care' to their students and protection against bullying is part of this care.

2. Aims of the School Policy

Whilst it may be difficult for a school to totally eliminate bullying in all its forms, we will aim to:

- ensure that all students can learn and develop in a safe, secure and happy environment free from worry or anxiety;
- educate and inform, constantly reinforce the message that bullying is wrong and ensure that all students are aware of their rights and responsibilities;
- deal firmly with incidents of bullying should they occur and provide effective support for the victims;
- ensure that all staff are aware of the appropriate strategies and procedures in place if incidents of bullying should occur;
- meet any legal obligations which rest with the school.

3. Key Principles

- All bullying is unacceptable, regardless of how it is delivered or what excuses are given to justify it.
- We will do all that we can to prevent incidents of bullying at our school.
- Victims of bullying will always be treated in a supportive manner.
- Instances of bullying will be dealt with firmly and effectively.
- The wishes of the victim will always be taken into account when deciding how to deal with a specific incident of bullying.

4. The Nature of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as any deliberate and persistent attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone, either physically or emotionally.

Bullying may be:

Physical

This will include any form of violent behaviour such as hitting, pushing, kicking or spitting, threats of violence or any physical intimidation.

Verbal

This may include name-calling, sarcasm, rumour-mongering, persistent teasing or derogatory comments about such things as appearance, mannerisms or family members.

Emotional

This may include the use of ridicule, humiliation (written or verbal) ostracism, inciting others or persistent tormenting.

Racist

This may include taunts, gestures, stereo-typing, derogatory references (written or verbal) of a religious or cultural nature or comments directed at ethnic characteristics.

Sexual

This may include heterosexual or homophobic harassment (written or verbal) suggestive comments about appearance and/or gender characteristics or unwanted physical contact.

Abuse of property

This will include theft, deliberate damage to property, interfering with possessions, demanding money or "borrowing" and failing to return.

Cyber Bullying

This may include posting negative comments via instant messaging service or chat rooms.

5. The Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher must :

- ensure that the school has an effective anti-bullying policy and that staff (teaching and non-teaching), parents and students are aware of the procedures and strategies for dealing with incidents of bullying should they occur;

- ensure that all the issues surrounding bullying are covered comprehensively and effectively through the formal and informal curriculum;
- endeavour to establish a school ethos which promotes self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem and so mitigate against some of the key causal issues surrounding bullying;
- review and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and report back to the Governing Body accordingly.

Although the Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for the school's anti-bullying policy many of the day to day procedural issues are delegated to Year Leaders.

6. The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body:

- will support the Headteacher in all attempts to counter bullying.
- requires that the Headteacher monitors and record incidents of bullying and reports on the effectiveness of school policy.
- must respond within ten days to a parental request to investigate an incident by notifying the Headteacher who, in due course will report back to a representative of the Governors.

7. Practical strategies to help minimise the risk of bullying

- The anti-bullying policy, including the guidelines for staff are reviewed and discussed by all year teams on an annual basis.
- Incidents of bullying are recorded on the school bullying log. The bully is made aware that an incident has been formally recorded.
- The issues surrounding bullying are comprehensively covered through the school's PSHE programme and the Tutorial and Assembly programme.
- All students are encouraged to report, in confidence, any instances of bullying towards themselves or others.
- Students are given an information leaflet that includes practical advice and suggestions on how to avoid bullying. The same leaflet is also available for parents.
- A peer helping scheme is being set up where students can go for advice and support.
- Support for vulnerable students is readily available through PSHE, our Child and Family Support worker the school mentoring programme and the LSC.

- There are staffed “safe areas” in school at break and lunchtime. Similarly all dining areas are staffed and students are allowed to remain inside the school building if they wish. There are always two members of staff on “outside patrol” for the entire break and lunchtime periods.
- The school buses are staffed both on the way to and the way home from school.

8. Guidelines for staff

See Appendices A and B.

9. Guidelines for students and parents

See Appendix B

10. Evaluation Procedures

The effectiveness of the Policy will be evaluated through discussions with staff and students, the annual student survey and by monitoring the number of incidents recorded on the bullying log over a given period.

Appendix A

Anti-bullying Policy

Guidance and Procedures for Staff

1. You must be familiar with our anti-bullying policy.
2. Look out for possible signs of bullying. You should investigate if a child:
 - is unwilling to come to school;
 - becomes withdrawn or anxious;
 - has possessions go “missing”;
 - keeps “losing” their dinner or bus money;
 - starts waiting around at the end of the school day and delays going home;
 - becomes easily upset or distressed;
 - starts to stammer;
 - begins to do poorly in school work;
 - is frightened to say what is wrong;
 - has unexplained cuts and bruises;
 - arrives with torn clothes or damaged books.
3. Where a student reports an incident of bullying you must always take the complaint seriously and listen carefully to what the child has to say. Any complaint must then be thoroughly investigated. This may involve speaking to other students or taking witness statements (**see point 5**).
4. If you witness bullying or think that it may be happening, you are duty bound to intervene. This will clearly involve supporting the victim and dealing with the perpetrator(s) as appropriate.
- 5. When dealing with a complaint or incident always reassure the victim that you will not simply jump in and make things worse. Discuss the best course of action with the victim.**
6. Always try and resolve the issue through discussion. Establish that the bully is wrong and explain how his or her actions are affecting the victim. An apology from the bully and a clear warning as to the consequences of similar behaviour may well resolve the issue at this stage. Monitor the situation closely. Subsequent instances of bullying will then lead to a referral to Year Leaders or SMT as outlined in step 9.
7. Always record the details of the incident and ensure that both victim and bully are aware that you have done so. Make sure that a copy of your report is passed to the Year Leader. The Year Leader may contact the parents of both parties depending on the nature of the problem and whether or not they feel it is appropriate. The Year Leader will also record the incident on the school bullying log.

8. Professional judgement should be used when dealing with incidents of bullying. However, if you have any doubt you should seek the support and advice of senior colleagues.

9. Unresolved or serious incidents must be reported to Year Leaders or SMT, who will take steps to separate students whilst investigations take place. This will almost certainly involve talking to other students and taking witness statements.

10. Various outcomes and courses of action may follow an investigation. The matter may be resolved through discussion as outlined in point 6 although parents would almost certainly be informed and sanctions imposed.

11. If bullying continues:

- group changes may be considered;
- students may be isolated or other sanctions imposed;
- students may be sent home to be brought back in by parents;
- fixed term exclusion may be considered by the Headteacher;
- permanent exclusion will be considered as a last resort.

Appendix B

Students:

If you are being bullied:

- It is best to tell a responsible adult
- Pick carefully who you choose to tell - ***not everyone is as understanding***
- **NEVER** try to make the bully your friend
- If you don't get bullied then do not laugh along with the bully

REMEMBER:

Everyone has the right not to be bullied and the right to feel safe at school.

Parents:

If your child is being bullied:

- Discuss why, when and where it is happening
- Do not turn a blind eye on the matter it will only get worse
- Discuss with your child which teacher they would be comfortable talking about it with

If your child is a bully:

- Make an appointment to see a class teacher or form tutor
- Discourage other members of your family from allowing a bullying behaviour