

Packwood Haugh School

Anti-Bullying Policy

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Aims

In line with the aims of Packwood Haugh School the anti-bullying policy aims to ensure the ability of all children at Packwood Haugh School, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and all of the staff to enjoy a safe and happy working environment, free of bullying that enables them to flourish and prosper.

The policy has been written in accordance with the guidance laid out by the Department of Children, Schools and Families.

There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:

- deliberately hurtful (including aggression) ·
- repeated often over a period of time
- difficult for victims to defend themselves against

Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:

- physical - hitting, kicking,
- taking or mistreating belongings
- verbal - name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious emails and texts and malicious use of social networking sites (cyberbullying)

Name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics, but pupils can be called nasty names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour; sexual orientation; or some form of disability.

Prevention

- A spirit of mutual co-operation and teamwork is consciously fostered within the school
- There is a code of thoughtful pastoral care, encouraging good relationships.
- There is a strong policy of good discipline and a high level of supervision.
- There are regular talks in Assembly, Tutorials and Headmaster's lessons concerning bullying.
- The staff receive regular reminders. Any problems of this nature are always brought up at staff meetings.
- Monitors and senior children have a specific brief to bring any indications of bullying to the attention of a member of staff. There is a Monitors' meeting each week.
- Children are always encouraged to seek help wherever necessary.

Procedure

Where bullying or unkindness is alleged, the Headmaster is informed as soon as possible. Both parties are spoken to and the action taken by the Headmaster will depend upon the circumstances. Some cases prove to be little more than a misunderstanding, and generally clear guidance as to the standards of behaviour expected will suffice. It may also be appropriate to investigate more closely any underlying reason for the bully behaving as he/she did. Possible further steps include:

- Guidance with sanction and warning of consequences of further misconduct
- Conduct report
- Notifying parents – arrange a meeting
- Suspension
- Expulsion (if severe and persistent – the decision to be shared with the Chairman of Governors)

A record of the incident will be entered on the database for all the pupils concerned. Staff and tutors will be informed at the next Staff Meeting so that all parties can be suitably supported. There will be a follow-up with the victim concerned a few days later to ensure all is well, and occasionally thereafter for a period of weeks.

Opportunities to promote anti-bullying messages through the curriculum

Through our curriculum¹:

- The contribution of all pupils is valued
- All pupils can feel secure and are able to contribute appropriately
- Stereotypical views are challenged and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others whether arising from race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability or disability
- Pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours both in school and in the wider community
- All forms of bullying and harassment are challenged
- Pupils are supported to develop their social and emotional skills

Further information about specific types of bullying

Bullying can be related to:

- Race, religion or culture
- Special educational needs and disabilities
Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities do not always have the levels of social confidence and competence and the robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying.
- Appearance or health conditions
Those with health or visible medical conditions, such as eczema, may be more likely than their peers to become targets for bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight, and other body image issues can result in bullying.
- Sexual orientation
Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. The pupil may not want to report bullying if it means “coming out” to teachers and parents.
- Sexist or sexual bullying
Sexist and sexual bullying affects both genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls, and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name calling, comments and overt “looks” about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty. Pupils identifying as transgender or experiencing gender dysphoria (feeling that they belong to another gender or do not conform with the gender role prescribed to them) can also be targeted by bullies.
- Cyberbullying
Cyberbullying is a “method” of bullying, rather than a “type” of bullying. It includes bullying via text message; via instant messenger services and social network sites; via email; and via images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phone. It can take the form of any of the previously discussed types of bullying – i.e. technology can be used to bully for reasons of race, religion, sexuality, disability etc.

Bullying Around Race, Religion and Culture

Racism and bullying should have no place in our school. Every child deserves respect and a safe learning environment whatever their racial or religious background and every child needs to learn that modern British society values diversity and mutual respect.

What is racist bullying?

“The term racist bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status.”

Preventing racist bullying

Incorporate the recommended six themes into our everyday teaching and work in the forms, with personal tutors and through the Packwood Way.

- Shared humanity: similarity, sameness and universality
- Difference and diversity: contrasting stories and interpretations
- Interdependence: borrowing, mingling and mutual influence
- Excellence everywhere
- Identity and belonging
- Race, ethnicity and justice

Responding to incidents of racist bullying

In providing support the school should accept the pupil’s account of the incident and confirm that it was right for the pupil to approach and inform school staff. It should be stressed that the pupil was not himself the cause of the bullying. The pupils should be involved in solving the situation – would he like other pupils to help solve the situation and would he like his parents to be informed and involved.

The ‘bully’ needs to be sanctioned but also helped to understand the hurtfulness of racist bullying. Those responsible need to be clear that what they have done is wrong and they need to be helped to understand their own behaviour and to change it.

Homophobic Bullying

What is homophobic bullying?

Homophobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people.

Who experiences homophobic bullying?

- Young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual
- Young people who are thought to be lesbian, gay or bisexual
- Young people who are different in some way – they may not act like the other boys or girls
- Young people who have gay friends, or family, or their parents/carers are gay
- Teachers, who may or may not be lesbian, gay or bisexual

Who does the bullying?

- Anyone. Especially if they have been told it is wrong
- People who might be gay themselves and are angry about that
- People who think gay people shouldn't have the same rights as heterosexual people and use this as justification for bullying

Why should schools do anything about it?

- Schools have a legal duty to ensure homophobic bullying is dealt with in schools.
- Homophobic bullying can have a negative impact on young people

How to recognise homophobic bullying

- Homophobic bullying can be hard to identify because it may be going on in secret. Sometimes pupils may not want to tell anyone about it in case teachers/staff or other adults assume they are gay. The fact that young people are particularly reluctant to tell is a distinctive aspect of homophobic bullying.
- Generally, homophobic bullying looks like other sorts of bullying, but in particular it can include:
 - Verbal abuse – including spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that someone is inferior and so they are “gay”
 - Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking and threatening behaviour
 - Cyberbullying – using on line spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. Can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging

Can it happen at Primary School Level?

- Yes, Pupils may not know what the words mean, but can use homophobic language against others as a form of bullying.
- Or, they may bully a pupil who has gay parents/carers or family members

How to respond to homophobic bullying

- School staff interact with pupils on a daily basis and are more likely to see, and be told about, incidents of homophobic bullying. It is important that staff responses are, in line with Ofsted guidelines, 'swift, proportionate, discreet, influential and effective'. Staff should respond effectively to incidents of homophobic bullying, and instil confidence in pupils and parents/carers that issues will be dealt with.

Responding to homophobic language

Casual homophobic language is common in schools but, if it is not challenged, pupils may think that homophobic bullying is acceptable. It is therefore important to challenge homophobic language when it occurs:

- Ensure that pupils know that homophobic language will not be tolerated in school.
- When an incident occurs, pupils should be informed that homophobic language is offensive, and will not be tolerated
- If a pupils continues to make homophobic remarks, explain in detail the effects that homophobic bullying has on people and discuss the matter with the Head.

Understanding Cyberbullying

1. Cyberbullying can be defined as the *use of Information and Communications Technology, particularly mobile phones, the internet and social networking sites deliberately to upset someone else*. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.
2. It also affects members of school staff and other adults; there are examples of staff being ridiculed, threatened and otherwise abused online by pupils.
3. Cyberbullying should be taken very seriously. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 includes legal powers that relate more directly to cyberbullying; it outlines the power of head teachers to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off-site and provides a defence in relation to the confiscation of mobile phones and other items.
4. Although cyberbullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment and threatening and menacing communications. Schools should contact the police if they feel that the law has been broken.
5. Some cyberbullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, but it is important to recognise that some incidents of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. What may be sent as a joke, may not be received as one, and indeed the distance that technology allows in communication means the sender may not see the impact of the message on the receiver. There is also less opportunity for either party to resolve any misunderstanding or to feel empathy. It is important that pupils are made aware of the effects of their actions.
6. The following link to the Shropshire County Council website has some useful information regarding cyberbullying and internet safety:
<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/childrenfamilies.nsf/open/3D1D38F1EEA00B008025753D0050A4C8>

Preventing Cyberbullying

1. Ensure that all staff are made aware of cyberbullying.
2. Raise awareness of cyberbullying and the unacceptability of it through discussion in form time and personal tutor time. Discuss what a pupil should do if they feel they are a victim of cyberbullying.
3. Ensure that pupils are aware of the procedures and sanctions for dealing with cyberbullying – through form time and personal tutor time.
4. Ensure annual review of the policy regarding use of school IT networks and mobile phones.
5. Record and monitor incidents of cyberbullying in the same way as all other forms of bullying.
6. Discuss the responsible use of technologies and e-safety.
7. Stay up-to-date regarding new technologies and services that become popular.

Responding to Cyberbullying

1. Cyberbullying is a form of bullying and should be dealt with as any other form of bullying, following the same use of sanctions.

Consideration should be given to the victim of cyberbullying, taking into account the different nature of cyberbullying. The invasiveness of cyberbullying and the size of the audience should be taken into account when dealing with the victim and the perpetrator.

2. The person being bullied will usually have examples of texts or emails received, and should be encouraged to keep these to aid in any investigation. If necessary there are additional reporting routes available, through mobile phone companies, internet service providers and social networking sites. Detailed information on retaining evidence, containing incidents, and contacting the relevant organisations can be found in DCSF Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools document.

3. Advise those experiencing cyberbullying on steps they can take to avoid recurrence – for example, advise those targeted not to retaliate or reply; provide advice on ‘blocking’ or removing people from ‘buddy lists’; and ask them to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

4. Take steps to identify the person responsible for the bullying. Steps can include looking at the school system and computer logs; identifying and interviewing possible witnesses; and, with police involvement, obtaining user information from the service provider.

5. Once the person responsible for the cyberbullying has been identified, it is important that, as in other cases of bullying, sanctions are applied, as laid out in the Anti-Bullying policy. Steps should be taken to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any help that they may need. It is important to refer to the Acceptable Use Policy for the internet and apply sanctions where applicable and practical.

Anti-Bullying Information Sheet for Pupils

Is it bullying?

It is if you feel hurt because individuals or groups are:

- Calling you names
- Threatening you
- Pressuring you to give someone money or possessions
- Hitting you
- Damaging your possessions
- Spreading rumours about you or your family
- Using text, email or web space to write or say hurtful things (cyberbullying)

Packwood Haugh does not tolerate bullying. This is what we do about bullying:

- Make sure that the person being bullied is safe
- Work to stop the bullying happening again
- Provide support to the person being bullied

What should you do?

Talk to someone you trust and get them to help you take the right steps to stop the bullying.

If you feel you are being bullied:

- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can
- Be firm and clear – look them in the eye and tell them to stop
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away or, if you do not feel comfortable telling an adult, tell another pupil.

If you have been bullied:

- Tell a teacher or another adult in your school
- Tell your family
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you
- Keep on speaking until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened

When you are talking to an adult about bullying be clear about:

- What has happened to you
- How often it has happened
- Who was involved
- Who saw what was happening
- Where it happened
- What you have done about it already

Remember there is always the school's independent advisor, Mrs Smith: 01939 260704.

Teasing or Bullying

Every child has a right to be happy at school. Make sure that you do not cause unhappiness by things you say or things you do. You may think it is all in fun, but it may turn out to be more harmful than you think.

- Be prepared to put up with a certain amount of good-humoured banter. Do not be too precious!
- If, however, the teasing is unkind and hurtful, or the bullying is really causing you distress or causing another child distress, do not hesitate to turn to someone for help:
 - a) You have a Form/Personal Tutor who will help, or you may have a member of staff whom you specially trust and like;
 - b) Boarders have the matrons, houseparents and boarding staff;
 - c) There may be a senior boy or girl or monitor whom you feel you could approach for advice;
 - d) You have a matron with special responsibility for you dormitory;
 - e) You can always come to me. Do not feel that the matter has to be very serious for you to take this step.
 - Remember, telling someone about bullying, teasing, etc. is not sneaking. If you are upset, or if you see another child who is upset, turn to someone for help straight away. We all want Packwood to be a happy school, and by telling you are helping everybody, including the bully.

Independent Advisor

If you feel the matter is too sensitive or too private to talk about to your parents or to a friend, and if you feel you cannot come to me, or any other member of staff, there is an independent person whom you can telephone.

MRS SMITH: 01939 260704

She will be able to talk to you about the problem, and will be able to give you some helpful advice.