



The
Ursuline
Preparatory School Ilford

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(October 2024)

The School Mission Statement

To live and learn in harmony,
Caring for each other;
Treating everybody as a sister and a brother;
Reflecting Christ's actions and His message too,
By striving for excellence in all that we do

Anti-Bullying Policy

Persons responsible: The Head Teacher in consultation with the governing body, staff and parents.

Date Adopted: 2001

Date of latest Policy Review: October 2024

Date of next review: October 2025

Rationale

This policy has regard to DfE guidance 2017, *Preventing and Tackling Bullying*. Bullying affects the whole school community: pupils, their families, teachers, support staff and governors. This policy is to be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), and policies listed under 'Other Relevant Policies,' found on page 8. Primarily it threatens the safety and happiness of the pupils and may undermine their educational achievement. Bullying is a specific unacceptable behaviour which is totally alien to our school ethos, aims and Mission Statement. This policy also has regard to DCSF Guidance Safe to Learn: embedding anti-bullying work in schools. By raising awareness and working together, according to the guidelines laid down in this policy we can hope to deal with bullying more effectively and send a clear message to all concerned that bullying of any kind by any member of our community, will not be tolerated at the Ursuline Preparatory School Ilford (URSPSI).

Our success will be tested not by the absence of problems but by the way we deal with them. To this end everyone in the school community has joint responsibility and must be clear and consistent about aims, rules and expectations and know what the agreed procedures are.

Aims of the Policy

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying. Bullying is wrong and damages the individual. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

The Objectives of the Policy

- All governors, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and pupils to have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Involve pupils through highlighting the significance of the role of bystanders in bullying and through making it easy to report bullying.

A Definition of Bullying

Bullying is, usually, repeated intimidation of a victim carried out by a more powerful person or group in order to cause physical and/or emotional hurt. It involves:

- Deliberate hostility and aggression toward the victim.
- A victim who is weaker or less powerful than the bully or bullies.
- An outcome which is always painful and distressing for the victim.
- **STOP- Several Times on Purpose-** being hurtful or unkind on purpose and on a number of occasions.

Bullying can be the following:

Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, damaging personal property, other forms of physical violence, threats.

Verbal: Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing e.g. about hair colour or body shape.

Emotional: Deliberately excluding (sending to Coventry) tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings), threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, graffiti.

Racist: Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.

Sexual: Unwanted physical contact, abusive comments. Sexist and homophobic bullying.

Cyber: Sending malicious text messages, emails and photographs and inappropriate use of social networking sites and chat rooms.

Religious: Taunts and disrespect

Relational: Excluding people from groups, gossiping and spreading rumours.

SEN/Disability: All of the above.

(Cyber-bullying or 'virtual' bullying can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.)

Bullying is not confined solely to relationships between young people. Verbal and emotional bullying in particular may occur between staff or staff and parents, staff and children, parents and children. All members of the school community have a responsibility to prevent such occurrences of bullying. Such behaviour will not be tolerated and must be dealt with appropriately.

A child may indicate, by signs or behaviour, that he/she is being bullied. If you are concerned and become aware of any of the following, you may wish to ask if someone is threatening or bullying your child.

A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Please see Child Protection policy for more details.

Sexting

We, at the URSPSI, will support the victims of 'peer on peer abuse by sexting'. In cases of 'sexting' we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) published in August 2016: 'Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents, and safeguarding young people'.

Effects of bullying

Children may:

- Be frightened of walking to or from school.
- Be unwilling to go to school.
- Beg you to drive them to school.
- Change their route to school.
- Be doing poorly in their school work.
- Come home regularly with clothes or books destroyed.
- Become withdrawn, start stammering.
- Become distressed, stop eating.
- Attempt suicide.
- Cry themselves to sleep.
- Have nightmares and even call out 'leave me alone'.
- Have unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts.
- Have their possessions go 'missing'.
- Ask for money or begin stealing money (to pay the bully).
- Refuse to say what's wrong.
- Give improbable excuses to explain any of the above.

Supporting Victims of Bullying

Children who are being bullied are often too frightened to tell others. Encourage children to speak openly by asking them directly and saying you are concerned and want to help and support them.

- Don't promise that you'll keep anything secret but reassure the child that you will help them sort out the problem.
- If a child is a perpetual 'victim' of bullying by different groups or individuals try to observe the child's reactions to others when talking or playing or see if they're being bullied for any 'bad' habits e.g. sucking their thumbs, picking their nose. Help them to change this behaviour and develop social skills and confidence e.g. through roleplay.

We can help by:

i. Encouraging self-esteem:

- Reassuring the child that they are loved.
- The bullying is not their fault.

- Listening carefully to them.
- Give them responsibilities to help make the child feel valued and important.
- Encourage them to do things they are good at.
- Encourage them to play with others if they feel isolated.
- Praise their achievements.
- Advising the victim's parents to try to play down the bullying incidents when at home, divert the child's attention to something else and be positive that the situation will be resolved.

ii. Implementing classroom strategies:

- 'Circle time' with the teacher as facilitator encouraging the children to raise issues and talk about them.
- Raising awareness of bullying and behaviour as an issue through e.g. discussion, brain storming, role-play, drama.
- Kindness trees-reminding children about their responsibilities in how we treat others.
- Ursuline Values displayed

iii. Implementing whole school strategies:

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils.
- Pupil version of Anti-bullying policy-(Pupil code of conduct) written by each class with support from the Class Teacher. This is displayed in each class and agreed and signed by all children.
- Whole school agreement, clarity of approach, strong home/school links.
- Assemblies.
- Police programme.
- Code of conduct.
- 'Buddy scheme' with confident peer or older child supporting another child in the classroom/playground-(as and when is deemed a necessary strategy to be used)
- INSET including Educare modules
- Highlight the role of bystanders.
- Use of class dojos to encourage positive behaviour, responsibility, tolerance, respect for each other
- Anti-Bullying Week will be part of the PSHE curriculum
- Environmental Safeguarding Posters will be present in all classrooms and communal areas.

iv. Introducing children to strategies they can use to protect themselves by telling them to:

- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can.
- Stand tall, look the bully/bullies in the eye and tell them to stop, that you don't like what they are saying/doing.
- Try not to show that you are upset or angry.
- Be firm and clear about what you want.
- When you say 'No' say it firmly.
- Walk away from a person or situation that is making you angry or upsetting you.
- Take several deep breaths and count to ten.
- Tell an adult what has happened or a friend.

Why do some People Bully

People become bullies for lots of different reasons:

- They have family problems e.g. bereavement, divorce.
- They are being bullied themselves.
- They are selfish or spoilt and always want to get their own way.
- They have no friends and feel lonely.
- They feel bad about themselves they want to make others feel bad too.
- They are taking out their own frustrations on others.
- They feel insecure and unimportant – bullying gives them power.
- They want to look 'big' in front of others.
- They have been bullied into joining a bullying gang and have gone along with things just to keep on the bully's good side.
- They don't understand how bad victims feel.

Whatever the cause, bullying is usually a signal that the bully needs some help.

Bullies often use 'difference' as an excuse for their bad behaviour. But it isn't this 'difference' in the victim which causes the problem – it's the bullies who have the problem because they are:

- Afraid
- Jealous
- Envious
- Cruel
- Angry
- Insecure
- Unhappy

Helping the Bullying Child:

- See if the bully has any idea about why they bully and what they think might help them stop (refer to the reasons why people bully).
- Reassure the child it's the behaviour you don't like, not them and you want to help them change.
- Work out a way for the child to make amends for the bullying.
- Set up some sort of reward for good behaviour and realistic goals.
- Set limits. Stop any show of aggression immediately and help the child find other, non-aggressive ways of reasoning.
- If the child bullies when faced with certain situations, help them work out and practise alternative ways of behaving.
- Explain that getting away from a situation where they feel themselves losing their temper, or things getting out of hand, is not a weakness. It is a sensible way of ensuring that the situation doesn't get worse.
- Teach the child the difference between assertive behaviour and aggressive behaviour.
- Praise the child when they do things well, create opportunities for them to shine.
- Try to build their self-esteem.

School Procedure

- All significant events should be recorded and placed in the child's personal file, in class blue books and if repeated incidents in the serious behaviour log on the s drive in the behaviour folder.
- To use colour coding on the s drive behaviour folder to indicate where an incident occurred ie. In the classroom, playground, morning or after school clubs
- To maintain up-to-date records, all staff witnessing incidents anywhere around the school must inform the class teacher.
- The headmistress is to be made aware of all alleged bullying issues by support staff and/or by class teachers.
- According to the nature of the incident parents may be informed on an informal or formal basis.
- Parents should inform their children's class teacher and/or headmistress immediately if they have any concerns.
- Depending on the nature of incident/s class teachers and/or headmistress will talk to both children involved.
- The children may then be interviewed separately. Witnesses will be obtained if necessary.
- The children are told the matter will be taken seriously and will be dealt with immediately.
- The children may be asked to record their own account of events.
- An apology obtained from bully/ies to victim.
- Support staff will be informed and asked to be extra vigilant at break times and report back to the teachers if further conflict occurs.

According to the individual case the following may be implemented:

- Letter to parents.
- Strategies for helping victims of bullying.
- Strategies for helping the bully
- Formal meeting/s between headmistress/parent/teacher/child, outside agencies involved as appropriate.
- Restorative Justice/ Conflict Resolution session to be held.
- 'Bullying child' to go on report and system of rewards and sanctions introduced in line with behavioural targets.
- Situation monitored, progress recorded and situation reviewed at a later date.
- Follow up meetings with families to report progress.
- If situation continues and/or increases in seriousness clear warning of the consequences will be given.
- Written records of incidents, interviews and action taken.
- Exclusion (fixed term or permanent) are very serious options which may need to be discussed or considered.

In very serious cases and only after the headmistress has been involved it may be necessary to make a report to the police or to the social services. However, it is the policy of our prep school to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the school's own disciplinary procedures unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

Our key message will always be prevention, by teaching children that everyone in our school has the right to feel safe and happy and that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.

Anti-bullying strategies and awareness weeks, including assemblies for pupils and CPD for staff are organised in the anti-bullying month of November and throughout the school year.

Staff training and updating regarding anti-bullying strategies will be a standing item on the school's annual CPD plan.

Developing knowledge and strategies regarding the importance and role of bystanders within many bullying situations will be highlighted and explored.

Other relevant Policies

This policy is to be read in conjunction with:

1. Behaviour and Exclusions policy
2. Equal Opportunities policy
3. E- safety policy
4. SEND policy
5. Keeping Children safe in Education (2024)

Responsibilities

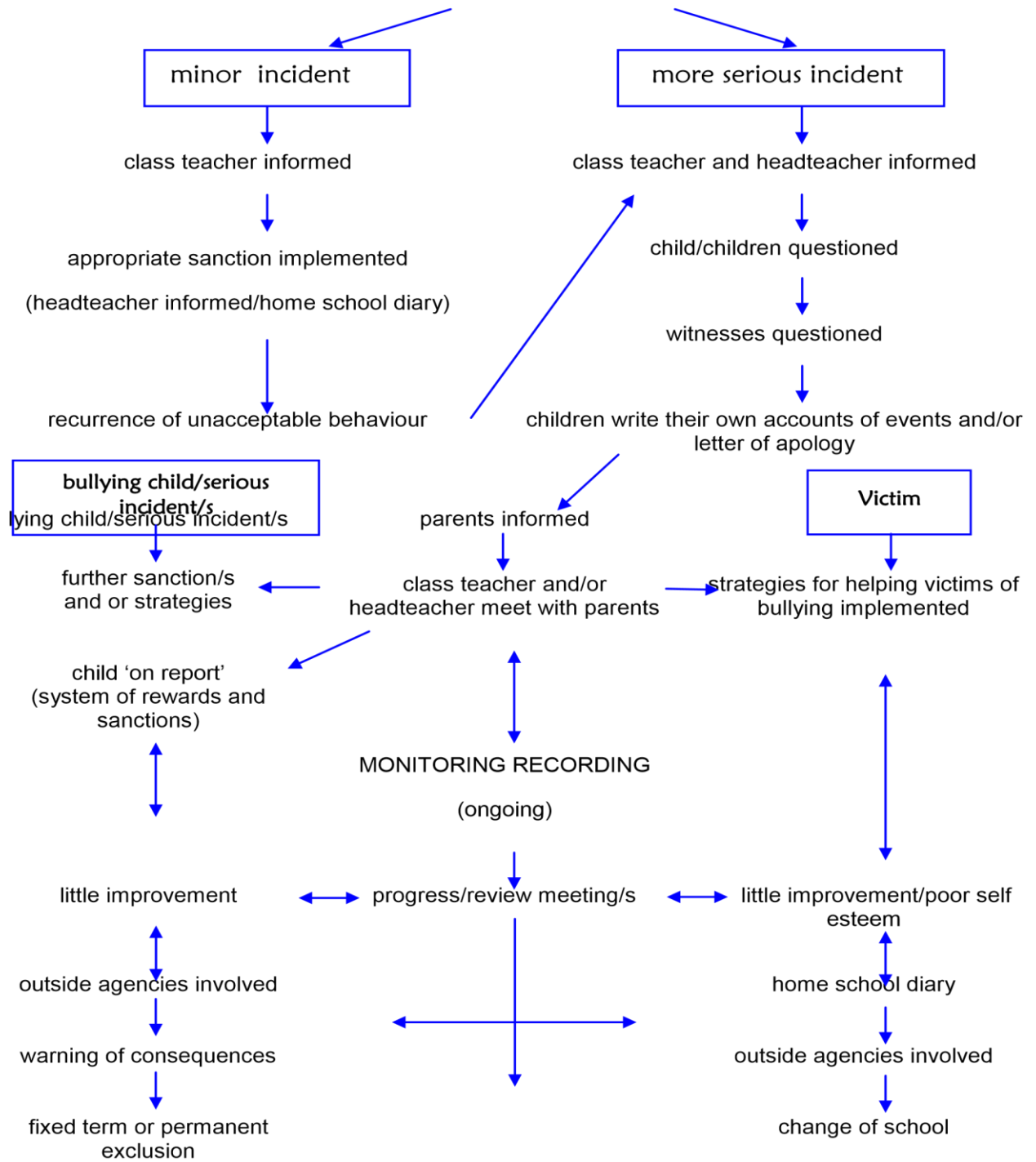
The responsibility for the implementation of the policy lies within the school. All teachers, support and non-teaching staff are required to uphold and reinforce implementation (reporting concerns to the Senior Leadership Team, SLT).

Monitoring the implementation of this policy lies with the SLT who report to the head teacher. The head teacher will monitor all incidents of bullying in order to identify amongst other things, trends over time.

School Discipline Procedures.....What Happens Next

Despite all our positive work/clear expectations etc. unacceptable behaviour occurs:

Adult present deals with incident



Depending on the nature of the incident some or all of the above procedures may be implemented

Appendix ii

Circle Time

Circle Time aims to develop:

- The value and self-confidence of each child.
- Specific behaviours which show caring and respect towards each other.
- The establishment of classroom routines, which are necessary for quality teaching and learning, and these routines can be established in an enjoyable and constructive way.
- Climate of good relationships between teacher and children and child to child.
- A way of meeting children's needs with regards to improving their behaviour by all of them saying what they deserve.
- Talking and listening skills in a way which help such children transfer across the curriculum.
- A sense of responsibility for one's own behaviour and actions.
- An environment which is non-threatening, in which teachers and pupils can express themselves and listen to each other.

The main elements of Circle Time

- The pupils and teachers sit in a circle together with the teacher acting as the facilitator.
- The sessions are planned and developed over time.
- The length of the sessions can vary according to the needs of the group.
- The sessions are given a regular time slot.
- The sessions operate within the agreed framework of guidelines.
- Each session should have a positive focus.

Essential pre-requisites for successful Circle Time

- Sitting in a circle allowing eye contact.
- Establishing ground rules.
- Taking turns.
- Allowing to pass.
- Valuing all contributions (no put downs).
- Always praising, very positive.
- Low teacher profile.
- Always ending session on a positive.
- Making it fun, light hearted.

Ground rules for Circle Work

A good idea is to do one or two initial sessions, which include enjoyable exercises. Then work out ground rules with the whole group.

This ensures the group is more motivated towards the ideas of Circle Work and therefore prepared to negotiate and commit themselves to these rules for older children particularly.

If a group doesn't suggest some of the necessary ground rules themselves, propose them. One way of really finding out what individuals think is to ask them to vote on suggestions by closing their eyes and raising hands. This stops peer group pressure.

Developing Circle Time

Pupils need time to become familiar with the circle formation and it is suggested to play starter games before moving on to more personal issues.

For younger children some first activities may include name games:

1. Name games - start with yourself to show children that you are part of the circle. Each person introduces themselves and then the next child, for example, I am Emma, this is Rakhi.
2. Adjectives name games - each child says their name and a true characteristic, second time around introduce a memory element, for example, this is talkative Theresa and I am overworked Riya.
3. Random name game - children say their own name and throw the soft toy to another child anywhere in the circle at the same time calling out the child's name.

The circle time sessions may be planned around different themes, for example, feelings, caring, friendship, co-operation, problem solving or affirmation. A circle time session may look something like this:-

A warm up game for example Simon Says

A round; for example I feel happy when something I do well is..... I get fed up when..... Another name for these are Tag Lines which are used in a round.

An Activity – discussion to allow reflections and the opportunity to explore subjects in greater depth.

Concluding game

Evaluation

Appendix iii

Helpful organisations

ANTI-BULLYING CAMPAIGN

185 Tower Bridge Road London SE1 2UF

Tel: 0207 378 1446 (9.30 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.) Resources include: advice line for parents, children and teachers. They also publish parent's fact sheet, resource pack.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

Beatbullying: A bullying prevention charity with an emphasis on working directly with children and young people.

KIDSCAPE

2 Grosvenor Gardens

London SW1W 0HD

Tel: 0207 730 3300 Fax: 0207 7081

Has a wide range of publications for young people, parents and teachers. Bullying counsellor available (Monday to Friday, 10.00 – 4.00).

ADVISORY CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

1C Aberdeen Studios 22 Highbury Grove London N5 2DQ.

Tel: 0207 704 98220 Tel helpline: 0207 354 831 (Mon-Fri 2-5 p.m.)

CHILDLINE

Royal Mail Building,

Studd Street

London N1 0QW

Tel: 0207 239 1000

Fax: 0207 239 1001

Besides the free national helpline for children, has a leaflet for parents: Bullying – What can parents do? and a leaflet for children: Bullying and how to beat it.

PARENTLINE PLUS

520 Highgate Studios

53 – 79 Highgate Road

Kentish Town, London NW5 1TL

Tel: 0808 800 2222

National helpline for parents

(Mon – Fri 9.00 – 9.00; Sat 9.30-5.00; Sun 10.00 – 3.00).

Cyber-bullying

ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.