



At Ashfield Valley we care for and value every child in a nurturing, inclusive environment.

All members of our school community will work hard to ensure that every pupil achieves their full potential and has the opportunity to shine.

Anti-bullying Policy

Reviewed: February 2024

Next review February 2025

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly, severely and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to inform members of staff.

What Is Bullying?

We recognise that many children and young people will experience conflict in their relationships with other children and young people, and as a school, we are committed to developing empathy and the skills to manage relationships in a peaceful way that does not harm others.

However, bullying is different. Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person either physically or emotionally, by intimidating or demeaning others. It is usually persistent and is often covert, and is a conscious attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

There is considerable evidence to show that bullying has both short term and longer-term impact on pupils.

- Bullying impacts on pupils' wellbeing, can impact on attendance and become a significant barrier to learning.
- Bullying is associated with lower levels of school engagement and achievement both in primary and secondary schools and can lead to mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression.

Bullying is unacceptable. Our school will respond promptly and effectively to reported incidents of bullying.

In our school community:

- Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.
- Everybody has the right to feel happy and safe.
- No-one deserves to be a target of bullying.
- Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving.

Types of bullying behaviour

Bullying can take many forms:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening behaviour
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, use of derogatory language
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Extortion: demanding money/goods with threats
- Online: use of social media, messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology e.g photos and videos.
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic or biphobic: bullying because of sexuality or perceived sexuality

- Transphobic: because of gender identity or perceived gender identity

Preventing Bullying

We foster a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is unacceptable. We believe that preventing bullying is the responsibility of our whole school community and when there are incidents of bullying, we will work together to deal with the situation and to learn from what has happened.

In our school we do this by:

- Focusing on being kind to each other – this is one of our school values.
- Using assemblies and RHE in class to ensure that pupils understand the differences between relational conflict and bullying.
- Building a positive ethos based on respecting and celebrating all types of difference in our school.
- Creating a safe and happy environment, with consequent positive relationships that have an impact on learning and achievement.
 - Work in school which develops empathy, social skills and emotional understanding e.g. RHE, Citizenship, social and emotional learning programmes.
 - Think about any safeguarding concern and report concerns to Designated Safeguarding Lead.
 - Provide assurances to child that concerns have been listened to and action will be taken.
 - Consider who else is involved and what roles they have taken.
- Send clear message that the bullying must stop.
- Work with both parties to find solutions. Identify the most effective way of preventing reoccurrence and any consequences.
 - Raising awareness of online bullying through regular e-safety lessons
 - Focussed work with individuals and groups of pupils where required to support understanding and development of social skills e.g. social skills groups
 - Ensuring playground and midday staff are trained and we have a range of activities at lunchtime to promote positive play.

Reporting bullying

In our school pupils are encouraged to talk to staff when they are unhappy or have concerns. Pupils in our school understand that they have a right to feel and be safe and a responsibility to support others to feel and be safe.

Pupils are encouraged to report bullying to:

- A trusted adult
- Their class teacher/TA
- A member of the Welfare Team

Children are taught that it is important to talk to a trusted adult if bullying is taking place outside of school. Parents are also encouraged to report concerns and bullying to named individuals. This is normally the class teacher / TA.

When pupils report their concerns, our staff are trained to listen and to believe. We involve children as far as possible in finding solutions. All incidents are recorded on CPOMS.

We monitor and review all bullying incidents to determine any patterns or trends that may require further action. On a regular basis we give pupils the opportunity to feedback on how safe and happy they feel at school. We do this through pupil questionnaires and discussions with pupils using our 'Wellbeing Warriors' team and our Pupil Leaders.

Procedures for parents

- If a parent has any concerns about their child, they should speak to the class teacher immediately
 - If a parent feels unable to talk to the class teacher, they can make an appointment to speak directly with the Deputy Head or the Headteacher.
 - The school will work with both the child and the parents to ensure that any bullying is stopped, and that support is given where needed.
 - Parents should not confront the bully or their parents. This can complicate the situation and distress the pupil.
 - The school will deal directly with all children involved and their parents directly. Parents will be kept informed of any actions the school is taking.
 - If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

All members of the school community, including pupils, staff, parents and governors, are expected to always treat everyone with dignity and respect. This includes both face-to-face contact and online

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences such as those in our behaviour policy may take place:
 - Use of home / school communication books
 - Sanctions including loss of lunchtime/playtime
 - Involvement of external agencies
 - Monitoring by Mentor/Learning Manager
 - Peer support/peer mentoring
 - Formal recording (racism/homophobia)
 - Use of behaviour contract
 - Liaison with parent/carer/social worker
 - In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
 - If possible, the students will be reconciled
 - After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.