Langham Oaks School

Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy

Our Vision

Safe, Secure, Successful, Belonging

October 2021 Review October 2022

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Statutory Duties of Schools

Headteachers have a legal duty under the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils. Under the Education Inspections Bill 2006 the duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside school, where it is reasonable to do so. Schools also have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils (Education Act 2002), to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004) and observe its duties under the Equality act 2010. This policy draws on (*Preventing and Tackling Bullying,* DfE, July 2017) but also (*Safe to Learn*, DCSF 2007) on this issue of bullying of staff by pupils*.*

Introduction: Statement of Aims

At Langham Oaks School we are committed to the **elimination of all forms of bullying and harassment**.

We believe that every member of our school community irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation has **the right to work or study without fear of bullying, harassment or victimisation.**

We are an SEMH school that **supports vulnerable pupils who may have experienced bullying before as a victim or perpetrator.** The school provides a fresh start. This extends to each day and each lesson being a fresh beginning.

We **promote transparency and honesty**, and make every attempt through **restorative approaches** to educate and repair relationships when incidents occur and limit the need for sanctions and exclusion.

All adults in the school are involved in the restorative approach, where appropriate. We know that by supporting and guiding pupils through the process they will have the opportunity to have their say, hear another point of view and resolve the issue. It is a key part of helping pupils feel that their voice is heard as well as understanding the real consequences of their actions.

We aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for learning for all our pupils, to allow them to improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential. Developing **trusting relationships with the adults** is instrumental in this process and lies at the core of Langham Oaks.

We would expect **pupils to act responsibly and feel safe in school**. They should understand the issues relating to bullying and feel confident to seek support from school should they feel unsafe. We also teach them that every action has an impact on someone else.

We also know that it is important for **parents to feel confident** that their children are safe and cared-for in school and in the care setting. They should feel that incidents, when they do arise, are dealt with promptly and according to this policy. We work hard to maintain good communication with families, ensure their voice is heard and maintain good relationships with them.

Bullying is not confined to the school premises. **Bullying may also occur outside school**, in the local community, on the journey to and from school, and in further education settings.

Staff at Langham Oaks School have the power to **discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises** 'to such an extent as is reasonable'. This can relate to bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in the local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed. In these cases, there would always be close liaison with families.

The increasing use of digital technology and the Internet has also opened up new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims.

Bullying can take place between:

- young people
- young people and staff
- staff
- individuals or groups.

The school is aware of its legal obligations and role within the local community. It supports parents and works with other agencies outside the school where appropriate.

Our commitment to this principle is demonstrated through:

- our school Behaviour Policy
- safe and responsible use of ICT (see e-safety policy and Acceptable use protocols),
- our Equality and Behaviour policies, and the management practices and processes that support them,
- our commitment to the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum (including the National Curriculum)

Policy Development

This policy is a working document which has on-going input from:

- members of staff - through consultation documents, surveys and staff meetings,
- the Langham Oaks Executive Committee – through discussions at meetings and training events,
- parents/carers – through regular meetings, welfare calls, IEP and open days
- pupils - through the school council, residential pupil meetings and class discussions
- other partners, e.g. external providers both in school and off-site, and representatives from the local community such as the Police.

This policy is available:

- online on the school website
- from the school office.

Roles and Responsibilities

The **Headteacher** has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation. He liaises with the Executive Committee, parents/carers, outside agencies, and the Engagement for learning Team that support the school throughout the day.

The responsibilities of the Headteacher are:

- policy development and review involving pupils, staff, the Executive Committee and parents/carers,
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice,
- ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review,
- managing bullying incidents,
- managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents,
- assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate,
- co-ordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour.

The Engagement for Learning Lead:

- receives and records notification of incidents of actual or perceived bullying,
- checks and records the response to the incident to ensure that this is in line with policy,
- acts as first point of contact with staff who have concerns about bullying in school.

Any associated safeguarding concerns or issues will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headteacher (or another member of SLT in their absence), who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be defined as, 'Behaviour by an individual or group repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally'. Bullying differs from teasing, falling out between friends and other types of aggressive behaviour in that:

- there is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate,
- there is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves,
- it is usually persistent.

We also have to take into account the SEMH needs of the individual pupils involved and make an informed judgement about the intent and understanding of the perpetrator and the impact on the victim.

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent, provided it fulfils the other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of hate-crime related bullying and cyberbullying. If the victim might be in danger, then intervention is urgently required.

Bullying can include:

- name-calling
- verbal harassment or threat
- homophobia or other prejudices connected to the recipient's identity or protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010)
- written harassment
- taunting
- mocking
- making offensive comments
- physical assault or threat
- physical or mental torment
- taking or damaging belongings or property
- cyberbullying - inappropriate text messaging and emailing, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the Internet
- producing offensive graffiti
- gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- repeated unfounded trivial complaints
- wearing or displaying offensive badges and insignia
- bringing defamatory materials into school
- excluding people from groups.
- refusing to cooperate or work with other pupils
- intrusion into personal space, spying or persistently following an individual.

There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

In dealing with such behaviour it is important to consider the context in which the incident takes place and the victim's perception of the perpetrator's motivation. School staff should remember our role as educators in dealing with the behaviour and the underlying values of the perpetrators. Action should be taken to ensure the safety and welfare of the victim, as well as giving appropriate sanctions and advice to the perpetrator.

Staff development will cover the following issues in relation to bullying on a rolling programme:

1. Why are children and young people bullied?
2. Where does bullying take place?
3. Specific types of bullying, for example:

a. Hate-crime related bullying of children with special educational needs or disabilities, homophobic bullying or bullying related to race, religion or culture.
b. Bullying related to appearance or health.
c. Bullying of young carers or looked-after children, or bullying otherwise related to home circumstances.
d. Sexist or sexualised bullying.

Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

If a member of staff suspects an incidence of cyber-bullying, the Education Act 2011 allows the Headteacher to authorise a member of staff to seize the electronic device to examine data or files, and delete these where there is good reason to do so. The school does not need parental consent to do so. If the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.

Reporting and Responding to Bullying

The school has clear systems for reporting and responding to bullying for the whole school community (including staff, parents/carers, children and young people). This includes those who are the victims of bullying or have witnessed bullying behaviour (bystanders).

As part of the PHSE curriculum, pupils are taught about the concept of bullying and its impact on themselves and others. They are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult (a member of staff or parent) if they have any concerns for themselves or others.

Pupils will be reassured that whatever they say will be taken seriously, and advised that appropriate adults will need to be informed.

Parents and carers should be made aware of the Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy on their child's admission to school. They are encouraged to contact school if their child raises any concerns, or if they have concerns of their own.

Staff should report any concerns immediately, by discussing them with the Engagement for Learning Lead or EfL team. If appropriate, they may raise concerns in school briefing or may consult SMT for advice on the best course of action.

Procedures

All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated by:

- interviewing all parties.

- Informing parents.
- Implementing appropriate disciplinary sanctions in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy. Sanctions will be applied according to the seriousness of the incident and pupil's individual needs, but will send out a message that bullying is unacceptable.
- Responses may also vary according to the type of bullying and may involve other agencies where appropriate.
- Carrying out follow up, especially keeping in touch with the person who reported the situation, and parents or carers. There is a clear complaints procedure for pupils and parents who are not satisfied with the school's actions, which is available on the school website.
- Delivering a range of responses and support appropriate to the situation. Responses will be solution-focused and will demonstrate a restorative approach such as individual work with the victim and perpetrator, or referral to outside agencies if appropriate.
- Liaising with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises, e.g. in the case of cyberbullying or hate-crime.
- Where appropriate to involve other agencies, who may be able to support.

It is important to note that discussions with the victim (as is appropriate to the pupil's level of understanding) will require patience and understanding. The events that lead-up to a bullying incident may need to be drawn out on paper in order to aid the pupil's understanding and recognition of his behaviour. It should involve a member of staff with whom the pupil feels comfortable as well as the person responsible for behaviour and/or the Headteacher.

It is important to establish whether there was '**intent'** behind the behaviour/s. It is common for pupils with language and communication issues to experience confusion about the effect of their behaviours on others. This is targeted continually through a whole school, multi-disciplinary approach. However, once staff are sure that a pupil or pupils have been made explicitly aware of the unacceptability of certain actions/behaviours, anti-bullying policies will be implemented.

Recording Bullying and Evaluating the Policy

Details of bullying will be recorded and stored using the school's incident reporting system as detailed in the Behaviour Policy. The Engagement for learning team will be made aware of all incidents of bullying and will ensure individual incidents are followed up and recorded.

Information recorded will be used to identify trends, inform preventative work and develop the policy. This information will be discussed by staff in appropriate forums and presented to the Executive Committee as part of the Headteacher's report. The policy will be reviewed and updated annually.

Strategies for Preventing Bullying

As part of our ongoing commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils we at Langham Oaks School use the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour:

- positive reward system

- displays of posters and leaflets
- PSHE lessons and cross curriculum work
- specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as Cyberbullying and Internet safety
- pupil voice and school council
- support for parents/carers, e.g. parent group, family liaison support, parent information and events
- training, support and development for all staff.

Links with other Policies

Policy	Why
Behaviour Policy	Reporting and recording, rewards and sanctions
Safeguarding Policy	Child protection
E-Safety Policy	Cyberbullying and e-safety
Equality Policy	Hate-crime (homophobia, race and disability)
Confidentiality Policy	Reporting and recording
PSHCE	Strategies to prevent bullying

Reference Documents and Related Policy Documents

National
Ensuring Good Behaviour in Schools - A summary for Heads, Governing Bodies.
Behaviour and Discipline in School - Guide for Headteachers and School Staff, July 2011.
Preventing and tackling Bullying – Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, July 2017
Local
Anti-bullying Policy Development: Guidance for schools (2009)

Useful organisations

Anti-bullying Alliance (ABA) - www.anti-bullying.org
Brings together more than 65 organisations with the aim of reducing bullying and creating safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.
Mencap – www.mencap.org
Mencap is a learning disability charity that provides information and support to children and adults with a learning disability, and to their families and carers.
Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH) – www.eachaction.org.uk
A charity and training agency helping people and organisations affected by homophobia. The website gives guidance, contact details and a freephone helpline.
School's Out – www.schools-out.org.uk
Beatbullying – www.beatbullying.org.uk
Beatbullying is the leading bullying prevention charity in the UK, and provides anti-bullying resources, information, advice and support for young people, parents and professionals affected by bullying.
Childnet International – www.childnet-int.org
Childnet International - The UK's safer internet centre
CEOP Browser Safety Tool
www.thinkuknow.co.uk

References Documents and Related Policy/Guidance
National Documents
Safe to Learn - DCSF Guidelines
Embedding anti-bullying work in schools – DCSF-00656-2007
Homophobic bullying – DCSF – 00668-2007
Cyberbullying – DCSF – 00658-2007
Bullying Involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities – DCSF 00372-2008
The Equality Act 2010
www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications
Cyberbullying - supporting school staff – www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications
Cyberbullying -A whole school community issue www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications