PRINCE'S MEAD

Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2021

The Prince's Mead Vision

To be a thriving and successful 21st century school

Our Purpose

To provide the highest standard of education delivering academic rigour in an enriched environment, empowering each child to fulfil their potential.

Rationale

The school has a 'duty of care' towards its pupils with regard to bullying in that the Headmaster and staff stand in loco parentis (in place of the parents). This duty of care includes protecting pupils from harm of bullying. This policy applies to all pupils including those in EYFS.

The National and Legal Context

This policy takes full account of the school's legal obligations under the Independent School Standards Regulations (2014) to:

- promote the well-being of pupils in the school

- develop a policy which encourages good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular preventing all forms of bullying amongst pupils

- establish procedures for dealing with complaints about bullying

This policy links to Every Child Matters Outcomes of Stay Safe, Be Healthy and Make a Positive Contribution. It also links with the National Healthy Schools programme theme of Emotional Health and Wellbeing, safeguarding children's procedures and current DCSF anti-bullying guidance, Safe to Learn. In addition it includes the latest guidance from the DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying October 2014.

Aims of the Policy

- to assist in creating an ethos in which attending school is a positive experience for all members of the school community

- to make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable at school

- to enable everyone to feel safe while at school and encourage reporting of incidences of bullying

- to deal effectively with bullying

- to support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are kept safe and protected from this

- to help and support bullies to change their attitudes as well as their behaviour and understand why it needs to change

- to liaise with pupils, parents and other appropriate members of the school community

- to ensure all members of the school community feel responsible for combating bullying

- to ensure consistency in practice within the school community

What's Changed?

This document replaces previous advice – Safe to Learn: embedding anti-bullying work in schools. It outlines, in one place, the Government's approach to bullying, legal obligations and the powers schools have to tackle bullying, and the principles which underpin the most effective anti-bullying strategies in schools. Further information to assist staff relating to specialist support can be found in the Special Educational Needs and Child Protection policies.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be defined in a number of ways. We follow the DCSF Safe to Learn (2007) guidance which defines bullying as:

'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

The definition of bullying can also mean that it is repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and can often be motivated by prejudice against particular groups; for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia and sexual orientation, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer.

It may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email);

Bullying can be direct or indirect and includes:

- Verbal bullying – name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments and teasing

- Physical bullying – kicking, hitting, punching, pushing and pinching

- Emotional bullying – producing offensive graffiti, excluding people from groups, spreading hurtful and untrue rumours, being forced to do things against own will and taking belongings or money

- Cyber bullying – offensive text messaging and e-mailing and sending degrading images by phone or the internet

Bullying can take place between staff and pupils; between staff; by individuals or groups; face to face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods. It can happen in isolation or quite often in the presence of others.

People who are victims of bullying frequently, but not exclusively, are bullied as a result of:

- race, religion or culture

- special educational needs or disability

- appearance or health conditions

- sexual orientation

- gender

- home circumstance including looked-after-children and young carers

Inclusion

Every member of the school community is entitled to expect equality of protection from bullying as well as protection and support from school policies and procedures designed to ensure that the school remains a safe environment in which to teach and learn. The school policy has given careful consideration to the six equality strands, race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability and sexuality. This is to ensure that anti-bullying provision is provided in a sensitive and non-judgemental way that will enable all young people, staff and the wider school community to feel valued and included in effective policy and practices. This policy also includes the needs of the staff working within the school.

School Statement of Intent

This school believes that:

- bullying is to be taken very seriously, both physical and emotional (which may cause psychological damage);

- bullying is undesirable and unacceptable

- bullying is a problem to which solutions can be found

- seeking help and openness are regarded as signs of strength not weakness

- all members of the school community will be listened to and taken seriously

- bullying prevents pupils achieving their full potential and affects standards of achievement and aspirations

- everyone has the right to work and learn in a healthy atmosphere that is free from fear

- all of us have a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others

- we all have a duty to work together to protect vulnerable individuals from bullying and other forms of abuse

Intended Outcomes and Targets

- that there are effective listening systems for pupils and staff within the school

- that all staff are aware of the anti-bullying policy and know who to report suspected bullying to

- that no child or young persons' educational opportunities and achievement are disadvantaged due to the experience of bullying

- that there is effective communication with parents and the wider school community on the subject of bullying through newsletters and parents meetings

Recording of Incidents

The Headmaster keeps a record of individual incidents of significant bullying. A review of records will be made annually in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and Form tutors keep evidence of bullying on Engage and share this information.

Procedures and Dealing with Incidents – A Whole School Approach

Role of pupils and staff in reporting and recording a bullying incident involving pupils.

We take the view that everyone has a responsibility to report incidents of bullying or to share their concerns with a member of the school community. At this school we follow the school policy to reporting and dealing with bullying incidents so that it is easy to report bullying, including cyber-bullying and bullying outside school and records are kept to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted or to enable patterns to be identified.

Safeguarding procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made. Staff must make a careful judgement whether or not a third party needs to be informed. This judgement will be based upon:

- the seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the pupil may be experiencing

- the pupil's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions

Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer or member of staff.

An underlying principle in supporting pupils and staff in our school is that all incidences of bullying will be taken seriously.

Appropriate disciplinary sanctions which reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect will be applied (strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying, it may also be appropriate for SEND pupils to receive adjusted sanctions within the agreed system as a response to any individual circumstances of the pupil in question). Specific sanctions are outlined within the school's Behaviour Policy.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be evaluated and updated where necessary annually. In addition, the views of the Headmaster, SLT, Board of Governors and other staff will be used to make changes and improvements to the policy on an on-going basis.

Staff awareness will be raised through training, so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support are available; where appropriate advice is taken from the Local Authority and IAPS to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils.

The school will have clear policies communicated to parents, pupils and staff, and creating an environment of good behaviour and respect, with helpful examples set by staff and older pupils and celebration of success.

The school will involve parents and making sure pupils are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. The school will also ensure that it is made clear to parents the role in which they can take to support the school and their child in preventing bullying.

Strategies to Reduce Bullying

The school has adopted a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying, support victims and support those displaying bullying behaviour including:

- training for all members of staff on anti-bullying policy and strategy

- staff to be vigilant and react to any form of bullying displayed towards pupils and staff

- using educational elements such as personal, social and health education (PSHEE), assemblies, projects, drama, stories, literature, with discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language

- active management of hardware, software and connectivity and the vigilance of teachers and parents have a part to play in the safeguarding and protection of pupils.

- clear guidance on the use of technology in the classroom and beyond for all users, including staff, students/pupils and visitors that references permissions/restrictions and agreed sanctions. (All this is covered in the 'Aceptable Use' policies relating to technology.)