



VENN
BOULEVARD
CENTRE

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed By	Approved By	Date of Approval	Version Approved
Claire Goodaire	Governors	Sept 2021	1.1
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Venn Boulevard Centre ethos:

- Encourage honesty, respect and trust
- Learn how to self-regulate our emotions and thoughts through a personalised package of support for each student
- Feel safe, secure and happy in the school environment
- Develop our confidence and self-image to allow us to achieve our potential
- Ensure everyone is important and valued
- Promote healthy lifestyles
- Encourage understanding and acceptance of individual needs
- Offer continued support for a smooth transition to the next provision

Our Aims:

We aim to prevent bullying, so that all pupils can be happy and achieve

We believe that our schools should be a place where pupils, staff, families and other visitors are made to feel welcome and comfortable and where everyone is treated with respect, in an atmosphere free from intimidation

Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all pupils and all staff have a duty of care, to ensure our pupils are protected from harm

Our Objectives:

- Adopt a definition of bullying that is agreed across our schools
- Have a consistent approach to any bullying incidents that occur
- Raise awareness of bullying and promote positive relationships based on mutual respect
- Seek to involve all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of this policy
- Promote positive action to prevent bullying through our PSHE programme and our social emotional and mental health curriculum
- Provide support for all members of the school community who may be involved in dealing with an incident of bullying
- Provide appropriate training for both staff and pupils to support the implementation of the policy across the school
- Ensure fair treatment for all, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or sexuality, and encourage understanding and tolerance of different social, religious and cultural backgrounds

Definition of Bullying

'A persistent, deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate someone, which is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power, making it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves.'

There may sometimes be misunderstanding about the meaning of the term 'bullying'. One-off incidents, whilst they may be very serious and must always be dealt with, do not fall within the definition of 'bullying'.

Types of Bullying Include:

Baiting

Baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonize those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretly to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get into trouble.

Banter

The dictionary describes banter as; 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks'. Bullying is often justified as being just banter. It may start as banter, but some types of banter are bullying and need to be addressed as bullying.

Types of banter

- Friendly banter
- Ignorant banter
- Malicious banter

Child on Child Abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying);
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

The lives of pupils who are bullied are affected; they may suffer injury, they may attend erratically, they may lose self-confidence, they are likely to underachieve educationally and socially. Many of the outward signs of bullying can be the same as other indicators of abuse such as:

- Non-accidental injuries (including self-abuse)
- Low self-esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress or anxiety.

If unchecked, others may come to see bullying behaviour as acceptable within the school. It is not unknown for victims to become bullies of younger or more vulnerable pupils than themselves. Bullying can and frequently does have long term effects on victims which may affect their adult lives.

Cyber-Bullying

Cyberbullying is defined as the use of ICT, particularly mobile phones and the Internet, to deliberately 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.

Cyberbullying can also affect members of school staff and other adults for example, staff being ridiculed, threatened and otherwise abused online by pupils.

Any cyberbullying incidents are recorded by the member of staff who has seen, heard or been spoken to about the incident. The bullying incident form is passed immediately to the Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL). The DSL will then decide what further action needs to take place. This may include conversations with pupils, parents and other outside agencies. Cyberbullying is commonly discussed in PSHE, group discussions and assemblies to help educate our students. Staff training is provided on a regular basis on anti-bullying strategies.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and includes acts such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault:

Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names and sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
 - sexualised online bullying;
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

When referring to sexual violence and sexual harassment in this context we are referring to child on child occurrences. Any incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment are recorded by the member of staff who has seen, heard or been spoken to about the incident. The incident form is passed immediately to the Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL). All victims will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe. The DSL will then decide what further action needs to take place. This is very likely to include conversations with pupils and parents and a report may be made to the police and other agencies. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are discussed in PSHE, group discussions and assemblies to help educate our students and staff training is provided on a regular basis. Our school promotes a culture whereby sexual violence and sexual harassment are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Prejudice Related Bullying

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transgender person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, including Gypsy, Roma, Traveller heritage
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief

- sex /gender
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident.

Other vulnerable groups include

- young carers
- looked after children
- bullying related to home circumstances
- bullying related to appearance or health

Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious. We have a designated lead for young carers and looked after children who will liaise with staff and children to ensure that they are supported and know where to go for help.

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

Prejudice Related Language

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are perceived to be different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers are perceived to be different. Dismissing such language as banter is not helpful as it is being used to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

Hate crime and bullying

There is no legal definition of a hate crime. However, the police and the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) have an agreed definition of hate crime as:

"Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender."

There is a distinction between a hate crime and a hate incident.

"A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender."

However, a hate incident does not necessarily break the law. Where a hate incident amounts to a criminal offence, and is based on one of the five protected characteristics, it is known as a hate crime.

The type of conduct which will be considered as a hate incident is wide ranging and includes the following:

- verbal abuse;
- harassment;
- bullying or intimidation;
- physical attacks;
- threats of violence;

- hoax calls, abusive phone or text messages, hate mail;
- online abuse;
- displaying or circulating discriminatory literature or posters;
- graffiti;
- arson;
- throwing rubbish in a garden; and
- malicious complaints.

Any concerns about hate incidents/crimes should be discussed with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Information on how to report a hate crime can be found at

<https://www.report-it.org.uk/home>

Children can report any crime anonymously at <https://www.fearless.org/>

Strategies for preventing bullying

As part of our ongoing commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils, we at Venn Boulevard Centre and the Sullivan Centre have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour

1. Curriculum/Whole-School Strategies

- Ensuring that the school actively promotes the celebration of difference and diversity as part of their core values
- RSHE/PSHE/Citizenship lessons, drop down days and cross curriculum themes including work on challenging prejudice- related language and behaviour and challenging unconscious bias
- Celebration events
- Anti-Bullying Week annually in November.
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as Cyberbullying and internet safety
- Pupil Voice (e.g. pupil surveys)
- School Council
- Visits from external agencies (e.g. NSPCC etc)
- Modelling of positive relationships
- Staff and young people are actively encouraged and supported to challenge prejudice related behaviour relating to all protected characteristics and vulnerable groups
- Ensuring that images and materials used reflect all groups in British society

The Prevent Duty

From 1 July 2015 all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent Duty.

A Prevent Duty plan is in place to protect our children from the risk of radicalisation. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. School staff should use their judgement in identifying children who may be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

By promoting the fundamental British Values, we aim to build pupils’ resilience to radicalisation and enable them to challenge extremist views. It is important to emphasise that the Prevent Duty is not intended to stop pupils debating controversial issues. On the contrary, we aim to provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of School is ultimately responsible for the well-being of all pupils and staff. All staff, pupils, parents and the governing body should be made aware of the policy alongside their general awareness being raised of the issues associated with bullying in schools.

The Head of School and the Senior Leadership Team are designated to oversee the safeguarding and well-being of pupils.

Their role includes the following responsibilities:

- To ensure all staff are aware of the contents of the 'Anti-Bullying Policy' and that its procedures are adhered to, through regular training
- To ensure the use of appropriate assemblies, PSHE lessons and input from outside providers (e.g. theatre groups) to highlight aspects of bullying, including Anti-Bullying Week
- To monitor and record all reports of incidents of bullying (using the bullying incident forms) and to liaise with parents/carers
- To liaise with the police and other agencies as necessary

School staff have the following responsibilities:

- To be alert to any potential incident of bullying and intervene when instances are noticed
- Report to the SLT using a bullying incident form, which clearly shows facts, allegations and actions taken. Verbatim should be used wherever possible and staff should not record their own opinions/subjective information on the form

Pupils have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that previous victims of bullying are not isolated from groups of friends
- Inform a member of staff that bullying is happening
- Encourage the victim to join in activities and groups
- To work closely with staff to create a culture of openness, fairness and a culture which does not accept bullying and/or discrimination of any kind
- To engage in PSHE lessons and group discussion to gain an understanding of diversity, discrimination and our rights/responsibilities

Parents have the following responsibilities:

- To contact the school immediately if they know or suspect that their child is being bullied, even if their child has asked for "secrecy," and work in partnership with us to bring an end to the bullying
- Contact the school if they know or suspect that their child is bullying another pupil
- Share with the school any suspicions they have that bullying is taking place, even when it does not directly affect their child

The Head of School will decide how incidents of bullying are addressed. This may involve a Conflict Resolution Panel between students, a school centred 'No Blame Approach,' both of which start with the principle that what is important is to solve the problem and not to punish the bully and to provide extra intervention to educate the perpetrators of bullying to understand its effects.

There is a focus on the feelings of the victim, seeking other pupils, including the bullies, to empathise with the victim and provide support, giving pupils, including the bullies, responsibility for the resolving the problem. The victim must agree to be involved in the process.

In the case of serious incidents, where the Head of School is concerned a criminal breach of the law has occurred, she will liaise with parent/carers and the Police and other agencies, as required.

The No Blame Approach works through a progressive series of “steps”

Step 1 – Interview the victim and ask them to describe (words, picture, poem etc) the effect the bullying has had, and to agree what can be shared with others

Step 2 – Meet with those involved, involving the group of the victim’s peers including bullies, bystanders and others. At the outset it is made clear that no-one is to be blamed and punished

Step 3 – Explain the concerns, with the group listening to or seeing what the victim wishes them to know about the effects of the bullying

Step 4 – Share the responsibility, with the group acknowledging what has happened and the feelings of the victim

Step 5 – Ask the group for ideas, with individuals in the group, and group as a whole, asked for suggestions as to how they could help solve the problem and agreeing what action(s) they will take

Step 6 – Leave the responsibility with the group to act on the suggestions they have made

Step 7 – Arrange for the group to meet again, after an agreed period, to describe what has happened and if any further action is needed

Step 8 – Ensure that all steps are logged and parents informed throughout the process

The Restorative Practice Conference employs a script which outlines; a specific format involving structured interviews prior to the meeting, ground rules for the meeting, how to guide participants in drawing up a contact agreed and signed by all parties at the meeting.

Serious incidents of bullying and derogative behaviours, including discriminatory language, will be considered by the Head of School, in line with our behaviour policy.

Discrimination

Discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated within our school and will be taken seriously. All allegations of discrimination will be investigated by the Head of School, unless the allegation relates to the Head of School, in which case it will be investigated by the Executive Head.

Our schools embrace diversity and actively promote awareness of LGBTQ+. We are part of the Barnardo’s Transgender awareness project and we are keen for staff and students to be educated on a variety of diversity issues, including those prevalent in our society. We have a culturally rich curriculum which teaches our students to respect and to develop knowledge and understanding of different cultural groups, religions and prejudices within our society. All pupils study PSHE and Religious Studies to further their knowledge and understanding. We also have bespoke life skill modules in our social and emotional mental health curriculum to help specific pieces of learning with our Life Coach/Tutor on a 1-1 or on a small group basis. Our schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students under Equality Act 2010 and we work closely with parents/carers and our students to meet the individual special educational needs for each of our pupils (see our special educational needs policy for more information). We have a duty to protect our staff and students from direct and indirect discrimination and our staff and student’s welfare are paramount in everything we do.

Allegations against staff

All members of the school community are entitled to protection from bullying. Inappropriate and bullying behaviour towards staff will not be tolerated.

Any staff disclosing information, regarding inappropriate behaviour by colleagues, will be listened to and supported by the Head of School, in line with the 'Whistle Blowing Policy'

Links with other policies

This policy has been developed and evaluated with a view to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all staff and pupils.

It links with several policies and documents which can be read in conjunction, for example, Whistle Blowing policy, Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Attendance Policy, Social Emotional and Mental Health Policy, Guidelines for Network and Internet Use and Responsible Internet Use Policy)

Evaluation and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually, sooner if necessary due to significant changes in research, legal guidance or if Governors note areas for specific improvements should be addressed.

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.

Stonewall – www.stonewall.org.uk

The lesbian, gay and bisexual charity

Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH) – www.eachaction.org.uk

Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH) is 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

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

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