



Somerset Bridge Primary School

Aspire - Brave - Care - Collaborate

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Fifth review	
Sixth review	
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Anti-bullying and Anti-harassment Policy

Introduction

At Somerset Bridge we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and recognising each individual's right to work and play in a happy and safe environment. Our school community promotes and develops a school ethos where bullying behaviour is regarded as unacceptable, and understand that those who bully need support to change their behaviour.

All children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. In addition, we have a zero-tolerance approach and will respond to all reports and concerns of child-on-child abuse and child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the school, and/or online.

Rationale

There are a number of important reasons for challenging bullying and harassment as well as child-on-child abuse in school.

1. Safety and wellbeing. Over time, children are likely to lose self-confidence and self-esteem. Some may blame themselves for 'inviting' the abuse.
2. Educational achievement. Harassment is likely to affect children's concentration and learning. Some might avoid being harassed by avoiding coming to school and therefore attendance could suffer.
3. Providing a model for positive behaviour. If harassment goes unchallenged, other children will learn that this behaviour is acceptable and is a quick and effective way of getting what they want. Those who are being harassed may feel let down by adults in the school.
4. Upholding the reputation of the school. A school should never claim that bullying does not happen. Parents and children need to be assured that at our school, both through policy and action, we will respond positively and effectively to any form of harassment.
5. The Children Act 2004. This key document states that there is a duty on key agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
6. Equality Act 2010. Schools are required to have due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
7. The mental wellbeing of children. Being mentally healthy during childhood means reaching developmental and emotional milestones and learning healthy social skills and how to cope when there are problems.

Aims of the policy

- To ensure everyone in the school community knows what is meant by harassment and child-on-child abuse.
- To support staff in identifying possible signs and indicators of child-on-child abuse, bullying and harassment.
- To support staff in preventing harassment.
- To support staff to know how to deal with bullying and harassment, should they occur.
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Expectations of our policy

- Staff will be vigilant and responsive to incidents of harassment/bullying.
- Children will feel that school is trying to reduce and prevent harassment/bullying.
- Children will report there is rarely harassment/bullying in school.
- Parents will feel that the school deals well with any incidents of harassment/bullying.
- Children and parents report any incident which they feel is harassment/bullying in the expectation that school will deal with the incident.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour (emotional or physical), repeated over a period of time and where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves, sometimes due to an imbalance of power. This includes any incidences of cyber-bullying covered under our Online Safety Policy.

It is important to state that cyberbullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communication Act 1988 under section 1, which states that electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat, contain false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal behaviour. If the behaviour involves the use of taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18, then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

What is bullying?

Pupils must be educated to understand what bullying is and to feel that they will be supported and listened to when they report any incidents in which they feel that they, or their friends, are being bullied.

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lack of concentration or absence from school.

What is not bullying?

It is important to understand that bullying is not a falling out with friends, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is intentional, persistent and done to deliberately hurt another, either physically or emotionally. Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset and it is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns. When such incidents as these arise, the children will be supported by the adults who work with them so that they are able to resolve these friendship issues.

Definition of harassment

When we are talking about harassment, we are talking about child-on-child abuse, bullying, violating another person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for another person. Harassment is physical, verbal or emotional behaviour that makes a person feel victimised. Those who are being harassed often find it difficult to defend themselves. Harassment is against the law.

Types of harassment/bullying

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between children and this list is not exhaustive.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may include: hitting, biting, kicking or hair pulling. It also includes unwanted physical contact. There may be a reason why a child harms another and it is

important to understand why a child has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally, before considering appropriate consequences.

Sexually harmful behaviour

This is not always contrived with the intent of harming others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as for the victim. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, suggestive comments or body language, inappropriate role play, sexual touching or other harassment through any methods or media.

Child-on-child abuse

This is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Child-on-child abuse includes actions such as:

- making verbal or physical threats,
- open hostility,
- spreading rumours or gossip,
- attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason, such as hair colour, size, religion, faith, race, disability, gender or sexual orientation,
- inappropriate touch,
- isolating others or excluding them from the normal learning environment, friendships or conversations,
- humiliating, demeaning actions or persistent criticism.

Sexting

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. Pressurising someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, however once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession indecent images of a person under 18 or sharing it with someone else, the young person is breaking the law.

Prejudiced behaviour

This term relates to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – in particular related to disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life (for example, care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual orientation.

Prevention

All staff involved in the education and/or supervision of children will be made aware of the issue of bullying. During the induction process, staff will be made aware of the school's Behaviour Policy and how rewards and sanctions must be applied consistently. School staff will consistently reinforce the message that we take a zero tolerance approach, all forms of bullying are unacceptable and that positive actions to prevent it and control it will be taken.

In addition, all opportunities will be used to educate children in desirable behaviours – respectful, courteous, kind and caring behaviours – in line with our school ethos. These will be promoted in assemblies, during lessons and in playtime and lunchtime. In particular, learning about the effects of bullying will take place through the PSHE curriculum and during anti-bullying week, which will run across school each November.

Procedures and strategies for prevention of harassment

- Encourage relationships that are built on mutual respect, trust, caring and consideration for others rather than on power and strength. This includes child/child and teacher/child relationships.
- Implement a relevant, effective curriculum, that helps children to develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe. The curriculum is updated to reflect changes in legislation, and the mandatory teaching of Relationship Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education.
- Establish and publicise systems for children to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be taken seriously.
- Raise awareness of issues relating to bullying and harassment, such as anti-bullying week. Children should know the procedures to follow if they feel they are being bullied.
- Encourage parents and students to report incidents and staff will follow up through investigation and appropriate action.
- Provide help for victims and perpetrators.
- Have clear routines for reporting bullying.
- Access to pastoral support.

Possible indicators of bullying/harassment

- Unusual or change of behaviour pattern
- Less care taken in learning
- Deterioration in quality of work
- Increasing absences
- Late for school
- Unwillingness to go home at the end of the day
- Desire to stay with adults
- Stealing money from home
- Personal equipment damaged or disappearing
- Low engagement with learning

When bullying or harassment is reported:

- Staff must not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with harassment.
- All reports of harassment will be investigated. Minor incidents will be dealt with on the spot by staff (including the child's class teacher) using the school's Behaviour Policy.
- The Headteacher will be informed of major incidents, including those against protected characteristics, and he will instruct appropriate staff to investigate the issue thoroughly alongside himself.
- Staff will deal with a situation involving harassment immediately and sensitively.
- Parents/carers of those involved will be informed and made aware of the process school is following.
- If the police need to speak to the children, parents will be informed. They should give permission for the meeting to take place and be present if appropriate.
- Once the details are clear, students, staff and parents will be spoken to and appropriate support will be put in place in line with this policy.
- The incident will be recorded on CPOMS by relevant staff.

When bullying is reported, pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Being offered an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of the pastoral team or the child's class teacher.
- Being reassured that their allegation is being treated appropriately.
- Being offered additional relevant support.
- Working with our pastoral team to restore self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing the consequences of their actions which shows disapproval of their actions but not of the child themselves.
- Talking to our pastoral team in order to discover why they demonstrated such behaviour.
- Understanding the need to change.
- Working together with our pastoral team and parents/guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.
- Children who bully will be dealt with and punishment will be in line with our Behaviour Policy.

Appendices

Our Anti-harassment codes will be displayed and discussed in all of our classrooms and referred to frequently by adults working in school. Anti-bullying and anti-harassment assemblies will also be held.



Reception Class and Key Stage 1

Anti-harassment Code

- We are all equal even if we might look, act or think differently to one another. Everyone should be treated in the same way
- All children should be able to enjoy their learning. Everyone should look forward to coming to school.
- We will all be kind to one another.
- Children will tell the adults in class if they are unhappy.
- Adults will always listen to what the children say and help them if they need it.





Lower Key Stage 2 Anti-harassment Code

- All members of the school community are treated equally and we celebrate all the differences between us
- All children have the right to enjoy their learning and free time safely, free from fear.
- Unkind actions and remarks are not acceptable at this school, whether they are made on purpose or not.
- Children are encouraged by all staff to report if they do not feel safe in school.
- All incidents of harassment will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
- Cyberbullying is not acceptable and action will be taken.
- Support is available to those involved in incidents of harassment both for the victim and the bully.





Upper Key Stage 2

Anti-harassment Code

- All members of the school community are treated as individuals whatever their gender, race, age, religion or belief, culture, disability, sexual orientation, educational need, ability or appearance.
- All children have the right to enjoy their learning and free time safely, free from fear.
- Unkind actions and remarks are not acceptable at this school, whether they are made intentionally or not.
- Children are encouraged by all staff to report if they do not feel safe in school.
- All incidents of harassment will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
- Cyberbullying is not acceptable and action will be taken.
- Support is available to those involved in incidents of harassment both for the victim and the perpetrator.

