



Anti-Bullying Policy

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Anti-Bullying Policy

Fairfield School has a duty of care for pupils and staff and strives to create a safe and happy environment, believing that all bullying and peer to peer abuse is unacceptable whether at home, at school, at work, in the local community or online via social networking. We believe that Fairfield provides a safe, caring and happy place for pupils to learn and for adults to work. As this is achieved, the school is able to provide and develop teaching and learning, whilst fostering an attitude of responsible behaviour at all times to promote safety, both in, and out of school.

Aims of this Policy

- To promote the well-being of all pupils
- To prevent, reduce and eradicate any forms of bullying behaviour
- To offer a safe and supportive environment

What is Bullying?

Bullying is defined as, **'behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'** (DfE Safe to Learn). Bullying is a repeated behaviour that is intended to make another person feel uncomfortable or threatened, and can take many forms. The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school.

What is Cyber-Bullying?

Cyber-bullying happens 'online' through electronic information technology with a widespread audience and numerous devices to communicate through.

Cyber-bullying can leave children and young people feeling scared, upset, isolated and very vulnerable, particularly as the bullying can happen whilst in their own home.

There are a number of different methods of cyber-bullying, but the main ones are:

- Electronic communication such as messages, texts, emails, photographs, video-messaging, sexting via mobile phones, computers, smart-phones, tablets etc to individuals or groups
- Communication is threatening, upsetting or offensive and may include racist, sexist, or homophobic content
- Making humiliating and abusive phone calls on mobiles or land lines
- Sending inappropriate communication that can be shared with others through social networking and gaming sites
- Communicating with friends of the victim and other people to try to make them become part of the bullying
- Setting up 'profiles' on social networking sites to make fun of a child or young person
- Creating a false identity to impersonate someone and send inappropriate communications in their name
- Use chat rooms and gaming sites to abuse other players, use threats, lock victims out of games, spread false rumours
- Sending viruses or hacking programs that can destroy the victim's computer or delete personal information from their hard drive
- Posting intimate, sensitive and personal information, about someone without their permission or knowledge

The above methods can also be used by adults to 'groom' vulnerable children and young people in order to sexually exploit them.

These people pretend to be someone else online in order to be-friend a child or young person, find out sensitive information or obtain intimate photographs of them, and then threaten to expose this information to their family or friends.

Assessing and managing risk Fairfield school will:

- Take reasonable precautions to prevent access by students and staff to inappropriate material
- Maintain an audit of all Information and Communication Technology used in school
- Where appropriate make pupils aware of strategies for safe and responsible use of the internet and what to do when things go wrong
- Staff should safety-check all sites and links before using with pupils
- The use of social media will be risk-assessed and carefully controlled within school
- A reporting process is in place to deal with problems and all staff and students made aware of it
- Our 'Acceptable Use' and 'E-safety' policies cover all aspects of technology and online environments used at Fairfield School

The pupils at Fairfield have a wide range of highly complex cognitive, physical and medical needs. As a school community we understand that bullying can have discernments and raise concerns that are in themselves complicated to resolve. Not all pupils at Fairfield will recognise bullying behaviour if they were to experience it; equally not all pupils would recognise their own behaviour as bullying towards another pupil. Cognitive understanding and communication impairment are vital factors in how and what the pupils communicate and understand. All bullying issues, whatever the nature, will be treated with equal importance and the response will be based upon the guidelines in the policy.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular individuals or groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously our first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical. As a school, if a situation happened, we would make their own judgement about each specific case.

Reporting Bullying

Pupils are encouraged to communicate openly and honestly at all times within school and to disclose any forms of bullying, whether carried out by another pupil or by an adult. The hope is that by disclosing the problem in the first instance, this will become the first step in empowering the victim to overcome the bullying. Whenever a pupil experiences bullying, it should be disclosed, whether by the victim, friends of the victim, bystanders or via parents. Information can be reported to any member of staff. All staff should first secure the safety of the child.

At Fairfield School we pride ourselves on our positive relationships with pupils and where possible encourage them to communicate to a member of staff if they are being bullied, or have any concerns. Our pupils are aware they can talk to any staff member, family member or friend they feel comfortable with and trust, about bullying. Pupils are made aware they need to help each other. Class teachers, Pathway leaders, support staff and DSL's work closely together to support pupils and combat any cases of bullying.

All pupils are encouraged to be respectful and kind to their peers at a level appropriate to their cognition level. Pupils are always encouraged to disclose any concerns about bullying to a person they can trust so that they can help their peer. At Fairfield School we ensure our pupils are aware, where possible, that 'kind hands' and 'kind words' are important when being kind and friendly to others.

Procedures

Procedures may vary with each situation but the main objectives should be that bullying incidents are addressed and strategies agreed to help resolve the problem. Any incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated immediately. Everything that happens will be carefully recorded. The most important thing is to stop any bullying incidents and ensure the victim is safe. We aim for a peaceful resolution. Concerns and any incidents will be shared with parents so we can work in partnership to resolve any difficulties. Staff will monitor the situation to ensure that the bullying does not continue. A bullying incident will be regarded as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm (Children Act 1989).

Preventing Bullying

We aim to prevent bullying by:

- Fostering a whole school ethos of good behaviour, mutual respect, and consideration for one another with our staff and pupils setting a good example of how to behave towards each other
- We aim to create a safe, happy, and inclusive environment for learning, and encourage pupils to value diversity and difference, protect the vulnerable, and appreciate how their actions might affect others
- Raising awareness about bullying through opportunities in the curriculum
- Developing pupils' social skills, confidence, resilience and self-esteem; and defining the value of assertiveness in relationships as opposed to aggression, frustration, whether direct or indirect.
- Making it clear to all that there are effective procedures for reporting, investigating and tackling bullying
- Making it clear to all that incidents of cyberbullying or bullying of any kind that occur off the school premises but have an impact on the classroom environment or relationships between pupils will be pursued with the same seriousness as bullying occurring within school
- Taking pupils' views into account through the school council, and developing the roles that pupils can play in anti-bullying work

Equal Opportunities

We are firmly committed to the principles of equal opportunities. We believe that all our pupils are entitled to appropriate learning experiences, which will enable them to achieve their potential and enrich their lives. We place great value on diversity and treat every member of the school as an individual.

The Head teacher, Staff and Governing Body will ensure that the policy is implemented equally in all cases, without regard to ethnic origin, cultural differences, faith, gender, disability or sexuality. They will ensure that pupils are listened to and that their concerns are appropriately addressed. They will have a share responsibility for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed, and consistently and fairly applied. Mutual support amongst all staff is essential for creating a high quality and safe learning environment, promoting good behaviour and implementing the agreed policy and procedures consistently.