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FRIARAGE SCHOOL ANTI BULLYING POLICY

1. AIMS

This policy relates to children, young people and adults at Friarage School. It acknowledges the statutory obligations on school to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. It also acknowledges that bullying incidents should be addressed as a child protection concern where there is a risk of significant harm.

The School recognises its duty to respond to bullying that takes place at school and outside the school premises. Any incidents of bullying behaviour are totally unacceptable. Claims that bullying has occurred will be taken seriously and acted upon. Reasonable adjustments will be made according to special educational need/ disability/ or vulnerability of children where circumstances might explain but never excuse bullying behaviours.

Our vision is to develop and nurture happy, healthy and emotionally intelligent independent learners. Every child no matter what their race, culture or background has a right to belong and feel valued and safe. We aspire to create an atmosphere in which high quality learning takes place; a school where pupils, staff and visitors are welcomed into a warm, friendly and thriving learning community.

2. WHAT IS BULLYING?

The Anti Bullying Alliance includes the following principles in its definition of bullying which Friarage School agrees with:

- bullying behaviour deliberately causes hurt (either physically or emotionally)
- bullying behaviour is repetitive (though one off incidents such as the posting of an image, or the sending of a text that is then forwarded to a group, can quickly become repetitive and spiral into bullying behaviour)
- bullying behaviour involves an imbalance of power (the person on the receiving end feels like they can't defend themselves)

BULLYING IS NOT:

- teasing and banter between friends without intention to cause hurt

- falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement
- behaviour that all parties have consented to and enjoy (though watch as coercion can be very subtle)

Types of Bullying:

Direct

- Physical-attacks, hitting, kicking, pinching, taking possessions
- Verbal- name calling, teasing, threats, spreading malicious stories
- Non-verbal- ignoring or leaving out, offensive gestures, facial gestures

Indirect

- Cyber bullying-texts, pictures/video clips, phone call, email, instant messaging, chat rooms, social networking sites
- Prejudice or identity-driven bullying or harassment
- Disability/Special Educational Needs
- Gender- Sexist, Sexual and Transgender (Friarage School is a Stonewall School Champion)
- Race, religion and culture
- Socio-economic background

Bullying behaviours can involve children and young people and adults.

3. Signs and symptoms of bullying

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated Preventive measures

4. Ethos at Friarage School which promotes anti bullying:

- we establish school rules which demonstrate caring behaviour, and ensure that they are understood by all children
- we use our behaviour policy to promote good behaviour
- specify clearly those types of behaviour which are considered to be "bullying" and therefore unacceptable
- specify clearly what sanctions will follow bullying behaviour
- regularly remind children in assembly or on notices, etc, of the importance of respectful and caring behaviour to be shown to everyone
- use SEAL and the personal, health and social curriculum to permeate all aspects of school life and be thoroughly integrated into the more general curriculum wherever possible
- every member of staff has the responsibility to support and foster this curriculum
- we need to have structure in place which ensures that issues of bullying are routinely and regularly addressed in the classroom curriculum
- we draw up individual educational programmes for those children experiencing interpersonal and peer relationship difficulties
- we use differentiated personal and social curriculum materials (eg: social skills curriculum and materials from the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning)
- we monitor closely those children which special educational needs

5. Procedures for dealing with bullying incidents:

- Children are listened to calmly and seriously
- The class teacher will record the event and actions in their pastoral file
- If bullying has occurred then parents would be informed
- If bullying has occurred then sanctions designated by the school would be applied
- The level of sanction would reflect the severity of the incident (see thresholds)
- Sanctions available are: loss of playtime, lunchtime detention, internal exclusion, lunchtime exclusion from school, fixed term exclusion from school
- The bully is given behavioural support to address any underlying causes for bullying behaviours
- The victim is given support from a named mentor
- The victim has direct access to a member of the senior leadership team at times when bullying may recur
- The victim is given emotional support through nurture group
- The victim is given actions to keep safe

6. IF THE INCIDENT IS REPORTED BY A PARENT:

The Head teacher or assistant head teacher become involve and will listen impartially to the complaint. The procedures will be explained to the parent and it is important at this stage that the parent feels that the incident is being taken seriously and therefore has confidence in our systems. Witnesses to the incident will be interviewed, those with knowledge of the children involved, e.g. class teacher, will be asked for any background information which may be relevant. If the head teacher/ assistant head teachers are satisfied that there has been some bullying the procedure is as follows:

- The parents of the bully are informed and invited into school to discuss the incident
- The victim is supported by a named mentor and given actions to keep safe
- The bully is given appropriate sanction
- The bully is given behavioural support to address any underlying causes for bullying behaviours

7. WORKING WITH CHILDREN AFTER REPORTED BULLYING

The child who is bullied:

Work with children that follows any discovery or report of bullying must scrupulously avoid aggravating the bullied child's physical or emotional distress. Teachers need to take particular care that in following up a complaint of bullying they do not expose the bullied child to the risk of even more bullying. They should take all reasonable measures to ensure that the bullied child is supported and protected. Interventions which appear to be particularly sensitive to the needs of all children are those in which more general problem solving strategies are modelled. Where a bullied child is suffering prolonged or intense anxiety or distress, referral to outside agencies should be considered.

We will:

- provide an opportunity for discussions with the child who has been bullied
- avoid embarrassing and shaming the bullied child by focusing on a particular incident when the child is present
- use "supportive" children to ensure that the bullied child is befriended and protected, eg. In going to and from school
- consider the appropriateness of referring the bullied child from specialist help, having consulted and secured the agreement of parents. Outside agencies which may provide this expertise include the Educational Psychology Service, the EMS for Behaviour, CSC child and family guidance Education Welfare Service, etc.

SELF ESTEEM

Children who are bullied tend to have very low self-esteem. They feel guilty and worthless and, because they sometimes lack self-assertion skills, they are targeted by the kind of children who themselves bolster their own low levels of self-esteem by physically hurting, mocking and shaming "weaker" peers.

Class teachers and staff generally need to be aware of the ways in which school practices may enhance or diminish children's levels of self-esteem.

- Ensure that all children are spoken to respectfully
- Ensure that all children are noticed and valued

- Ensure that all children have access to rewards and privileges
- Acknowledge that effort is more important than achievement

7. THE CHILD WHO BULLIES

We work hard with those children who bully others to ensure that they receive the help that will prevent further bullying. Bullies themselves are frequently bullied and may need help to see that bullying is not acceptable behaviour. It is useful for staff to acknowledge that children sometimes bully because they have not learned appropriate ways of interacting with their peers. Modelling and role play will often be required. Approaches which are solely punitive are not advisable, since evidence suggest that they do not prevent further bullying.

School will:

- specifically teach interpersonal and social skills to children who have not acquired them. Modelling and role play will often be required.
- ensure that there are serious talks with any child found bullying
- explain the problem and help everyone to understand how the bullied child feels
- share the responsibility for the problem
- involve the group in sharing ideas and improving the situation
- include a later review of progress

8. THRESHOLDS FOR ASSESSING SEVERITY OF BULLYING INCIDENT

Actions and sanctions will be in direct correlation to the impact of the bullying incident.

Low Level

Member of staff talks with those involved and decides no further action is required, reinforcing with all involved school's stance with regard to bullying behaviour.

Should be handled quickly and sensitively without making too much of the incident.

This will involve an appropriate member of staff following the following procedures:

- Talk with target to understand feelings
- Talk with perpetrator to give the "evidence" of distress / hurt; to reinforce view that behaviour is unacceptable; to encourage perpetrator to make a response to target in form of apology and seeking to improve relationship
- In talks with both target and perpetrator seek to discover whether there are underlying "reasons" for behaviour
- Feedback to target
- Monitoring (may involve use of Peer Supporters)

Medium Level

- Behaviour needs further investigation by the appropriate member of staff
- Behaviour investigated to assess nature and severity of the behaviour: all those involved including bystanders talked to: behaviour records checked: parents informed, involved as appropriate and provided with regular feedback
- Priority is to protect and provide support for the target(s) of bullying, and then to seek to resolve the conflict – need also to consider alleged perpetrator
- Provide help to change behaviour of those engaging in bullying behaviour
- Bystander behaviour addressed

- Parents informed and involved

High Level

Reasons for categorising this as high level bullying would be:

- Previous strategies have not prevented perpetrator continuing his / her behaviour
- Impact on target
- Degree of imbalance of power between target and victim
- Perpetrator shows no remorse for actions
- Perpetrator seems to be incapable of empathy
- Parents support perpetrator in his / her behaviour
- Behaviour is potentially so serious that it has to be referred to a senior member of staff, and if appropriate the Child Protection Designated Person
- Senior member of staff informs parents immediately and meeting arranged as soon as possible (unless such action could put a child at risk)
- Appropriate senior member of staff instigates immediately an investigation and decides whether case needs to be referred to external agency, for example Child Protection and / or Police
- Where external agencies involved further school action needs to be agreed with involved agenc

