Anti-Bullying Policy

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Anti-Bullying Policy

Dereham Neatherd High School has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. Every pupil has the right to learn in a safe environment and to have any concerns dealt with quickly and robustly.

This policy has been written in accordance with the Department for Education (DfE) document: Preventing and Tackling Bullying
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Definition of Bullying

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

Bullying is differentiated from a friendship issue by:

- A deliberate intention to hurt, threaten, frighten or humiliate.
- Repetition.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves. This power imbalance can be present amongst friends.

There is no specific guidance around how long the behaviour has to be repeated for it to be classed as bullying but we would work on anything that had happened more than *"once or twice over a period of a week".* One-off incidents (especially physical incidents or those classed as hate crime) will be dealt with robustly however the incident is categorised.

Deliberately harming someone online is always classed as cyber-bullying.

Bullying can be:

a. Physical (pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or other violence)
b. Emotional (unfriendly, excluding or tormenting)
c. Verbal (name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours or teasing)
d. Cyber (all areas of internet or electronic communication)

Or involve one of the nine characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010, for example:

e. Racist (racist taunts, graffiti or gestures)
f. Sexual (unwanted physical contact or abusive comments)
g. LGBTQ+ phobic (focusing on the issues of sexuality and gender)

What does bullying look like? (this list is not exhaustive)

- Name calling
- Taunting
- Mocking
- Making offensive comments

- Physical assault, taking or damaging belongings
- Offensive graffiti
- Gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- Excluding people from groups with intent
- Unwanted physical contact
- Following/intimidating

This is a non-exhaustive list and cases that fall outside these categories will be dealt with by the Student Development Team in the spirit of this policy.

Comments made by a bully may regard age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, racial harassment, language or physical abuse but, again, this is not an exhaustive list.

Staring at someone or giving them "evil/ bad/nasty looks" is often subjective and hard to prove but can be considered bullying if accompanied by other actions and where there is clear evidence.

Bullying can affect both pupils and staff. This policy and procedure applies to the bullying of pupils by pupils inside and outside of school. Allegations about the bullying of pupils by staff will be dealt with under the school's Safeguarding Policy and Disciplinary Policy. Allegations of bullying of staff by pupils should be reported to the relevant Line Manager. They will then discuss this with the Headteacher.

Other related policies and procedures include the Behaviour, Safeguarding and Equalities policies.

How can bullying be reported?

Pupils can report bullying in the following ways:

- **To form tutor** – during form time every day
- **Student development support request slip*** – collect a request slip from form tutor, key stage office or student reception. Place the slip in the postbox under the canopy
- **At Student Reception** –Before school, after school, at break, form-time and lunchtime.
- **To one of our trained anti-bullying pupil ambassadors** – at break time or lunch time.
- **Online** - via the Bully Button on the front page of the school website or anonymously via the Tootoot app.
- **To a trusted adult** – either at school or at home

Parents can report bullying in the following ways:

- **By phone** – Call 01362 697981 and ask to speak to your child's Head of Year.
- **By email** – parents can email the school directly at office@neatherd.org When doing so please give full details of the incident and any names of pupils.
- **Online** - via the Bully Button on the front page of the school website or anonymously via the Tootoot app.

Staff can report bullying in the following way:

- **Entry made on school Management Information System (MIS)** – Staff can report bullying if they have witnessed behaviour they feel may be deemed bullying

What actions are taken if an allegation of bullying is made?

1. The member of staff to whom the allegation is reported must speak to the pupil and get a full written statement. Statement sheets are available in the Student Development Team office. Statements must always include dates, name of victim, and signature of those writing the statement. Ideally, the following details should also be given wherever possible: the name of the bully (if provided), dates, times, locations and names of witnesses.
2. To be considered bullying, unkind behavior has to have been repeated. If it is a one-off, then it is deemed a friendship issue (recorded on MIS) and appropriate action taken to resolve the issue.
3. Staff investigating allegations must refer to any previous entries on the school MIS for friendship issues/alleged bullying of the victim along with any previous friendship issues or instances of bullying for the reported bully. This is essential in ascertaining if there are any patterns within the behaviour, and thus inform decisions on whether the new allegation should be deemed bullying.
4. If deemed bullying:
    a) Further written statements, if required, to be taken by either the initial member of staff, or PSO/Director from those named as victims, perpetrators and witnesses. If cyber bullying, then evidence of this (e.g. screen shots) will asked for and saved
    b) Depending on the information gathered, the situation can be addressed in a number of ways, depending on severity of actions and whether it has happened before. The options include making those involved aware of the consequences of their actions and likely consequences if it continues, a meeting with all the people involved (this may be a formal Restorative Justice (RJ) meeting) or separate RJ discussions with those involved. The problems and a way forward need to be identified, acknowledged and a strategy to move forward agreed. If there are to be consequences, they should follow the school's Behaviour Policy.
    c) The situation should be monitored by a named person, checking how the situation has changed with all parties at agreed dates in the future. This will usually be the Form Tutor, but may be another member of the Student Development Team.
    Ideally the check-in will happen 1-2 days after the report has been made and addressed. Assuming all is well, a further check-in should take place after a week or two and then again after another few weeks to ensure issue has been resolved. If evidence shows there are still concerns, further actions may need to be taken. After check-ins, parents need to be made aware. Notes from check-ins to be recorded on the MIS.
    d) The incident and actions should be recorded on MIS, with all actions detailed. If the perpetrator is known, then information must be recorded under the 'Bullying' category on MIS.

e) All paperwork should be scanned and filed in the perpetrator's and victim's Documents Page on the MIS
f) Parents of the victim and perpetrator should be contacted to make them aware of the incident, actions taken and then be kept informed.
g) Any bullying that is deemed a safeguarding concern will also be reported to our safeguarding team and recorded as a safeguarding log – for example if clearly ongoing sexist abuse, targeted cyber bullying, clearly on-going harm to the victim.

Review and report on incidents

All incidents of bullying or perceived bullying that are dealt with should be recorded on MIS. If it is felt that an incident has not been handled according to this policy, or unsatisfactorily, please contact the Deputy Headteacher in the first instance by contacting the school at office@neatherd.org

If you wish to submit your concerns as a formal complaint, please refer to the school website for our complaints procedure and documentation.

What are the possible sanctions for bullying?

This depends on the severity of the case and will be decided after investigation and interviews or statements with those involved.

In cases where intent is uncertain or where things have been reported quickly we like to take a restorative approach to bullying – seeking apologies, resolution and then "checking in" again frequently. We know that many victims of bullying fail to report for fear of causing a fuss and things getting worse. We encourage the bullies to show empathy wherever possible in order to reduce the likelihood of them engaging in similar behaviour in the future.

Where the bullying has been clearly very unkind and the intent is clear we will use the sanctions stated in the school Behaviour Policy (https://neatherd.org/Policies/). These include detentions or Internal Exclusion as a sanction. Our decisions will always take into account wherever possible the intent, the severity and duration of the bullying and the level of remorse shown.

Repeated cases, physical bullying, hate crime and cyber-bullying (including comments online, setting up of chatrooms, improper use of pictures, etc.) could lead to Internal Exclusion and, in extreme cases, suspensions from school. Permanent Exclusion could be considered in very extreme, repeat cases.

The parents of the victim of bullying and the perpetrator will be contacted by the staff member dealing with the incident.

Bystanders and those encouraging fights or disputes are also sanctioned as part of this policy and the school Behaviour Policy.

In all cases of applying a sanction, we will take into account any special educational needs the pupil involved may have.

Liaising with the police

We will liaise with the police on any of the following issues:

- violence or assault (including sexual assault)
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages or other on-line communications
- hate crimes
- bullying outside of school
- cyber-bullying

Cases of racist or phobic bullying will be recorded and reported as required by Norfolk County Council and in our position as a School of Sanctuary.

What else do we do to prevent bullying?

- We celebrate Anti-Bullying Week through form-time activities and assemblies and on our school website and social media platforms.
- Pupil voice meetings and pupil surveys are regularly completed to hear pupils' views
- Anti-bullying ambassadors – these are pupils trained in supporting pupils with friendship issues and cases of bullying, and allows pupils to speak to peers rather than an adult. Our anti-bullying ambassadors work closely with the Student Development Team to ensure cases of bullying are addressed in the correct manner according to this policy.
- Clear procedures for reporting and identifying bullying. All staff in school should be vigilant to the signs of bullying. These can include being unwilling or frightened to go to school (drop in attendance) or use the bus/bus waiting area, becoming withdrawn or anxious, feigning illness, academic performance dropping, asking for money to replace "lost" money, changing eating habits, excessive spending in the canteen, no longer using the canteen, becoming aggressive or bullying others, making improbable excuses or having unexplained marks, bruises or injuries.
- All concerns about bullying, whether reported by pupils, parents or suspected by staff will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly and appropriate action taken.
- Pupils are encouraged to talk to any member of staff they feel comfortable with such as their form tutor. There are also local and national support agencies, such as Childline, that can also offer advice and support. This number is available in the pupil planner.
- We have a section in our planner that outlines what is and isn't bullying, how it can be reported and how we can support one another if we are being bullied.

- Create a safe and secure environment. Any pupil should be confident that they can discuss their feelings of being bullied and expect to be listened to and helped to resolve the problems. Incidents should be reported immediately. Staff will treat pupils' feelings with respect and follow the procedures to help resolve the situation swiftly and positively. Pupils should be able to travel to and from school and move around the school without fear of abuse, intimidation or bullying. We will continuously seek to make our school a physically and emotionally safe place.
- We always mark Black History Month, LGBT History Month and International Women's Day.
- We have a form time programme which tackles these themes throughout the year and encourages both empathy and how pupils can take the role of an upstander.
- We believe very much as a school in the importance of Society and Ethics and its role at tackling some of these broader issues in more depth in lesson time.
- We purposefully look out for pupils whom we deem "vulnerable" to Hate Crime and build strong relationships of trust.

Parental Responsibility

- We can only act when we have been made aware of a possible case of bullying, therefore parents must make us aware of any concerns straight away so that we can put in place support and address the situation.
- Parents need also to be aware that not all reported cases on bullying will be deemed bullying, therefore when speaking to their child about an issue, they should be aware of the definition of bullying (at the beginning of this policy).
- Parents of a pupil who has bullied must speak to their child about reasons behind this and support the school decision on sanctions.
- Parents or carers trying to resolve bullying directly with pupils or their families can lead to problems escalating. Pupils who are found to be bullying others also need support and help to change their behaviour.

Useful Links:

- School Behaviour Policy: https://neatherd.org/Policies/

Other links:

- https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school
- https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights
- https://www.bullying.co.uk/advice-for-schools/
- https://www.bullying.co.uk/advice-for-parents/
- https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/