



Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed: 07.02.2024 | Next date for review: 07.02.2025

This policy takes into account the 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying Guidance' published by the DfE in July 2011.

Staff are aware that bullying takes three principal forms, verbal, physical and manipulative.

- Verbal – name calling, threats, insults or offensive remarks
- Physical – hitting, kicking, deliberate pushing and jostling, taking of property
- Indirect – spreading rumours, sending malicious messages, ostracising

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet, and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Bullying is often recognised as a 'prolonged' attack but it may also be a single unresolved event, which casts a shadow over a child's life. Research has shown that whilst schools do not tolerate bullying, its extent is often greatly underestimated.

Aims

Running Deer aims:

- To create an atmosphere where all students can reach their full potential within a safe and caring environment and therefore bullying and other forms of anti-social behaviour are not tolerated.
- To train staff to recognise the causes and types of bullying and to make all staff aware of the school's procedures with regard to any concerns raised about bullying.
- To ensure students are made aware of the code of conduct (Behaviour Policy), which outlines

how students are expected to behave towards all other members of the School community. This code of conduct outlines the fact that harassment is not tolerated by anyone.

- To address issues relating to bullying and behaviour through PSHE and general activities.
- To ensure that parents are made fully aware of the School's anti-bullying policy.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in the UK.

The DfE guidance for schools, 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying', can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

The NSPCC also provides summaries of the key legislation and guidance on:

- bullying <http://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying>
- online abuse <http://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/online-abuse>
- child protection <http://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system>

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- bullying causes real distress. It can affect a person's health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.
- We will seek to prevent bullying by:
 - developing a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone involved in our organisation is expected to behave, in face-to-face contact and online, and within and outside of our activities
 - holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families who use our organisation about bullying and how to prevent it. These discussions will focus on:
 - group members' responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code
 - practising skills such as listening to each other

- respecting the fact that we are all different
- making sure that no one is without friends
- dealing with problems in a positive way
- checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well
- providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racial, sexist, homophobic and sexual bullying
- putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place
- making sure our response to incidents of bullying takes into account:
 - the needs of the person being bullied
 - the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
 - needs of any bystanders
 - our organisation as a whole.
- reviewing the plan developed to address any incidents of bullying at regular intervals, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term.

We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity. We will be proactive about:

- seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference
- increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers, children and young people
- welcoming new members to our organisation.

More information about responding effectively to bullying is available:

- protecting children from bullying and cyberbullying <http://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-andneglect/bullying>
- recognising and responding to abuse <http://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-andneglect/recognising-and-responding-to-abuse>

Related policies and procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures including:

- Child protection/safeguarding policy statement.
- Procedures for responding to concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing.
- Dealing with allegations made against a child or young person.
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers.
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers.

- Online safety policy and procedures for responding to concerns about online abuse.
- Equality and diversity policies.

Cyber-Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen 24/7, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

We recognise the impact of cyber-bullying: including text messaging, social networking websites, mobile phones, photographs and email. The school incorporates responsible use of the internet and modern technology as part of the PSHE programme.

Information is also shared with parents and staff concerning the dangers of cyber-bullying. The use of IT systems is covered in Running Deer's ICT policy.

We recognise that bullying may cause significant psychological damage, or even suicidal tendencies and that some bullying behaviour can be harassing and threatening.

Safeguarding Children

Under the Children Act 1989 bullying incidents should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will report the school's concerns to the local authority Safeguarding Children Board.

Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, the school may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

Police

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communication – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1998, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication, which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

Strategies for Dealing with Bullying

Relationships can break down and so procedures to deal with bullying need to be in place. The purpose of this procedure is to protect and support the victim, to rehabilitate the perpetrator and to establish a secure and happy environment.

All staff will receive training in dealing with bullying via induction and regular review of policy at staff meetings. The Equal Opportunities policy, Behaviour and Relationship Policy should also be consulted.

Depending upon the perceived seriousness of the situation, issues of bullying will be dealt with by the teacher/ case worker or executive directors. The Managing Director will inform any other member of staff as necessary and keep an anti-bullying log so that any patterns in bullying behaviour can be identified.

The emphasis for all teachers and case workers should be upon listening, believing and helping all concerned. All pupils should know that we regard bullying as a serious offence and that all claims of bullying will be thoroughly investigated.

Procedures

Reporting and Recording Arrangements

A student who feels they are being bullied must tell a teacher, case worker or any other member of staff with whom they feel comfortable. If they do not feel confident enough to speak up by themselves, students should be encouraged to enlist the moral support of a friend. Above all, students should be encouraged to tell someone straight away.

Teachers and case workers should not ignore or disregard a complaint. When a case is referred to them they should:

- ask for details and record the information on an anti-bullying incident report sheet.
- give the completed form to the Head of House and Assistant Head (Pastoral) in the first instance. The executive directors will then follow these procedures:
 1. As soon as possible interview all involved parties. It is essential that records are kept of all interviews.
 2. Speak to the victim to establish what exactly has occurred and whether there are any witnesses. These witnesses should then also be interviewed. (It may not be possible to preserve confidentiality in these discussions as the person accused of bullying will need to be told exactly what they have done and the effect it has had.)

3. Interview the person being accused of bullying once the details of the complaint have been established. Again this should be recorded on the anti-bullying incident record sheet.
4. Inform the parents of the victim and the child doing the bullying. Parents will be made fully aware of the School's anti-bullying policy. It will be stressed that if the bullying continues sanctions will be used.
5. Make all members of staff involved with the pupils aware of any incidences of bullying and any strategies such as report or target cards and not sitting by or working with certain students.
6. Arrange a follow-up meeting with the pupils a week later to check how things are going.
7. A record should also be kept in the Anti-bullying Log and on CPOMS.

Involvement of Parents

Parents will be made fully aware of the School's anti-bullying policy. In some cases, parents may be the first to alert a teacher or case worker to an incident of bullying and they may be in some distress when they contact the School.

Good practice includes:

- recognising that the parent may be angry or upset.
- keeping an open mind – lack of staff awareness does not mean it is not happening.
- remaining calm and understanding.
- making clear that Running Deer does care and that something will be done, explaining the school policy and seeing that procedures are followed.

Sanctions

Sanctions for the bully may include:

- targets for behaviour.
- reporting to the executive directors on a daily or weekly basis.
- loss of playtimes or seclusion at lunchtimes.
- if the behaviour of the bully does not improve this could lead to suspension or ultimately exclusion (see exclusion policy).

As behaviour of the bully improves then sanctions should be removed and the child should be praised for their good behaviour. It is important to remember that their self-esteem may also have been damaged by being found bullying, or low self-esteem may have been the root cause.

Preventing Bullying

At Running Deer we:

- involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home. Parents should be directed to the Equal Opportunities and Behaviour policies.
- have created an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.
- regularly evaluate and update the Anti-Bullying policy.

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