

**Anti Bullying Policy**

Date updated – September 2019

Lead – Dawn Best

Status - Current

Prepared by – Dawn Best

Review date – September 2021 or sooner if legislation is updated

**Principles and Values**

As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. Bullying will not be tolerated. The school will seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within school or in the local community. The ethos of our school fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour and we will challenge any behaviour that falls below this.

**Objectives of this Policy**

* The CIC, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
* The CIC and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
* All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

All of us have encountered bullying at some point in our lives, but we all deal with it differently. The aim of this policy is to work together to ensure that school is a safe place for children and adults to be, whether the school community is directly or indirectly affected by bullying or not.

**What Is Bullying?**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

In other words, bullying at Best Futures is considered to be, “unacceptable behaviour which occurs ‘**lots of times, on purpose’.”**

Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time.

Bullying can be:

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| Emotional | Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)  |
| Physical | pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence  |
| Racial | racial taunts, graffiti, gestures  |
| Sexual | unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments  |
| Homophobic | because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality |
| Direct or indirect  | Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing |
| Cyber bullying | All areas of internet ,such as email & internet chat room misuseMobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities, Ipad, games consoles |

Bullying may be related to:

* Race
* Religion
* Culture
* SEN or disability
* Appearance or health condition
* Home circumstances
* Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying

Bullying can take place in any area of the school and school grounds, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips, day visits, group activities, cyberspace and between families in the local community.

**Bullies and Victims**

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of bully over victim. This can be achieved by:

* The size of the individual,
* The strength of the individual
* The numbers or group size involved
* Anonymity - through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc
* The mental capacity of either victim or bully.

Research shows that children, whose parents are over-protective, may fall into the category of bully or victim in almost equal numbers. This makes these children more vulnerable to being bullied or becoming bullies, but this group is not exclusive.

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying and approach this in the same way as any other category of Child Abuse; that is, do not wait to be told before you raise concerns or deal directly with the matter. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied; they may be too young or have Special Educational Needs.

Staff should be able to identify children who may be vulnerable and who could fall victim to bullying as well as those who may demonstrate bullying behaviour.

Provocative Victim – research shows that some children are provocative victims – this means that they actively seek responses from others, often using their own behaviours to insight a reaction from others to either bring attention to themselves or to get others into trouble.

**Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying**?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

**Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

* is frightened of walking to or from school
* doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
* begs to be driven to school
* changes their usual routine
* is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
* begins to truant
* 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 which are damaged or " 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
* is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
* is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
* lack of eye contact
* becoming short tempered
* change in attitude to people at home.

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

**Outcomes**

1. All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by the class teacher or by a senior member of staff.
2. Parents of the victim may also be questioned about the incident or about their general concerns.
3. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place. Eg a parent being informed about their child’s behaviour.
4. The school safeguarding team will be informed and acted upon, under cause for concern
5. In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with bulling eg police, counsellor, Mere Outreach Support etc.
6. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
7. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
8. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be recorded in the bullying Log and monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

**Prevention**

At Best Futures we use a variety of methods for helping children to prevent bullying through PSHE, Enrichment Activities, and Group Working

The ethos and working philosophy of Best Futures means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people’s property. Good and kind/polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded. Staff will regularly discuss bullying, this will inform children that we are serious about dealing with bullying and leads to open conversations and increased confidence in children to want to discuss bullying. Staff will reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular discussion. Take part in Anti-Bullying week. Staff to follow the equality policy; welcoming every child to our school. Staff must be careful not to highlight differences of children or an individual child, even if this is done in jest. This gives other children advocacy to use this difference to begin calling names or teasing. Staff must be vigilant regarding groups of friends together. Groups/gangs bring about the imbalance of power and must be broken up from around the central bully. Staff must reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else’s feelings.

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| **Useful Contacts****Name of organisation** | **Telephone number** | **Website** |
| Act Against Bullying | 0845 230 2560 | [www.actagainstbullying.com](http://www.actagainstbullying.com/) |
| Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) | 0207 704 3370 | [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/) |
| Anti-bully | not available | [www.antibully.org.uk](http://www.antibully.org.uk/) |
| Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) | 0207 843 1901 | [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/) |
| Anti-bullying Network | 0131 651 6103 | [www.antibullying.net](http://www.antibullying.net/) |
| Beat Bullying | 0845 338 5060 | [www.beatbullying.org.uk](http://www.beatbullying.org.uk/) |
| Bully Free Zone | 01204 454 958 | [www.bullyfreezone.co.uk](http://www.bullyfreezone.co.uk/) |
| Bullying Online | 020 7378 1446 | [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk/) |
| BBC | not available | [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk/) |
| Childline | 0800 1111 (helpline for children) | [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk/) |
| Kidscape | 020 7730 3300 (general enquiry number)08451 205 204 (helpline for adults only) | [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk/)[www.beyondbullying.com](http://www.beyondbullying.com/) |
| NSPCC | 0207 825 2500 | [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/) |
| Parentline Plus | 0808 800 2222 | [www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk/) |
| The Children’s Legal Centre | 0800 783 2187 | [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com/) |
| The Office of the Children’s Commissioner | 0844 800 9113 | www.childrenscommissioner.org.uk |
| UK Government Website | not available | [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk/) |

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| **Principle** | Chris Parker | Signature |  | **Date:** | Sept 2019 |
| **Chair of CIC** | Dawn Best | Signature |  | **Date:** | Sept 2019 |