

Anti-Bullying Policy

Birchwood Junior School



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| Approved by: | Brian Main (Chair of Governors) Tracey Bowman (Executive Headteacher) | Date: March 2019 |
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| Last reviewed on: | March 2019 |
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| Next review due by: | March 2021 |
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PHILOSOPHY

Whenever there is suspicion or evidence of bullying, teaching and non-teaching staff will investigate further and record details via CPOMS.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is any comment, (sexist, racist, disparaging) look or action, which **intentionally** causes physical or emotional harm to someone else. If bullying persists and is allowed to continue it could affect the social, emotional and/or the academic development of the victim. It is often directed at individuals who appear 'easy targets' or are for some reason more vulnerable. The bully will take enjoyment from the fear, emotional upset or distress of their victim. It can be persistent and ongoing over an extended period and often the victim will not share their distress with others.

THUS it is important that:

Everyone is vigilant and records are kept of apparently 'minor' incidents so that the school can identify patterns and the individuals involved. Incidents are recorded via CPOMS which will hold detailed accounts and suspicions of bullying. DSL (Designated Safeguarding Leads), SLT & all Staff should also monitor these reports regularly for patterns of unreported bullying over a period.

Pupils are confident that their concerns are taken seriously, investigated and action taken quickly.

Pupils are able to openly discuss the issue, to examine the reasons why individual s bully and the effect they have on their victims (Circle time, assembly, school Council, school chatter groups).

Pupils are involved in the prevention of Bullying.

Pupils see the school policy being put into action and see it actually working.

The key aspect of our approach is that we need to know of any problems and must be told relevant information, if we are to help and to take appropriate action.

WHAT MUST YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

You must talk to someone about the problem; a friend, your teacher or a relative, as discussed one of your five trusted adults.

If the School or parents do not know about it, nothing will be done. It is not 'grassing', informing, snitching, letting anyone down, to tell someone else.

WHAT MUST YOU DO IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED?

Again you must tell someone. Everyone, whether a fellow pupil who is a friend, teacher or parent, has a duty to report anything which is making someone else unhappy. It is wrong to do nothing.

WHAT SHOULD PARENTS DO IF THEY THINK THEIR SON/DAUGHTER IS BEING BULLIED?

Please telephone the School and talk to a member of the SLT. Even if your worries are unfounded, it is always best to discuss the issue with someone else. Further, all the evidence indicates that it is best to talk over the issues early on, before, one hopes, the pattern becomes more serious.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF BULLYING IS TAKING PLACE

The School will investigate all claims and try to ascertain the facts and any involvement by individuals.

The school will contact the original source of the information, if known, and ensure that they are aware action is being taken.

On the first occasion, the bully will, at the very least, be warned of the severe consequences of any repetition and a report of the incident will be placed on file. The precise action will depend upon the nature and seriousness' of the incident, since, sometimes, a quiet word/counselling may be sufficient. However, some action will always be taken.

Repetition will result in one or more actions being taken. The School will always view bullying seriously and pupils/parents must be aware from the outset that continued involvement in bullying, despite every support from the school, could lead to permanent exclusion.

Dependent on the degree of bullying parents of those involved will be contacted and asked to cooperate with the school to prevent such behaviour.

WILL THE SCHOOL DO ANYTHING ELSE

- Yes, the topic of relationships in general, including bullying, will be included in classroom lessons and assemblies in all years. The School will do everything in its power, in cooperation with pupils and parents, to ensure that students who are identified as bullies, change their behaviour and attitudes.
- We will use Circle Time and peer group support strategies to help both victim and bully.
- We will inform parents of the child found to be bullying and put a PSP into place. This is an incremental strategy that should solve the problem. If it fails then fixed term or permanent exclusion could be the ultimate sanction (Exclusion Policy)
- We will access support from the LEA Behaviour Support agencies.
- Students who are vulnerable to bullying will be given advice about coping strategies and bullies will also be given counselling and instructions about future behaviour. Birchwood Junior School will also provide various forms of therapy such as Lego Therapy, Art Therapy, Self-Esteem Coaching.

- Parents of the victim will be fully informed of the actions we are taking to modify the bullies behaviour and the strategies we have in place to support and ensure the well-being of their child.

Our Pupils have a legal and moral right to be happy and feel safe at school. Please help us achieve this by contacting us the moment you have concerns and encourage your child to report any incidents of bullying immediately. In this way we can take immediately. In this way we can take immediate measures to resolve the problem.

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology devices, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to support hostile behaviour towards somebody or a group of people.

Just as with 'regular' bullying, bystanders can easily become perpetrators – by passing on communications or failing to report cyberbullying when they are aware of it. They may not recognise themselves as participating in bullying, but their involvement can compound the misery for the person targeted. Birchwood Junior School recognises the importance of pupils being aware that their actions can have severe and distressing consequences and explore these as part of our anti bullying curriculum.

Although some cyberbullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, some incidents of cyberbullying can be unintentional and the result of individuals simply not thinking about the consequences of their actions. The nature of modern communications means that the sender of a message is rarely able to gauge the reaction of its recipient and the impact of the message. There is also less opportunity for either party to resolve any misunderstanding or to feel empathy.

CYBERBULLYING: OUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Cyberbullying, like all bullying, is taken very seriously at Birchwood Junior School. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) includes legal powers that relate more directly to cyberbullying; it outlines the power of head teachers to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off-site and provides a defence in relation to the confiscation of mobile phones and other items. Although cyberbullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment and threatening and menacing communications. Birchwood Junior School is obliged to contact police if we feel that the law has been broken and are unable to comprehensively resolve the situation through our Anti Bullying Policy and Procedures.

IDENTIFYING CYBERBULLYING

There are seven recognized categories of cyberbullying.

- *Text message bullying* involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort or the use of sexting.
- *Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras* is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people.
- *Phone call bullying* uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers

- *Bullying via social media* using websites such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr or any other popular social media site to harass, harm or embarrass a victim.
- *Email bullying* uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them.
- *Chat room bullying* involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.
- *Bullying through instant messaging (IM)* is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online (i.e. Facebook chat, Skype, etc.).
- *Bullying via websites* includes the use of defamatory blogs, personal websites and online personal polling sites as well as posting explicit pictures.

The nature of ICT means that new devices and mediums are regularly being created. We strive to for keep up to date with the latest technologies and safeguard our children against any potential opportunities for cyberbullying.

PREVENTING CYBERBULLYING

Birchwood Junior School promotes a staunch anti-bullying policy. We strive to tackle the problem in a number of ways. These include:

Information about Cyberbullying is taught as part of the school curriculum alongside other forms of bullying. We have regular visits from community members (such as local PCSOs, church leaders etc) who explain the damage that bullying can do. Drama groups have recently been invited into the school to put on plays to promote anti- cyberbullying messages as well as outside agencies that explore the effects of bullying.

Each year we mark Anti Bullying Week with a week of activities, focussing on the damage that bullying can cause and how to prevent it. There is a large focus on cyberbullying.

Children are not permitted to have mobile electronic devices in school. Any mobile electronic device brought in to school is kept safely in the school office until the end of the day.

Birchwood Junior School has monitored and filtered internet access for all staff members and children. Websites that are potentially harmful to children and most social networking websites are filtered.

Birchwood Junior School has policies regarding acceptable ICT use for pupils and staff. Children are aware of their own responsibilities regarding internet usage and are not given 'free time' on the internet. The policies and acceptable use forms are also available for parents to inspect.

The school records and monitors reported incidents of cyberbullying in the same way as all other forms of bullying and uses this information to develop policies and practices

As part of our general bullying prevention procedures, pupils are regularly advised of routes they can use to report cyberbullying. Publicising reporting routes is an important element of prevention, raising awareness of the issue but also ensuring that any incidents can be stopped before they become too serious or upsetting. The school

tries to ensure that children, parents and staff are all aware of the different ways available to report cyberbullying incidents. The school use Twitter and Parentmail to send communication to parents that have helpful guides supporting/informing parents about anti-bullying strategies.

Education and discussion around the responsible use of technologies and e-safety are key to preventing cyberbullying and helping children and young people deal confidently with any problems that might arise, whether in or out of school. We emphasise the fact that Technology can have a positive role in learning and teaching practice, and we try to ensure that staff are confident about ICT in order to model the responsible and positive use of technologies and to respond to incidents of cyberbullying appropriately.

The school aims to stay up to date – prevention and responding strategies require continuous review and refinement as new technologies and services become popular. Birchwood Junior School aims to publicise progress and cyberbullying prevention activities to the whole-school community.

RESPONDING TO CYBERBULLYING

Birchwood Junior School responds to reported incidents of cyberbullying by following the procedures in place for other forms of bullying.

The school has existing sanctions in place for bullying behaviour, and these will apply equally to cyberbullying. In addition, Birchwood Junior School will refer to our policy for safe internet and mobile phone use, and apply sanctions where applicable and practical. Technology-specific sanctions for pupils engaged in cyberbullying behaviour could include limiting internet access for a period of time during school hours or limiting access to ICT devices.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed in March 2021

This policy was agreed and adopted by the staff and Governing Body.