

# **Berwick Middle School**

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**



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<b>Date agreed by Governors</b>	<b>DEC 2012</b>
<b>Date of review</b>	<b>OCT 2016</b>
<b>Next Review Due</b>	<b>MARCH 2018</b>
<b>Responsible officer</b>	<b>Caroline Virtue</b>
<b>Responsible Governor</b>	<b>Clare Shaw</b>

# BERWICK MIDDLE SCHOOL

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

- This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Behaviour Policy and Child Protection Policy.
- This policy takes regard of the following documents;

*Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools*

*Equality Act 2010*

*Bullying – Don't Suffer in Silence- An Anti-Bullying Pack for Schools' (64/2000), DFE 2000*

### **Policy contents:**

1. Aims and objectives
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Berwick Middle School seeks to provide a safe, secure and positive environment where young people can achieve their potential, making full use of the opportunities available to them, have the right to be treated with respect and to be free from intimidation. Berwick Middle seeks to achieve these basic rights by ensuring:

- We are proactive in setting up a range of preventative measures.
- We actively listen to our students and where appropriate their parents/carers.
- We act appropriately on their behalf.
- We will respond to all allegations of bullying.

## **1. Aims and Objectives**

We aim to create an environment where pupils can grow and flourish without fear. Each pupil has the right to be safe both in and out of school and to be protected when they are feeling vulnerable.

We aim:

- To ensure that children learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied.
- To demonstrate that Berwick Middle takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated.
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and during off site activities.
- To support everyone in actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.
- To clarify for all pupils and staff that bullying is wholly and always unacceptable.
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is paramount.
- To promote an environment where children feel they can trust and tell adults if they are being bullied or know about any bullying.
- To promote positive attitudes in pupils (including conflict management training.)
- To ensure that all staff are aware of their duty of care over those in their charge and the need to be alert to signs of bullying.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of procedures through regular training.

## **2. Definition**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology.

Although it may be unintentional, it is also bullying if someone feels hurt because of things said about their ethnic, cultural or economic back ground, religious faith, gender, sexuality (homophobic/transphobic), disability, special educational need, appearance or issues in their family.

Bullying includes:

- Name calling
- Taunting
- Mocking
- Making offensive or humiliating comments
- Gossiping
- Spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours

- Laughing or sniggering at someone in an unkind way
- Taking or deliberately damaging a person's belongings
- Threats and extortion
- Physical violence
- Using body language inappropriately e.g. giving "dirty" looks
- Deliberately invading someone's personal space
- Cyber bullying, ie inappropriate text messaging, emailing and use of social network sites e.g. Facebook, Bebo, Myspace, Youtube, MSMessaging etc
- Sending or displaying offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet or email
- Producing offensive graffiti or writing unkind notes about someone
- Excluding people from groups
- Racist, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, homophobic, special educational needs disability-related language and comments

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour, it can cause psychological damage and even suicide. It is therefore, of the utmost importance that the culture at Berwick Middle School is one where all members of the community work to prevent bullying.

In accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy any act by a pupil outside of school which threatens, or could potentially threaten, the wellbeing of any member of the community or the reputation of the School may prompt a response from the School. Cyber activity is included in this scope for investigation, including referral to the police if an offence may have taken place.

### **3. Procedures**

Everyone at Berwick Middle School has the ability to contribute towards making the School a safe and happy place where bullying will have no place and where bullying will be challenged and eliminated.

Staff can and should:

- Be familiar with the definition of bullying and the School's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Monitor changes in pupils' or colleagues' behaviour (eg. becoming shy, nervous or withdrawn; pretending to be ill; taking unusual absences: in the case of children they begin to do poorly in school work).
- Ensure that pupils understand the definition of bullying and know the School's stance on bullying and are confident about the School's ability to deal with it.
- Ensure that pupils reporting bullying are heard.
- Ensure that pupils understand that staff cannot promise confidentiality.
- Pass on the information to the appropriate member of the pastoral team.

- Make sure that a person being bullied feels safe and knows how and where to get support.
- Record and report cases of bullying.
- Help to foster a climate of respect through their own words and actions.
- Prevent the use of inappropriate language (eg, the casual and pejorative use of the term 'gay')

## **4 Bullying**

### **4.1 Pupils who engage in bullying**

Pupils have to learn that bullying is unacceptable. Those who engage in bullying and fail to show through their actions that they have learnt that bullying is unacceptable risk forfeiting their right to be at Berwick Middle School and can face permanent exclusion.

Pupils who are guilty of bullying will be given sanctions (see Behaviour Policy for an explanation of the different kinds of sanctions, which can include warnings) according to the severity of the offence. Pupils will be given opportunities to:

- Face up to the harm they have done
- Learn to behave in ways which will not cause harm in future
- Develop their understanding of how others think and feel
- Learn how to take steps to repair the harm they have caused
- Pay a penalty for the harm they have done and thus be held accountable for their actions

### **4.2 Staff who engage in bullying**

It is expected that all staff employed by Berwick Middle School will recognise and eschew any behaviour which is bullying. Bullying of pupils or colleagues will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

### **4.3 Parents who engage in bullying of staff**

All parents of Berwick Middle School pupils will be expected to recognise and eschew any behaviour towards staff, or any other members of Berwick Middle School that is bullying. Staff will inform the Head Teacher if they are subject to bullying behaviour that they regard as unacceptable and the matter will be dealt with appropriately, in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy.

## **5 The role of the school**

The responsibilities of staff, including teachers, are set out at point 4 and in section 7 below. In addition the School will:

- Collate data about incidents of bullying and monitor trends, reporting to Governors and reviewing the anti-bullying procedures; this includes consulting children on their experience.
- Provide training to new staff at induction and to all staff regularly, through 1-1 and briefings.
- Promote awareness of where and when bullying is most likely to take place and ensure actions are taken to reduce the risk.
- Promote the anti-bullying policy and stance on bullying in assemblies and other activities at least once per year.
- Ensure that awareness of bullying is raised and anti-bullying measures are taught in PHSE lessons and assemblies
- Use assemblies, presentations, drama workshops and news items in the context of PHSE or more broadly to raise the awareness of bullying, the School's stance on it and develop pupils' understanding of the potential impact on people's lives of being bullied.
- Ensure that pupils know about the roles they can take in preventing bullying.
- Communicate to parents, via regular postings on the Parent Portal, details of anti-bullying measures in the school and make available this policy on request.
- Ensure that parents are confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously.
- Inform parents if their child is being bullied or is bullying someone else.
- Review its policy and procedures in the light of data and any complaints.
- Celebrate the success of anti-bullying measures and a positive culture where everyone feels safe to be themselves and where no one fears to learn or work.

## **6 Responsibilities and legal requirements**

### **6.1 Responsibilities**

Whenever bullying is suspected, the incident should be recorded and investigated.

At Berwick Middle School incidents not witnessed by form teachers should be reported to a form teacher and the Key Stage Lead who will decide who will investigate. A form teacher receiving a report directly from a child or witnessing bullying will investigate and report to the Key Stage Lead.

All incidents of bullying must be recorded and forwarded to Key Stage Lead. The Deputy Head keeps a central log.

For incidents of bullying which are about ethnic or religious background or sexuality, the Deputy Head must be informed.

## **Legal requirements**

The law requires that the Head Teacher must ensure that an effective anti bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented.

The school will have regard to the 2010 Equality Act and seek to eliminate any unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between all members of the school community.

The Head Teacher should publicise the measures in the Behaviour Policy and draw them to the attention of pupils, parents and staff at least once a year.

## **7. Guidance for staff**

All staff in Berwick Middle School must promote the general progress and well being of individual pupils and of any class or group of pupils assigned to them which includes ensuring as far as possible that pupils are free from bullying and harassment.

All staff must apply the school rewards and sanctions effectively.

While bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, threatening behaviour and communications: for example, under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1998, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. If the Head Teacher feels that an offence may have been committed they will seek advice and assistance from the police.

In line with Berwick Middle School's Safeguarding policy, where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, serious harm because of bullying then the appropriate designated Child Protection Officer should be informed and concern reported to the LA Services Team.

## **8. The Role of Governors**

The governors will liaise with the Head Teacher over all anti-bullying strategies, and be made aware of all individual cases where appropriate.

The governing body will discuss, review and endorse the policy annually.

The governors will liaise with the Head Teacher to arrange for a regular programme of staff development, which will include child protection and anti-bullying strategies. This will include training for support staff as well as teachers.

## **9. The Role of Staff**

### **The Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher has a legal duty under the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying amongst pupils.

The Head Teacher will:

- Ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies
- Review them regularly
- Determine the strategies and procedures
- Discuss development of the strategies with the Senior Management Team
- Ensure appropriate training is available
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, volunteers, parents, pupils
- Report to the governing body

### **The Deputy Head Teacher**

- be responsible for the day to day management of the policy and systems
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and bullies
- to keep the Head Teacher informed of incidents
- refer and liaise with inter agency working groups if necessary
- arrange relevant training with the Head, determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems
- ensure proper record keeping

### **Key Stage Lead will**

- be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice
- know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported

### **Form Teachers will**

- be responsible for liaising with the Assistant Heads over all incidents involving pupils in their forms
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution
- teach the anti-bullying programme in the PSHE and Citizenship lessons

## **All staff and volunteers will**

- know and follow all relevant policies and procedures
- keep clear records on the 'Record of incidents of bullying' form
- be observant and talk to pupils
- deal with incidents according to the policy
- never let any incident of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during off-site activity
- take action to reduce the risk of bullying at all times and in places where it is most likely

## **All staff will respond**

- if bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be investigated and dealt with immediately by the teacher approached
- if a racial element to the bullying is suspected the Deputy Head must be informed immediately
- the teacher will record the details of the incident on the Bullying Report Form and inform the relevant senior staff
- the Bullying Report Form will be kept in the central office
- all the parties will be interviewed and a record made
- staff teaching the bullied pupil and the form teacher will be informed
- an appropriate strategy and plan of action to combat the bullying will be decided upon
- the implementation of any strategy will be overseen by the Head or Deputy Head Teacher
- parents will be kept informed by the relevant staff
- any and all sanctions will be determined by the Head Teacher

## **The Pupil will**

- be heard
- if upset, be encouraged to speak to their teacher or a responsible adult at an appropriate time
- never take the law into their own hands and remember that physical aggression is not acceptable
- be reassured that the adult will try to sort out the problem as calmly as possible
- know that serious incidents will be referred to the Head Teacher
- understand that parents may be requested to come into school to discuss the matter
- know the incident will be recorded
- be told always to report incidents of bullying

## Reporting and Recording

- all incidents must be reported and recorded
- reports of bullying will be logged in form teachers records and a copy kept in the central office

## 10. Monitoring the effectiveness of our approach

- **the school will raise awareness of anti social nature of bullying through Citizenship, school assemblies, school council, form time and the curriculum as appropriate**

### Sanctions

The *School Behaviour Policy* identifies consequences to be applied where bullying takes place

### Involving Parents

- parents should know that bullying will not be tolerated and take a positive, active approach to educating pupils to combat it
- all parents will be informed of the policy and procedures
- parents of pupils who are being bullied and parents of the bullies will be involved in the solution to the problem as appropriate

The Head Teacher and the Senior Leadership team will consider reports of bullying to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled, with a view to improving the school's strategies

The Head Teacher will report to the governing body. Our governors, staff, pupils and parents, discuss, monitor and review our anti-bullying policy at least every two years.

## Whole School Preventative Strategies

A whole-school approach to tackling and preventing bullying in schools is working with children and young people, parents, school staff and the whole school community to provide a solid foundation from which to embed developments and lead improvement in a systematic way.

The approaches staff should cover the following

- National Healthy School Programme
- PSHE (Personal, Social & Health Education)/Citizenship
- SEAL
- Improving the school environment (i.e. buildings)
- Assemblies
- School councils
- Systems that support parent/carer involvement
- Adult modelling of positive relationships and communication
- Developing a restorative ethos and culture that supports the development of social and emotional skills

## Response Strategies

### Ways to Respond to Bullying

There are people who can help and actions pupils can take to make things better. Pupils and staff are offered the following advice

1. **Walk Away:** If possible, remove yourself from the situation immediately.
2. **Say “Stop”:** If it feels safe, tell the aggressor to stop in a firm but calm way. If you feel confident to do so, use humour or a clever response to weaken the effect of the mean behaviour.
3. **Keep Cool:** Try to control your emotions in the moment. Showing fear or anger may egg on the aggressor.
4. **Don’t Fight:** Try not to fight or bully back in response—this may just continue the cycle of bad behaviour.

### After the Incident

5. **Tell a Friend:** Don’t keep the bullying a secret. Tell a friend and ask for support. You will feel better, and your friend can help you decide what to do next and go with you to get assistance.
6. **Report to an Adult:** Tell a trusted adult what has happened. Remaining silent will not make things better and may worsen the situation.

Reporting a serious problem is not the same as “tattling.” Adults need to know about bullying behaviour so they can support you and take action to stop it.

