



PRIMARY SCHOOL

*'Attainment through Caring, Challenge & Creativity'*

# **Birkdale Primary School**

## **Anti-bullying Policy (including Cyber-bullying)**

*Please also see our Whole School Positive Behaviour Policy and  
Home School Agreement*

## Our Mission Statement

### "Attainment through Caring, Challenge & Creativity"

Where caring and respect for others are the responsibility of all who belong here, so that we may grow to understand our individual uniqueness and learn to love and respect the world in which we live.

Where the potential within us all is encouraged to flourish without fear or prejudice, so that we may learn to become all that we are meant to be

Where creativity has a pre-eminent place in the life and the work of the school, so that we may celebrate our own achievements and those of others.

### **Introduction**

All staff at Birkdale Primary want to ensure that all individuals within our school community spend their time at Birkdale Primary feeling safe, happy and respected. All staff want to help create an environment where individuality is celebrated and all individuals feel confident to be themselves. This policy helps define and identify unacceptable behaviour relating to bullying (and cyber-bullying) and offers strategies for dealing with perpetrators.

### **Definitions**

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the person concerned to defend themselves. Bullying can be described as being a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. Bullying can include ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats, verbal intimidation, physical intimidation, assault on persons and/or their property or indirect conduct such as spreading unpleasant stories or rumours about someone.

Bullying of any kind which may include but not limited to physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, online/cyber, indirect and prejudice-related (e.g. racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, disablist) is never tolerated and is dealt with seriously and swiftly. Please see our Positive Behaviour Policy for more information.

There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability)
- Bullying related to appearance or
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions

- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying)
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying
- Cyber-bullying:

**Cyberbullying** is when one child or a group of children aim to threaten, tease or embarrass someone else by using a mobile phone, the internet or other technologies.

Cyberbullying takes many forms. These are the main ones:

- E-mails Sending e-mails that can be threatening or upsetting. E-mails can be sent directly to a single target, or to a group of people to encourage them to become part of the bullying. These messages or 'hate mails' can include examples of racism, sexism and other types of prejudice. If someone sends a message, which then is forwarded or laughed at, this then adds to the problem.
- Instant messenger and chat rooms Sending instant messenger and chat room messages to friends or direct to a victim. Others can be invited into the bullying conversation, who then become part of it by laughing.
- Social networking sites - Setting up profiles on social networking sites to make fun of someone. By visiting these pages or contributing to them, children become part of the problem and add to the feelings of unhappiness felt by the victim.
- Mobile phone - Sending humiliating and abusive text or video messages, as well as photo messages and phone calls over a mobile phone. This includes anonymous text messages over short distances using Bluetooth technology and sharing videos of physical attacks on individuals (happy slapping).
- Interactive gaming - Games consoles allow players to chat online with anyone they find themselves matched with in a multi-player game. Sometimes cyber bullies abuse other players and use threats. They can also lock victims out of games, spread false rumours about someone or hack into someone's account.
- Sending viruses - Some people send viruses or hacking programs to another person that can destroy their computers or delete personal information from their hard drive.
- Abusing personal information - Many victims of cyberbullying have complained that they have seen personal photos, emails or blog postings posted where others could see it without their permission. Social networking sites make it a lot easier for web users to get hold of personal information and photos of people. They can also get hold of someone else's messaging accounts and chat to people pretending to be the victim.

Even though cyberbullying cannot physically hurt, it can still leave children feeling mentally vulnerable and very upset. They can also feel scared, lonely and stressed and also feel that there's no way out. Escaping cyberbullying can be very difficult. Because anyone can get access to a mobile phone or the internet almost anywhere, it can be tough for those on the receiving end to avoid it, even in the safety of their own home.

It is important that any concerns regarding bullying or indeed any matter regarding school are **not** be taken onto social media by adults. The school or any member of staff does not need to be named for the school to be able to refer the matter to the Local Authority which may result in a fine. This is especially the case if any negative posts are brought to the attention of the school whereby no effort has been made to meet with key members of staff.

### **Who is responsible for tackling bullying?**

All staff, parents/carers and children work together to create a safe, positive, happy learning environment. Bullying of any form whatsoever is never tolerated. It is the responsibility of our whole school community to try to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

The staff at Birkdale thrive on sharing good practice and communicating effectively, especially in regards to children's wellbeing and tackling bullying. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns about bullying with a class teacher or member of SLT as soon as possible. Children take part in regular circle times activities, class and whole-school assemblies and weekly Life Lessons which regularly raise awareness of the seriousness of bullying and how to protect themselves and others from bullies as well as highlight the importance of tolerance, respect and the celebration of ALL differences. Regular teachings of the Fundamental British Values remind children to be tolerant, respectful and inquisitive, rather than critical, of cultural, religious, racial and personal preferences. Wellbeing and positive mental health is an essential part of our curriculum and school ethos and the links between bullying and issues around mental health are made clear to the children.

### **Warning signs of bullying**

There are some possible indicators of bullying:

- Being moody, unhappy, anxious or bad tempered
- Being particularly quiet, anxious and/or withdrawn
- Wanting to avoid leaving the house and unwilling to attend School
- Deterioration of work
- Insomnia/ bed wetting
- Regularly/inexplicably complaining of being ill
- Being isolated with classmates/other children.

Certain features of cyberbullying are different from other forms of bullying:

- The invasion of home/personal space. Cyberbullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal.
- The audience can be very large and reached rapidly.
- The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying.

Electronically forwarded content is hard to control, and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for targets to move on.

- People who cyberbully may attempt to remain anonymous. This can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person cyberbullying may never be in the same physical space as their target.
- The profile of the bully and the target. Cyberbullying can take place both between peers and across generations; teachers have also been targets. Age or size are not important.
- Bystanders can also become accessories to the bullying; for example, by passing on a humiliating image.
- Some instances of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional. It can be the result of not thinking (something sent as a joke may be deeply upsetting or offensive to the recipient) or a lack of awareness of the consequences - for example saying something negative online about another pupil, or friend that they don't expect to be forwarded or viewed outside their immediate group.
- Many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence. This is one of the reasons why it's important to know how to respond.

All staff are trained to:

- Be vigilant in spotting signs of bullying, including cyber bullying
- Take reports seriously
- Assure children that they should not tolerate bullying in any form.
- Wherever possible, through teaching, circle time and assemblies, reinforce the ethos of the school community
- Encourage children to realise that bullying is not restricted to physical violence, but includes any form of behaviour which makes another child unhappy, and that this is easily conducted online too
- Develop children's sensitivity to differences between people and model tolerance and respect for all
- Give children strategies to deal with bullying, including being sufficiently assertive to object to unacceptable behaviour.
- Encourage children to seek adult involvement, in the knowledge that their problem will be taken seriously, even if this is through a non-direct contact such as a worry box, suggestion box or daily 'feelings check-in'
- Make children aware that bystanders can be seen to condone bullying by doing nothing and that it is their responsibility to inform an adult
- Take part in regular safeguarding training
- Adhere to the schools Acceptable Use Policy and support the school with regards to managing cyberbullying
- Promote and encourage the positive, safe use of Information Technology through Computing and PSHE lessons and help children celebrate access to the internet in a secure way.

## **Investigating incidents of bullying**

The following people are responsible for the co-ordination and implementation of anti-bullying prevention and response strategies:

Nick Sheeran - Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead

David Jessop - Deputy Headteacher

Machalla McDermott - Safeguarding Governor

Michelle Cousins - E-Safety Lead

Katherine Brand and Naomi Williams - Safeguarding Officers and Learning Mentors

Ceri Sinnott - PSHE, Relationships Education, SMSC and British Values Lead

The class teacher is initially responsible for investigating any alleged incidents and will log any incidents on CPOMS, alerting any other relevant members of staff. The SLT is always informed of any alleged and proven incidents. Incidents that include racist abuse are reported directly to the SLT. The Headteacher will report any incidents of this nature to the Local Authority as requested and to the Governing Body via the Headteacher Report.

A discussion with the children involved will address the issues surrounding the incident and will be appropriate to the children's age and level of understanding. The adult should try to remain neutral.

The investigation discussion should:

- Reassure all children involved that the incident is being dealt with and that they are in a safe space to talk
- Avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style.
- Give each pupil an opportunity to talk.
- Try to ensure that the discussion remains focused on finding a solution to the problem to stop bullying reoccurring.
- Ensure the focus is that it is the perpetrator's *behaviour*, not them, which must be challenged.
- Seek advice from the SLT if necessary.
- Recognise that the pupil who has been bullied may require support if they so wish, after the incident is over, and this may involve external agencies as and when required.
- Ensure there are opportunities to discuss or teach ways to prevent a similar incident occurring
- Make clear to the children involved who has been informed of the incident and why (including parents)

### ***With regards to cyberbullying:***

- Ask the child who has been bullied to think about what information they have in the public domain.

- Help the child to keep relevant evidence for any investigation (e.g. by not deleting messages they've received, and by taking screen capture shots and noting web addresses of online cyberbullying instances).
- Take action to contain the incident when content has been circulated: If you know who the person responsible is, ask them to remove the content; Contact the host (e.g. the social networking site) to make a report to get the content taken down.
- Use disciplinary powers to confiscate phones that are being used to cyber bully. Ask the pupil to tell you who they have sent messages on to.
- In cases of illegal content, contact the police, who can determine what needs to be kept for evidential purposes.

### **Parental involvement**

The parents of a child who has been proven to have bullied and the parents of a child who has been the victim of bullying will be informed of the incident and the action that has taken place so far. The parents will be asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem. Parents and children will be reminded through letters, newsletters and awareness events from time to time that children should tell someone if they ever feel bullied. The school does expect the full support of any parents involved in bullying incidents of any kind, and asks that they respect the complex and sometimes sensitive natures of resolving these incidents.

### **Pupil Involvement**

To encourage children to take an active part in preventing and dealing with any incidences of bullying, the school will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Publicise the details of help lines and websites.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.
- Teach regular, informative e-safety lessons to raise awareness of the definitions and effect of cyber-bullying.
- Teach the SMART rules consistently and clearly in an age appropriate way to ensure understanding of what cyberbullying is and how to prevent or manage incidents.

### **Links to legislation and other school policies**

There are a number of pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying as well as criminal law. These may include:

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyberbullying. The Head teacher has the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off site.
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990

Other relevant school policies include:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policies
- Confidentiality Policy
- e-Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policy (The curriculum details the cross-curricular links in which anti-bullying is referred to)



## Supporting Organisations and Guidance

Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Beat Bullying: [www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org)

Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

DfE: "Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies", and "Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools" March 2014: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tacklingbullying>

DfE: "No health without mental health":

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-crossgovernment-outcomes-strategy>

Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org](http://www.youngminds.org)

PSHE Association: [www.pshe-association.org.uk](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk)

Restorative Justice Council: [www.restorativejustice.org.uk](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk)

Victim Support: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

Young Carers: [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)

Childnet International: [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

Internet Watch Foundation: [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)

Think U Know: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

UK Safer Internet Centre: [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

EACH: [www.eachaction.org.uk](http://www.eachaction.org.uk)

Pace: [www.pacehealth.org.uk](http://www.pacehealth.org.uk)

Schools Out: [www.schools-out.org.uk](http://www.schools-out.org.uk)

Changing Faces: [www.changingfaces.org.uk](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk)

Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sendcode-of-practice-0-to-25>

Anne Frank Trust: [www.annefrank.org.uk](http://www.annefrank.org.uk)

Kick it Out: [www.kickitout.org](http://www.kickitout.org)

Report it: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)

Stop Hate: [www.stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org)

Show Racism the Red Card: [www.srtrc.org/educational](http://www.srtrc.org/educational)