

**Anti-Bullying Policy**

**The Valiant School**

| **Approved by:** | The Management Committee |  |
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**1. Rationale**

Pupils must feel safe and respected if they are to learn effectively. Since we are a school which sets high standards for our pupils it is important that we create an atmosphere in which bullying cannot thrive and in which no student has to suffer from harassment of any kind. Because bullying happens in all societies, at all levels, it is important that we make our pupils knowledgeable about bullying and teach them how to respond to and report bullying should it occur. Because bullying is in the news and is a form of real anxiety for parents, it is important that we inform parents fully about our approach to dealing with bullying, so that parents are able to distinguish between what is bullying and what is not.

**2. What is bullying?**

There is no legal definition of bullying. Bullying is usually described as being behaviour by an individual or group, usually 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 on social media 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 our first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical. (See ref: *Preventing Bullying 2017, DFE*).

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 and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. Schools have wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 to give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones Homophobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) people.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The Headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed

Bullying can be:

* physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
* teasing
* making threats
* verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
* indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)

# **3. Setting the Right Ethos**

A ‘telling’ school is one where pupils do inform staff when bullying is taking place.

If pupils who feel they are being bullied are to tell us about bullying we must work together to create an atmosphere of trust. ‘Victims’ must know that their concerns will be taken seriously and recognise that investigations take time.

We must also make it as easy as possible to report bullying. If this is to happen, then everyone on the site has a responsibility to ensure that we live by our core values and that we all set a good atmosphere throughout school. We want to make it clear that this responsibility includes:

* promoting an open and honest ethos that ensures that all members of the school community know and agree with our stance on bullying;
* ensuring that all staff exhibit positive behaviours, demonstrate our values and become positive role models to pupils;
* treating other people with respect at all times;
* doing nothing that could be construed as bullying;
* doing nothing that could be construed as supporting bullying. This includes relaying distressing messages, relaying threats, laughing at bullying, watching a fight;
* reporting to the proper person any bullying we witness or any behaviour which we feel could escalate into bullying;
* engaging pupils in reviewing and developing our anti-bullying practices;
* analyse available data to ascertain how the school environment and the journeys to and from school can be improved.

**4. The Role of Management Committee**

The Management Committee supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the Management Committee does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The Management Committee monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The Management Committee requires the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the Management Committee on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

The Management Committee responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the Management Committee notifies the Headteacher and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the Management Committee.

This anti-bullying policy is the Management Committee’s responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school’s anti-bullying records, and by discussion with the Headteacher. The Management Committee analyses information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all pupil involved in bullying incidents.

# **5. The Role of the Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the Management Committee about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Headteacher will ensure that all pupils know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headteacher draws the attention of pupil to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other pupil why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When pupils feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

**6. The Role of Staff**

Staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the school.

If staff witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the pupil who is being bullied. If a pupil is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Headteacher, the member of staff informs the pupil’s parents and carers.

Staff actively support anti-bullying strategies by teaching pupil directly about safeguarding issues and cyber-bullying. Information is regularly sent home to parents and carers to further develop parental awareness of safeguarding issues on the internet and mobile devices. Parent meetings give opportunities to discuss internet safety.

We keep a record of any bullying incidents on Incident Report Forms. If any adult witnesses an act of bullying they should record the event on the Incident Report Form and inform the Senior Leadership Team immediately.

If, as members of staff, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the pupil who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the pupil who has bullied:

* We explain why the action of the pupil was wrong and we endeavour to help the pupil change their behaviour in future.
* We then invite the pupil’s parents/carers into the school to discuss the situation.
* In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies such as Social Care.

Staff members routinely attend training, which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

Staff members attempt to support all pupil in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all pupils, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

# **7. Involvement of Pupils**

We will:

* Regularly canvas pupils 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.

# **8. The Role of Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child’s teacher immediately.

Parents and Carers have a responsibility to support the school’s anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

We believe it is important for our school to work with parents/carers to help them to understand our approach with regards to bullying and to engage promptly with them when an issue of bullying comes to light, whether their child is the student being bullied or the one doing the bullying. We will ensure parents/carers are made aware of how to work with us on bullying and how they can seek help if a problem is not resolved. Some parents may need specific support to help deal with their child's behaviour. Where our school identifies that this is the case, we will initially provide support ourselves or signpost the parents to appropriate channels of help.

We will:

* make sure that key information (including policies and named points of contact) about bullying is available to parents/carers.
* ensure that all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying.
* ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively.
* ensure all parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying.
* work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
* ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.

During a lengthy investigation, or when there is a repetition of bullying, a victim’s parents may feel very anxious. It is very important that the investigator and the parents keep in contact. We will always endeavour to ring parents on the same day that the incident occurred and keep them updated thereafter; however, phone calls may not always be able to be made as soon or as frequently as the parent would ideally like.

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# **9.  How to report bullying**

We will regularly remind our pupils to take the following action if they feel they are being bullied:

* If you feel able to, then let the ‘bully’ know that they do not like what is happening to them and ask the bully to stop;
* Tell someone in school who will initiate action to sort out the problem. This can be any member of staff.
* If a student feels unable to talk to staff directly they should speak to a parent/carer and ask them to contact the school.

**What any adult who has been told about bullying should do**

* Make immediate contact with the school via email, telephone or in person

**Anyone working within the school who is concerned about a child should:**

* Immediately inform the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead

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# **10. How we will respond to bullying**

**Who should investigate**

All instances of bullying will be investigated by the headteacher, or a member of staff that the headteacher has specifically delegated this responsibility to.

**The need for gathering evidence**If we are to deal with incidents fairly, we must gather as much evidence as possible in order to establish what really happened**.** This process sometimes takes some time, but staff are aware that a timely response is important.

**How we deal with incidents that cross the inside/outside school boundaries**Where incidents that happen outside school are clearly having a detrimental effect on the life of the school we will investigate these and, in conjunction with the parents and the local police, take appropriate action.

**What sanctions we use**
At our school, sanctions are applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any SEN or disabilities that pupils may have, and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children. Bullying by children with disabilities or SEN is no more acceptable than bullying by other children and it should be made clear that their actions are wrong and appropriate sanctions imposed. We expect all pupils to be proactive and seek help from members of staff if they witness another student being hurt or they are concerned about others.

The following is the normal hierarchy of sanctions. A serious case of bullying, however, might result in immediate exclusion:

* In the first instance, a bully will be warned and parents/carers will be informed. We will impress on them that what they have done will not be tolerated at our school.
* If the bullying continues, parents will be invited into school and both student and parents will be told that further sanctions will follow if the bullying doesn’t stop.
* If there is further bullying, the student will be detained at break and lunch times.
* The student may be removal from specific classes if appropriate.
* Further sanctions such as suspension will also be used if appropriate.
* The ultimate sanction for bullying is permanent exclusion.

**How we monitor the situation**Staff will check at regular intervals on the welfare of a student who has been bullied. Pupils are encouraged to support by informing staff of any repeat incidents. Whilst the sanctions outlined above will be used as appropriate, both pupils and parents must understand that we cannot take action if we are not aware. Therefore pupils and parents/carers are encouraged to support any concerns that they have about any student at the school.

**11. Links to Legislation**

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 Equality Act 2010
* The Pupil Act 1989
* Keeping Pupil Safe in Education

# **12. Supporting Organisations and Guidance**

Some helpful organisations that offer support and guidance include:

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

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 2017:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

DfE: “No health without mental health”: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>

Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

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

MindEd: [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)

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

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)

The Diana Award: [www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)

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

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

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

**Cyberbullying**

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)

**LGBTQ +**

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)

Stonewall: [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

**SEND**

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/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

**Racism and Hate**

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)

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# **13. Policy update**

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher and Proprietor. The Headteacher reports any incidents of bullying to the Management Committee.

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Headteacher and approved by the Management Committee.