



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Aspire. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly, severely and effectively. We are an anti-bullying school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to inform members of staff.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person either physically or emotionally, by intimidating or demeaning others. It is usually persistent and is often covert, and is a conscious attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional Derogatory name calling of an insulting and/or personal nature. Demanding money, material goods or favours by means of threat or force.
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence because of some perceived physical, economic, sexual, intellectual, cultural or racial difference
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, abuse and threats. Ridiculing an individual.
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

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

Each centre has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to any issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school's policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should know what the school's policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated in any of our schools.

Staff Responsibilities

- To implement procedures to confront bullying of any form
- To listen to all parties involved in incidents
- To investigate incidents promptly and as fully as possible
- To take appropriate action and to refer to Mentor/SLT as appropriate
- To record on the events log and in the racist/homophobia record if appropriate
- To share with parents of the victim and bully, incidents of serious and /or persistent bullying
- To promote the use of a range of learning styles and strategies which challenge bullying behaviour
- To promote open management styles which facilitate communication and consultation within the relevant school and relevant agencies when appropriate
- To promote the use of interventions which are least intrusive and most effective.

Signs and Symptoms

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

- is frightened of walking to or from their centre
- doesn't want to go on public transport
- begs to be driven their centre
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to their centre (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 on 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 lunch or other monies continually 'lost'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (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 & jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to staff or Mentor or SLT
2. In particular cases of bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff.
3. In particular cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences such as those in our behaviour policy may take place.
- Assertive training
- Counselling (Mentor, SLT, other)
- Use of report
- Involvement of external agencies
- Monitoring by Mentor/SLT
- Peer support/peer mentoring
- Formal recording (racism/homophobia)
- Use of behaviour contract
- Liaison with parent/carer/social worker
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
- If possible, the students will be reconciled
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

We will use methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- utilising Peer Mentor support
- signing a behaviour contract
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters with a Teacher, Mentor or SLT
- meeting with parents/carers or other outside agencies
- involving social workers or the education psychologist

Helpful Organisations:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 020 8772 9900

Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk