

February 2017

Presfield High School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Date ratified.....February 2017

Date for review.....February 2019

Signed.....Mark Purcell
Chair of Governors

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Presfield High School Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

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

Children with autistic spectrum conditions are vulnerable to bullying because while they look typical, they act differently and it's difficult for them to speak up or seek help. Many have unique or specific interests on certain topics and may not realise that others don't share their enthusiasm. Some may also have difficulties with eye contact and physical coordination, or have sensory difficulties, such as an under or over sensitivity to certain smells or noises. All this can greatly affect their ability to be accepted by their peer groups and can make them more at risk of being bullied.

Many children with autism may not have a circle of friends around them or may prefer solitary time during breaks, making them easy targets for bullies. It is therefore vital that staff and pupils working in school are able to identify and support children with the disorder, especially when the child themselves may not realise they are being bullied.

What is Bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying.

However, it is defined by GOV.UK (March 2016) as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, eg because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).

February 2017

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as:
 - email and internet chat room misuse.
 - Mobile threats by text messaging and calls.
 - Misuse of associated technology, i.e. cameral and video facilities.

Students at Presfield fall into two categories where either they understand how to behave appropriately but choose not to, or demonstrate behaviours that may be socially inappropriate and could be seen as bullying.

We recognise that a lack of social understanding associated with their diagnosis can lead students to fail to properly understand 'socially appropriate' behaviour or properly interpret other people's intentions. This means that our students can get it wrong and act in a way that could be perceived as bullying. Students with ASC may not understand that their behaviour is inappropriate and from their viewpoint may be reasonable. Their lack of empathy and theory of mind may mean that explicit teaching about the feelings and reactions of others is required in order for them to understand and modify their own behaviour.

To support our students understanding between poor social interaction choices and bullying we have adopted the mnemonic STOP (Several Times On Purpose) to define actions which constitute bullying.

At Presfield High School we believe that the pupil is paramount in all respects. Approaches to behaviour are entirely dependent on the prevailing ethos of the school and it is therefore critical that the pupil is placed at the centre of all considerations related to behaviour. Because of this, we believe that behaviour support represents an ethically compatible approach to addressing student behaviour within the context of our school.

Our practice in supporting pupil behaviour is governed by the maxim

'Positive approaches to promote positive behaviour'

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. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Bullying behaviour may result in an SEN environment, as a

February 2017

result of difficulties in social communication, theory of mind or empathy. Whilst all bullying will be dealt with and considered important we will also work to develop all pupils' skills in these areas.

Objectives of this Policy

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

Signs and Symptoms

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

- Is frightened of walking to or from school.
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school.
- changes their usual routine.
- is unwilling to go to school (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 in 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 dinner or other monies continually "lost".
- has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- comes home starving (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.

February 2017

- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.

The 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.
2. In cases of all bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff on SIMS.
3. In serious 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

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
2. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
3. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
4. 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:

- Writing a set of school rules.
- Signing a behaviour contract.
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly making up role-plays.
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters.
- SEAL
- Social skills summaries.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

February 2017

Childline	0800 1111
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline	0845 1 205 204
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Bullying Online	www.bullying.co.uk
Bullybusters	0800 169 6928
Anti-bullying alliance	http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/