

THE ACORNS SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING and ANTI-HARASSMENT STATEMENT

Statement of Intent

The staff and Management of Acorns are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils, staff, parents/ carers and visitors to school so they can learn work and engage in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils, staff and visitors 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.

What Is Bullying and Harassment?

Harassment covers a wide range of behaviours of an offensive nature. It is commonly understood as behaviour that demeans, humiliates or embarrasses a person; these are behaviours that appear to be disturbing, upsetting or threatening. When these behaviours become repetitive it is defined as bullying. Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, taunting under the guise of 'banter', threatening/ aggressive gestures or subtle body language postures.
- Physical pushing, spitting, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures etc.
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Gender/
- Culture discrimination/ prejudice relating to gender and cultural identity.
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, making false allegations in order to discredit another individuals reputation and/ or professionalism*
- Cyber/ online All areas of the internet such as social media, email, internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities (taking photos or footage without consent of subject) etc.

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. Anyone who uses bullying behaviour needs to learn different ways of behaving as it is unacceptable in our society. Schools and workplaces have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All members of the Management Committee, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying and harassment is.
- All members of the Management Committee and teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents 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. Everyone should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated by anyone in any format.

Signs and symptoms

Any individual may show a range of behaviours which may suggest that they are being bullied and this should be investigated.

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 /anxious when due to leave for school
- doesn't want to go on the school transport
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school
- 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 less well in school work
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (dinner taken)
- 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 based message or comment is received

These signs and behaviours are not exhaustive and could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to staff
2. Incidents will be recorded by staff on sims or CPOMs
3. Serious or persistent incidents to be reported to Senior Management.
4. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
5. If necessary and appropriate, police/other involved agencies will be consulted
6. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying prevented.
7. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
8. Restorative work will be undertaken as far as possible in line with our behaviour policy.

Outcomes

- 1) The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise.
- 2) A restorative conference may take place. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled: Restorative Justice is a cornerstone within all policies and procedures at Acorns
- 3) Other consequences may occur e.g., loss of privileges such as trips, visits etc.,
- 4) In serious cases, a risk assessment may be carried out and exclusion may be considered.
- 5) After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

Maintaining and developing the strong ethos at The Acorns School of mutual respect and support is the foundation for the prevention of bullying. This ethos is supported by:

- The consistent implementation of our Behaviour Code/Policy and Reward system.
- Involvement of all stakeholders in implementing and reviewing the Behaviour Code/Policy.
- Addressing a range of issues relating to bullying through the curriculum, particularly through the PSHE programme and SMSC.
- The high level of individual support for all pupils through the allocation of key workers, provision of Early Help services (for pupils and parents), personalised programmes and individual behaviour targets if appropriate.

Making false allegations

Making false allegations against anyone is a serious form of bullying. False allegations made against individual staff or aimed at 'the school' in any format i.e. verbal, online or in writing, will be taken very seriously by the school as those allegations can have serious and upsetting consequences for the victim(s). Any false allegations made, may result in individuals contacting authorities such as the police or legal services.

Other Information

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	020 7354 8321
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
CEOP	http://ceop.police.uk/
Childline	http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/bullying/pages/bullying.aspx

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