



# Anti-Bullying Policy

## Our Vision

We want Virginia Primary School to be a community of happy, confident, motivated lifelong learners. We want our children to be successful citizens who value themselves and each other. Therefore, we are continually striving to ensure that we nurture, challenge and enable each and every one to be the very best they can be in all areas of school life.

## Rights Respecting School

We are a Rights Respecting School and this policy supports the following articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child:

- Article 6 – survival and development. Every child has a right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.
- Article 19 – protection from all forms of violence. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are free from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.
- Article 28 – every child has the right to an education. Discipline in schools must respect children’s dignity.
- Article 29 – goals of education. Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures and the environment.

**Policy Updated: January 2024**

**Policy Renewal frequency: Annually**

**Policy Renewal Date: January 2025**

## Rationale

We believe that bullying hurts and that no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying. This will enable us to realise our vision for our children. Therefore, our school has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

**We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.**

## Aims of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents understand what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- Pupils and parents are assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- The whole school community knows that bullying will not be tolerated.

## What Is Bullying?

**At Virginia Primary School, we consider bullying to be:**

- Repetitive, wilful or persistent behaviour
- Intentionally harmful, carried out by an individual or a group
- An imbalance of power leaving the victim feeling defenceless. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.
- The misuse of technology such as mobile phones, internet or email\*.

**Bullying can be verbal, physical or psychological.**

**Different types of bullying are:**

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist- racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Faith – focusing on someone's faith or because they do not follow a faith.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic- because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality; gender stereotyping
- Verbal name -calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber-bullying – mobile phone threats by text messaging and calls, email and chat room misuse\*

*\*See the Online Safety policy for more specific information on cyberbullying*

## 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
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school, school absences increase
- 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 struggle with learning
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions go "missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- 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

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

## Procedures – dealing with incidents

1. All bullying incidents should be reported in the first instance to the child's class teacher.
2. The teacher should keep a record of incidents, (Restorative Chats). If they persist after discussions and circle time they should be reported to the head.
3. The head/SLT will talk to the perpetrators and victims and will contact parents.
4. The head/SLT will always discuss persistent incidents with the child and the parent together.
5. Incidents of bullying that have been discussed in this way will be kept on file in the head's office.
6. Serious/persistent incidents are reported to the Governing Body
7. Our aim is then to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

In all cases we will show pupils who have been bullied that we believe their perceptions of the incident and praise them for their courage in seeking help. We will find out and record details of the incident by asking neutral/open questions such as:

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- Where and when did it happen?
- What did you do and say?
- What did the other/s do and say?
- Has this happened before? How often?
- Were there any witnesses?
- Have you told anyone else about what happened?
- How do you feel about this and how has it affected you?

## **Outcomes**

1. The bully (bullies) will be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
2. The pupils will be reconciled – conflict resolution.
3. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
4. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered

## **Working with pupils who have been bullied**

Here are some additional guidelines of how teachers can support children:

- Listen carefully and record all incidents and discussions of them
- Get the bullied student and the bully/bullies to record the event in writing
- Comfort the victim and reassure them that staff can and will help
- Talk to the student/s doing the bullying about the victim's perception and how it differs from their own
- Monitor the situation
- Counsel the victim and the bully
- Avoid bullying the bully and express disapproval in a calm and rational way
- Teach the victim assertiveness skills and provide activities to build up self esteem
- Encourage the victim to ignore teasing at the time and seek help if necessary
- Inform pupils involved as spectators on how they can help create a more pleasant, safe environment by reporting incidents etc
- Inform all those involved in the incident of the action taken

## **Working with pupils who bully**

Regardless of the reasons for their bullying behaviour, bullies must be encouraged to understand the seriousness of their actions and attitudes and that bullying is not acceptable. We will relate discussion to the fact that we are a Rights Respecting School and to everyone's right to be safe, to be treated with respect and without discrimination. Bullies need to be made to understand the feeling and the behaviour of other people. Some ways of doing this are:

- Role play
- Brainstorming
- Involving others – outside agencies – Behaviour Team/Education Psychologist/Learning Mentor
- Writing accounts of the bullying actions
- Assertiveness skills training
- Explore and investigate whether the bully is being bullied and whether there are other issues in their life that may be causing them to bully

## **Strategies we employ to combat bullying**

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

These can include:

- Ensuring that anti-bullying is reflected in the school codes and classroom rights respecting charters.
- Raising awareness through regular anti-bullying themed assemblies
- PSHE materials used from Reception to Year 6
- Regular Circle Time on bullying issues
- Children reading or being read stories about bullying
- Use of drama activities and role play to help children to become more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying.
- Use of worry boxes in class
- Encouraging the whole school community to model rights respecting behaviour towards one another

## Role of Parents/Carers

Parents and carers can support children if their child has been a victim of bullying in the following ways:

- Taking an interest in their child's social life at school
- Being aware of signs and symptoms of bullying
- Asking him/her directly if there are suspicions of bullying
- Listening to children and believing what they say
- Finding out the facts when told about a bullying incident
- Keeping a record of incidents including who, what, when and where
- Staying calm, supportive and optimistic and supporting the child by assuring them that there is nothing wrong with him/her
- Encouraging children to talk to adults – TELL
- Not encouraging them to fight back
- Helping children to practise strategies such as: saying or shouting "No!", walking or running away with confidence
- Not agreeing to keep the bullying a secret
- Working with the school to resolve the situation
- Cyber bullying – keep evidence such as text, take screen captures. For more information, see the school's ICT and E-safety Policy.

## Monitoring and Review

***This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the head teacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy. The school council will also be used to monitor the effectiveness of the policy.***

This policy will be reviewed by the Leader for PSHE, who will consult with pupils, parents and the wider school community. We will use a range of strategies for consulting with the school community, including class councils, surveys and focus groups. The timing of the review will be in the Autumn Term to coincide with Anti Bullying Week.

## Related policies and documents:

- Online Safety Policy
- SEN
- Teaching and Learning
- Positive Behaviour
- Disability Equality
- Vulnerable Children
- Safe to Learn (DSCF)

## Anti-Bullying Organisations:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0300 0115 142
KIDSCAPE (Parents Helpline, Mon/Tues 9.30am-2.30pm)	07496 682785
Childline	0800 1111
Anti Bullying Alliance	aba@ncb.org.uk

## Useful websites:

[www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying)  
<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>  
[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
[www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk)  
<https://bullyfreeworld-bully.nationbuilder.com/>  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
<https://actagainstbullying.org/>  
<https://www.youthaccess.org.uk/>