



Oaklands School

“The best for all, the best from all”

Anti-Bullying Policy

| Date reviewed: | Review Cycle | Policy Review Date: |
|-------------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| 12 th May 26 | Annually | Summer 2027 |

Principles and Values

As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously. Pupils, parents and guardians should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to swiftly. Bullying will not be tolerated. The school will seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within school or in the school community. The ethos of our school 'The Best for All, the Best from All' fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour and we will consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this.

The Ethos, Mission Statement and Values at Oaklands School

The Ethos at Oaklands School is *"The best for all, the best from all"*

Our Mission Statement is,

We believe in making a lasting difference, by giving students the tools to meet the challenges of the future.

The Oaklands values that underpin our ethos and mission statement are:

- *Developing emotionally healthy minds*
- *Providing pathways to success*
- *Supporting pupils to become confident and resilient young adults*

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils, and key stakeholders should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school process is on preventing and dealing with incidents that can be perceived as bullying is on bullying.
- All pupils and parents should know what they should do if they feel that any bullying behaviour has happened.

All of us have encountered bullying at some point in our lives, but we all deal with it differently. The aim of this policy is to work together to ensure that our school is a safe place for pupils and adults to be; whether the school community is directly or indirectly affected by bullying or not.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be described as being a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully.

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour used by an individual or group, repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

In other words, bullying at Oaklands is considered to be, "unacceptable behaviour which occurs 'lots of times, on purpose, and is directed towards a specific person(s)".

Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time.

Bullying (by definition) can be:

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Emotional | being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures) |
| Physical | pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence |
| Racial | racial taunts, graffiti, gestures |
| Sexual | unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments |
| LGBT+ phobic | because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality |
| Direct or indirect Verbal | name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing |
| Cyber bullying | All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat. Social Media misuse. Threats by text messaging and phone calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities, I-pad, games consoles. |

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion
- Culture
- SEN or disability
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances, including young carers and poverty
- Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying, homophobia

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and cyberspace. It can take place in group activities and between families in the local community.

Why it's important to respond to Bullying

Bullying hurts and therefore will not be tolerated. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental and physical health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Victims and Perpetrators of Bullying

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another. This can be achieved by:-

- The size of the individual
- The strength of the individual
- The numbers or group size involved
- Anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc.

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying behaviours and approach this in the same way as any other category of Child Abuse; that is, do not wait to be told before you raise concerns or deal directly with the matter. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them.

Staff must also be aware of those children who may be vulnerable pupils, Looked after pupils, Pupils who are Carers; those coming from families who are facing challenges, or those responding to emotional problems or mental health issues which may bring about a propensity to be unkind to others, or may make them more likely to fall victim to the behaviour of others.

What does Bullying look like?

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

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- 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 make less effort with school work than previously
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry
- 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 and jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- lack of eye contact
- becoming short tempered
- Change in attitude to people at home.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Strategies for dealing with Bullying

At Oaklands we have a Stages of Escalation Guidance which has been shared with all staff on how to deal with bullying (see appendix 1). Within this it shows the stages of escalation that staff follow so that instances of bullying are dealt with quickly and efficiently.

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach, as bullies are often victims too - that may be a reason why they bully.

- Implement the schools restorative practice process to support both victims and perpetrators
- Discussions at length with the victim. This will require patience and understanding.
- Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible.
- Discussions with the bully. Discuss the details with them and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at Oaklands School.
- Separate discussions with parents of bully and victim.
- Sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of free time, exclusion from school, depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s) (see guidance in appendix 1).
- Continue monitoring the situation by observing at breaktime/lunchtimes and having discussions with victim to ensure no repetition.
- As the behaviour of the bully (hopefully) improves, then favoured activities etc can be reinstated, and the pupil should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the pupil's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.
- In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identities of bullies, at Oaklands School we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:
 - All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils.
 - All staff listen, believe, act.
 - All staff develop good working relationships with pupils and we hope pupils have the confidence to confide in staff when an incidence of bullying occurs.
- Communicate with the parents and carers of both the bully and the victim to ensure appropriate support and consequences are implemented.

In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with a child continually demonstrating unacceptable behaviour towards others. E.g. police, counsellor.

In serious cases (this is defined as children displaying an on-going lack of response to sanctions, that is, no change in behaviour of the perpetrator and an unwillingness to alter their behaviour choices), support from external agencies, counselling, adapted timetables, or even fixed or permanent exclusion will be considered.

During and after the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be recorded on CPOMS and monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

The school's Governing Board is informed of any bullying incidents, as they are recorded on the Balanced Scorecard document, which is shared at the termly Full Governing Board Meetings.

In all cases the school will involve and work closely with the parents of both bullies and their victims.

Prevention and Guidelines for Pupils

At Oaklands we use a variety of methods to support children in preventing and understanding the consequences of bullying through Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE), Relationship, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) and Citizenship lessons, and through the consistent application of the school's behaviour policy.

The ethos, mission statement, and values at Oaklands means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Good and kind/polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded through the school reward system.

Bullying behaviour is discussed within the curriculum, this informs students that we are serious about dealing with bullying and leads to open conversations and increased confidence in children to want to discuss bullying and report any incidents and concerns about other children's behaviour.

Staff will reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular theme in line with our expectations and values.

Staff must be vigilant regarding groups of friends together. Friendship groups may bring about the imbalance of power and must be led towards welcoming others to join them and not excluding others from their group.

Staff must reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings and be kind to each other.

If a child feels that they are being bullied then there are several procedures that they are encouraged to follow: (not hierarchical)

- Tell a teacher or adult whom you feel you can trust
- Tell a parent or adult at home whom you feel you can trust
- Discuss it as part of your PSHE time
- Ring Childline and follow the advice given
- Write your feelings/concerns down and give them to a trusted adult who you would like to support you.

Bullying outside of the School

Schools have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside of the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable.

Conduct outside the school premises, including online conduct, that schools might sanction pupils for include misbehaviour:

- when taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity;
- when travelling to or from school; 26
- when wearing school uniform;
- when in some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school;
- that could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school;
- that poses a threat to another pupil; or
- that could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

The decision to sanction a pupil will be lawful if it is made on the school premises or elsewhere at a time when the pupil is under the control or charge of a member of staff of the school.

Recording of Bullying Incidents

When an incident of bullying has taken place, staff must be prepared to record and report each incident on CPOMs which then records the incident and makes a log of it electronically.

General incidences of bullying should be recorded on CPOMs this would include incidents where staff have had to become involved and speak with pupils, and/or where parents have raised concerns regarding bullying. Confirmed cases of bullying must be recorded, as with any case of Child Protection.

All incidents of bullying will be discussed with all relevant staff and parents of the pupils involved, in order that everyone can be vigilant and that further incidents by the same pupil(s) may be prevented from happening in the future. Incidents of bullying will be discussed with the Governing Body (Safeguarding Governors).

Advice to Parents

As the parent of a child whom you suspect is being bullied:-

1. Report bullying incidents to your child's Form Tutor or school office
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff and the Head teacher notified.
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 child using unacceptable behaviour towards others, to change their behaviour.

Do Not:-

1. Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child or by speaking to their parents.
2. Encourage your child to be 'a bully' back.

Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

Social Media and Mobile Phones

Most cases of bullying involve direct contact between bully and victim. This may be face to face or through social media and specifically on mobile phone technology, such as sending threatening calls, texts and images. Pupils are advised not to share mobile numbers unless they are sure that the recipient can be trusted.

Parental Support:

Whilst we appreciate the benefits (and prevalence) of social media platforms and APPs as forms of communication, pupils often struggle to manage friendships online which can lead to fall-outs and unkind behaviour online.

Most social media apps are for pupils 13 years and over. If you do allow your child to access social media/communication platforms, we ask for your vigilance. Just like their interactions in person, online interactions require supervision and support.

Within our school's Home/ School agreement we ask parents to:

- Monitor your child's phone/computer/console for the apps that are downloaded
- Enact parental controls on phones, computers and consoles
- Review the messages your child sends and receives on platforms and apps – making monitoring part of a daily or weekly routine
- Set expectations about what space (preferably communal) and times your child has access to devices
- Encourage your child to share or discuss with me what they are doing.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

Oaklands School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

Oaklands School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our anti-bullying policy.

Helpful Contacts

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

020 7354 8321

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| Childline | 0800 1111 |
| 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 |
| Anti-Bullying Alliance | www.anti- |
| bullyingalliance.org.uk | |
| Anti-Bullying Network | www.antibullying.net |
| Bullying Online | www.bullying.co.uk |

Visit the Kidscape website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.

The Childline telephone number is displayed clearly in school.

Please contact the school if you wish to discuss this policy in further detail.

Appendix 1 - Anti – Bullying - Stages of Escalation Guidance

| Stage | School consequence | Actions | Parental/Carer communication |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1 – Where it is noted that the behaviour becomes directed and repeated. | Reflection (break time + lunch time if necessary) | Bullying awareness meeting held with Form Tutor (FT). Mention at staff meeting/briefing to raise awareness. Restorative meeting completed | Parents/Carers phoned and informed (by FTs and Teaching Assistant (TA)) |
| 2 – Continuation of the directed behaviour | Reflection (break time + lunch time if necessary) Spoken to by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. | FT to reflect on the behaviour with the child and identify relevant alternatives actions to take. Restorative meeting completed | Parents/Carers phoned and informed |
| 3 – Repeat of behaviour | Internal Exclusion | SLT to reflect on the behaviour with the child and identify relevant alternative actions to take. Bullying letter sent out (and registered on CPOMs) Message to go out in assembly to remind of the school’s zero tolerance regarding bullying. Students informed about the unfortunate fact that a letter has had to be sent out. Restorative meeting completed | Parents/Carers meet with the child’s FT to discuss behaviour (if option is available) |
| 4 – Repeat of behaviour | Internal Exclusion | SLT to reflect on the behaviour with the child and identify relevant alternatives actions to take. Bullying letter # 2 to be sent out. Message to go out in assembly to remind of the school’s zero tolerance regarding Bullying. Students informed about the unfortunate fact that a letter has had to be sent out. Restorative meeting completed | Parents/Carers meet with a member of the SLT to discuss behaviour. |