



## New Forest Small School

### ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Member of Staff Responsible	Headteacher
Regularity of Review	2 yearly

#### 1. **Rationale**

The following policy is informed by the Department for Education guidance document; '*Preventing and tackling bullying: advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies*'. The school will implement this policy until such time that it is superseded by further guidance.

It is the policy of The New Forest Small School to effectively challenge all forms of bullying in order to improve and sustain the happiness and safety of its pupils and staff and to help them to fulfil their potential. We recognise the profound impact of bullying on individuals' learning and mental health, not only during childhood, but also in adulthood. The New Forest Small School will make it clear to everyone that threatening behaviour directed towards students or staff is unacceptable and, in many cases, unlawful.

It will be a requirement on all staff that they should read and implement this policy so that all have a clear understanding and agreement on what constitutes good and bad practice.

This anti-bullying policy will dovetail with the school's behaviour policy. It will be clear what are the sanctions for bullying and in what circumstances they will apply. Strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying.

#### 2. **Aims and definitions**

The aims of this policy and the strategies it contains are;

- To ensure that immediate physical safety is the highest priority.
- To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- To safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying
- To trigger sources of support for the pupil; and
- To apply disciplinary sanctions to the pupil causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi-agency support if necessary.

#### *The nature of bullying*

There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:

- deliberately hurtful (including aggression);
- repeated often, over a period of time; and
- difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, such as those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act (e.g. disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity) or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be grounded in actual or perceived differences between children.

Bullying can take many forms, but the main types are:

- physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings;
- verbal - name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks; and
- indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, cyber-bullying via e-mails, text messages, social media or gaming.;
- homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying.

Name calling, among young children, is the most common direct form of bullying. We recognise that name-calling can be a precursor to other types of bullying behaviour and, if not challenge, can make children reluctant to report more serious issues. We will always intervene early in cases of low-level disruption, to set clear boundaries around unacceptable behaviour and ensure that the situation does not escalate.

### 3. Legal context

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, the Public Order Act 1986 and the Equality Act 2010.

The Headteacher and all staff acknowledge the school's statutory responsibilities as follows:

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014	<p>The proprietor of an independent school must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure that bullying is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy</li> <li>● Take relevant measures to promote Fundamental British Values. Points that are specifically relevant to the Anti-Bullying policy specify that the school must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;</li> <li>○ encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Equality Act 2010	Protected characteristics under the Equality Act are disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. A person is legally protected against direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation if they (i) have, (ii) are associated with someone who has, or (iii) are perceived to have a protected characteristic.

	<p>Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, schools must have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act</li> <li>• advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it</li> <li>• foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</li> </ul>
Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances.</li> <li>• This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in the park or the village centre.</li> </ul>
Education Act 2011	<p>When an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the Headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. In this context it is important to note that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.</li> <li>• Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.</li> </ul>
Malicious Communications Act 1988	<p>Any person who sends an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender, is guilty of a criminal offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient. If a staff member becomes aware that a pupil has acted in this way, they should inform the police.</p>

#### 4. Procedures

**All staff will implement the following responses to combat bullying:**

- through an emphasis within the curriculum – teachers will address anti-bullying awareness as part of PSHE and the school’s wider strategy for social, cultural, spiritual and moral education (see SMSC Policy);
- through strategies to reduce / eradicate bullying; and
- working with victims when other measures are needed.

*Where the school implements strategies that do not resolve the problem, permanent exclusion may be justified in the most serious and persistent cases, particularly where violence is involved.*

Staff responses to incidents of bullying will include;

- never to ignore suspected bullying;
- not to make premature assumptions;
- listen carefully to all accounts;
- adopt a problem-solving approach which moves pupils on from justifying themselves;
- applying appropriate disciplinary sanctions to ensure that all pupils clearly understand that bullying is wrong; and
- follow-up repeatedly, checking that bullying has not resumed.

### **The school will engage pupils by;**

- engaging them in discussions, appropriate to their age and maturity, which make them aware of bullying and its possible consequences;
- ensuring they are aware of what constitutes bullying through the citizenship curriculum and personal, social and health education;
- seeking their views about their perceptions of bullying and determining that they feel safe in the school;
- encouraging them to be proactive about preventing bullying and to come up with their own ideas for making the school a safe environment for anyone who walks into it, with particular reference to protected characteristics
- ensuring that all pupils understand how they can contribute to preventing bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders
- providing them with opportunities to talk to staff about issues which may trouble them or where they may feel at risk.

### **Curricular approaches to bullying**

The curriculum will be used to:

- raise awareness among pupils about the injustice of bullying;
- increase understanding for victims, and help build an anti-bullying ethos within the school;
- openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance-related difference, as per the Equalities and Cohesion Policy, and make it clear that prejudice-based language is never acceptable;
- teach pupils how constructively to manage their relationships with others;
- provide opportunities for co-operative group work; and
- provide a weekly circle time in order to;
  - create a safe space to explore issues of concern
  - explore relationships with adults and peers
  - enhance effective communication between pupils
  - affirm the strengths and enhance the self-esteem of each pupil.

### **Signs to look for in the playground**

- 'mock' blows or kicks which do not connect - or do so only softly;
- taking turns at being on top - or chasing the other;
- pupils who frown or look unhappy or angry;
- try to move away from the aggressor;
- do not take turns, the aggressor remaining dominant throughout; or
- attract other pupils' attention.

### **School staff will work with parents**

Staff will inform parents of the anti-bullying ethos within The New Forest Small School: ;

- through regular consultation and communication;
- by providing information about the nature and effects of bullying, by means of posters displayed in the school and information about the possible consequences of their children bringing valuable items to school;
- through ensuring that all parents are aware that the school does not tolerate bullying behaviour;
- through providing parents with the mechanisms to bring instances of alleged bullying to the attention of the head teacher and other staff.

### **In the event of an allegation of bullying, we shall ensure good practice through;**

- recognising that the parent may be angry and upset;
- keeping an open mind about the allegation;
- remaining calm and seek understanding;
- making clear that the school does care and that something will be done; and
- explaining the school policy, making sure all procedures are followed
- making parents aware that they may complement the school on the ways in which we tackle bullying, e.g. by reinforcing good behaviour at home.

### **Staff will:**

- ask for details and record the information;
- make a further appointment to explain actions and find out if it has stopped;
- follow up the incident to ensure that appropriate action has been taken and that the school policy has been implemented; and
- report their findings to parents.

### **Tackling bullying beyond the classroom: a whole-school approach**

The New Forest Small School aims to create an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. That culture extends beyond the classroom to the corridors, the playground, and beyond the school gates including travel to and from school. We have set out clear guidelines for managing behaviour during breaks and lunchtimes in our separate Behaviour Policy.

Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are

reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest. All staff are involved in ensuring that pupils feel safe at, and on the way to and from, school.

*Some claims of bullying may turn out to be false or exaggerated. However, whatever the victim's previous history, all claims of bullying will be treated seriously and not dismissed without further enquiries being made.*

### **Bullying which occurs outside school premises**

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

While school staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

### **Recording and reporting**

#### **The school will;**

- record all instances of alleged bullying and note the outcome to any investigation;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies;
- demonstrate that the responses to and decisions made about any parental complaint are defensible.

### **Support for pupils who are, or have been, bullied**

We acknowledge our responsibility to support children who are bullied, or have been bullied in previous educational settings, and make appropriate provision for a child's needs. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include:

- a quiet word from a teacher that knows the pupil well,
- asking the Designated Safeguarding Lead to provide support
- providing or arranging formal counselling
- engaging with parents
- referring to local authority children's services
- completing a Common Assessment Framework
- referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

### **Safeguarding children: working with external services**

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the school staff should discuss with the school's Designated

Safeguarding Lead and report their concerns to their local authority children's social care and work with them to take appropriate action.

However, external support can be given to pupils whether or not it is deemed a child protection concern. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

### **Monitoring and reviewing**

The school will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and review it every two years, or earlier if a serious incident arises.

Other linked policies include:

Equalities and Cohesion Policy  
Behaviour Policy  
Staff Conduct Policy  
Safeguarding Policy  
Child Protection Policy

### **Further information and guidance**

A long list of external organisations that can provide expert support is included in the Department for Education guide *Preventing and tackling bullying* (2017):

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/623895/Preventing\\_and\\_tackling\\_bullying\\_advice.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf)

In particular, all staff should be aware of the following:

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

The ABA has also put together a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools and young people from the anti-bullying sector which can be accessed here.

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/choosing-anti-bullying-tools>

## Appendix A

**The New Forest Small School will make information available to parents and their children about what they can do to deal with any incidents of bullying;**

### Information for pupils

- tell a teacher or another adult in your school
- tell your family
- if you are scared to tell an adult by yourself, ask a friend to come with you
- keep speaking up until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying

When you are talking to an adult about bullying, be clear about

- what has happened to you
- how often it has happened
- who was involved
- who saw what was happening
- where it happened
- what you have done about it already

### Information for parents

**Bullying behaviour includes:**

- name calling and nasty teasing
- threats and extortion
- physical violence
- damage to belongings
- leaving pupils out of social activities deliberately and frequently
- spreading malicious rumours

**Parents and families have an important part to play in helping the school deal with bullying.**

**First,** discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

**Second,** ask to see the school's anti-bullying policy.

**Third**, watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Common symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability. It can be helpful to ask questions about progress and friends at school; how break times and lunchtimes are spent; and whether your child is facing problems or difficulties at school. Don't dismiss negative signs. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

***If your child has been bullied:***

1. calmly talk to your child about it
2. make a note of what your child says - particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened
3. reassure your child that telling you about the bullying was the right thing to do
4. explain that any further incidents should be reported to the proprietor immediately
5. make an appointment to see the proprietor
6. explain to the proprietor the problems your child is experiencing

**Talking to the proprietor about bullying**

1. try and stay calm - bear in mind that the proprietor may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
2. be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened - give dates, places and names of other children involved
3. make a note of what action the school intends to take
4. ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school
5. stay in touch with the school - let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue

If you think your concerns are not being addressed:

- check the school's anti-bullying policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed
- discuss your concerns with the school's proprietor, keeping a record of the meeting

**If your child is bullying other children**

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents are not aware. Children sometimes bully others because:

- they don't know it is wrong
- they are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family they admire
- they haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends
- their friends encourage them to bully
- they are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings

To stop your child bullying others:

- talk to your child, explaining that bullying is unacceptable and makes others unhappy

- discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- show your child how to join in with other children without bullying
- make an appointment to see your child's class teacher to explain the problems your child is experiencing
- regularly check with your child how things are going at school, give your child lots of praise and encouragement when they are co-operative or kind to other people