



ST EGWIN'S C.E. MIDDLE SCHOOL

Anti-bullying Policy

Date – October 2020

Review date – October 2022

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Statement of intent

St Egwin's CE Middle School believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines a number of legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the school's Behavioural Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents/carers and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero tolerance policy for bullying at **St Egwin's CE Middle School**.

Signed by:

-  _____

Headteacher

15-10-20 _____

-  _____

Chair of governors

15-10-20 _____

Review date: August 2022

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation, including:

Education and Inspections Act 2006
Equality Act 2010
Children Act 1989
Protection from Harassment Act 1997
Malicious Communications Act 1988
Public Order Act 1986
Communications Act 2003
Human Rights Act 1998
Crime and Disorder Act 1998
Education Act 2011

1.1. This policy has been written in accordance with DfE advice, including, but not limited to:

DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (2017)

1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school's:

- Behaviour Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Equalities Policy

2. Definition

1.3. For the purpose of this policy, bullying is defined as **persistent behaviour** by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

1.4. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

1.5. Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the target of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Pupils who are adopted or looked after (CLA).
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.

3. Types of bullying

1.6. Many different kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or special educational needs are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

1.7. Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (Cyber)

1.8. **Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

1.9. **Homophobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

1.10 **Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

1.11 **Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

1.12 **Sexual bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

4. Cyberbullying

4.1 Cyberbullying may be defined as ‘the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children and adults may be reluctant to admit to being the victims of cyberbullying’. It can take a number of different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or ‘cyber-stalking’ (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), sexting (e.g sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, primarily between mobile phones) vilification/defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information/images and ‘trolling’ (abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online). It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

4.2 However it differs from other forms of bullying in several significant ways:

by facilitating a far more extreme invasion of personal space. Cyberbullying can take place at any time and intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe and personal.

the potential for anonymity on the part of the bully. This can be extremely distressing for the victim

the potential for the bully to play very rapidly to a larger audience so the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying.

through the knowledge that the data is in the world-wide domain, disproportionately amplifying the negative effect on the victim, even though the bully may feel his / her actual actions had been no worse than conventional forms of bullying

the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages as more people get drawn in as accessories. By passing on a humiliating picture or message a bystander becomes an accessory to the bullying.

- 4.1. the profile of the bully and target can be different to other forms of bullying as cyberbullying can take place between peers and across generations. Teachers can be victims and age and size are not important.
- 4.2. many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence so it is important the victim saves the information.

4.3 Guidance for staff

If you suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below:

Mobile Phones

- Ask the pupil to show you the mobile phone unless it is an inappropriate image in which case you should seek advice from a DSL)
- Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names
- CPOMS it and forward to DSL, Key Stage Coordinator and form tutor
- Tell the pupil to save the message/image

Computers

- Ask the pupil to get up on-screen the material in question (unless it is of inappropriate images in which case you should seek advice from a DSL)
- Ask the pupil to save the material
- Normal procedures to interview pupils and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.

4.4 Guidance for Pupils (We have a child-friendly version of the policy)

If you believe you or someone else is the victim of cyber-bullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible. This person could be a parent/guardian, or a member of staff. We encourage pupils to report these issues to parents

- Do not answer abusive messages but save them and report them
 - Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your parents/carers or a member of staff at school (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber-bullying)
 - Do not give out personal details or contact information without the permission of a parent/guardian (personal data)
 - Be careful who you allow to become a friend online and think about what information you want them to see.
 - Protect your password. Do not share it with anyone else and change it regularly
 - Always log off from the computer when you have finished or if you leave the computer for any reason.
 - Always put the privacy filters on to the sites you use. If you are not sure how to do this, ask a teacher or your parents.
 - Never reply to abusive e-mails
 - Never reply to someone you do not know
- Always stay in public areas in chat rooms
- The school will deal with cyberbullying in the same way as other bullying. Do not think that because it is online it is different to other forms of bullying.
 - The school will deal with inappropriate use of technology in the same way as other types of inappropriate behaviour and sanctions may be given.

4.5 Guidance for Parents/Carers

It is vital that parents/carers and the school work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying. Parents/carers must play their role and take responsibility for monitoring their child's online life.

- Parents/carers can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously the school takes incidents of cyber-bullying.
- Parents/carers should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyber-bullying.
- If parents/carers believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving the offensive text on their computer or on their child's mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything.

5. Statutory implications

- 5.1 The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 5.2 The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.
- 5.3 Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:
 - Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
 - The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
 - Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.

- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

6. Prevention

- 6.1 The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in our anti bullying policy.
- 6.2 All reported or witnessed instances of bullying in the school are investigated by a member of staff.
- 6.3 Staff encourage pupil co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work.
- 6.4 Bullying is discussed as part of the curriculum, and diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.
- 6.5 Seating arrangements in class will be changed and organised in a way that prevents instances of bullying.
- 6.6 Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities, house activities and vertical tutoring in KS3.
- 6.7** There are spaces available for pupils to go to at lunchtime if they are involved in conflict with their peers, or wish to avoid a bully. **This is far more limited due to COVID restrictions.**
- 6.8 Pupils deemed vulnerable will meet with their **form teacher OR a designated teacher** as deemed necessary to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly.
- 6.9 Form teachers** will offer an ‘open door’ policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.
- 6.9 Vulnerable children when joining the school will be placed carefully.

7. Signs of bullying

7.1 Some of the signs that a pupil may be a victim of bullying include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Asking to be driven to school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Truancy
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill in the morning
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Missing dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

7.2 Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating.

7.3 Pupils who display a significant number of these signs are approached by a member of staff, in order to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.

8. Staff principles

8.1 Prevention is at the forefront of the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

8.2 Staff treat reports of bullying seriously.

8.3 Staff do not ignore signs of suspected bullying.

8.4 Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another is challenged

8.5 Staff take action when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.

8.6 If the member of staff believes the pupil is in serious danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the **Designated Safeguarding Lead** immediately.

8.7 A follow- up will happen following any incidents, to ensure bullying has stopped.

9. Key roles and responsibilities

- 9.1 The **governing board** will evaluate and review this policy to ensure that it is non-discriminatory.
- 9.2 It is the responsibility of all staff to be alert to possible bullying of pupils and to deal with incidents as the highest priority.
- 9.3 The **headteacher** reviews and amends this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience reviews procedures annually.
- 9.4 Staff will record Bullying on CPOMS, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- 9.5 Senior leaders and Key Stage leaders will monitor the data in CPOMS in order to identify any trends in the types of bullying occurring and implement the appropriate measures to tackle it.
- 9.6 Appropriate training for staff members will be provided by the head teacher
- 9.7 The Key Stage Co-ordinator and Assistants correspond and meet with parents/carers where necessary. They also provide a point of contact when more serious bullying incidents occur.
- 9.8 All members of staff ensure that they are alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups.
- 9.9 All staff will avoid gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- 9.10 All staff have a duty to deal with any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.
- 9.11 Parents/carers are advised to inform school if they are concerned that their child may be being bullied or be involved in bullying.
- 9.12 Pupils are advised to inform a member of staff if they witness bullying, or are a victim of bullying.
- 9.13 Pupils are taught not to make counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- 9.14 Pupils are taught to walk away from any dangerous situations and avoid involving other pupils in incidents.

10. Procedures

10.1 Minor incidents are reported to the victim's **form teacher** who investigates the incident, sets appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and uses CPOMS to record the incident and outcome.

10.2 When investigating a bullying incident the following should be used:

- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed, including electronic communication
- If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to a First Aider for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
- A witness is used for serious incidents
- If appropriate, the alleged bully, the victim and witnesses, are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete
- All concerned pupils are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils

10.3 Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic and sexual bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

11 Sanctions

- 11.1 If the member of staff dealing with the incident is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.
- 11.2 The member of staff dealing with the incident informs the pupil of the type of sanction to be used in this instance (detentions, service-based activities, etc.) and future sanctions if the bullying continues. **These sanctions are more limited due to COVID restrictions.**
- 11.3 If possible, the member of staff dealing with the incident will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the bully. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent.
- 11.4 Parents/carers are informed of more serious bullying incidents and what action is being taken.
- 11.5 The Key Stage Co-ordinator informally monitors the pupils involved over the next half-term.

12 Bullying outside of school

- 12.1 The Headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.
- 12.2 The **Headteacher** is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police or the **anti-social behaviour coordinator** of the action taken against a pupil.
- 12.3 If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed.

13 Monitoring and review

- 13.2 This policy is reviewed every **two years**
- 13.3 The scheduled review date for this policy is **October 2022**