



Spring Grove School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This Policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in the EYFS.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At Spring Grove School, our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop his/her full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

Spring Grove School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting Spring Grove School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together.

This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website and on request. It is also communicated to all staff and pupils.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to respect the staff, the school and each other, in return. All forms of bullying at the school is prevented as far as is reasonably practicable and any instances will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action.

This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including those in the EYFS.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

“Bullying may be defined as: *Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally*” (Guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Department of Education)

Bullying involves the wilful abuse of *power*. It is *persistent* and is *personal*. It may take several forms: physical, verbal, emotional, psychological and cyber. It happens at all levels of society amongst both children and adults.

Bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual, verbal (including via email, social media and SMS or other instant messages), and emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours) means. It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are sexist, homophobic, racist, which focus on religion or cultural or family background, special educational needs, disabilities or physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). It may also be unpleasant in other ways.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve everyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.

DEFINITION OF CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying can be defined as “the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others” (Belsey, <http://www.cyberbullying.org/>). It is an aggressive, intentional act carried out repeatedly over time, often against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself.

Cyber-bullying could involve communication by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear or humiliation;
- Posting threatening, abusive, offensive or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube);
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner; or
- Hijacking/ cloning e-mail accounts.
- Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Bebo, Facebook and Myspace, emails and mobile phones used for SMS messages and as cameras.

Advice to children if you think you are being bullied

- Try to ignore the person who is attempting to bully you
- Walk calmly away from the situation if you can, without retaliating
- Tell someone what has happened, even if you have been warned not to
- Remember that there are likely to be others being bullied by the same person and so you will be helping them too by talking about your experience
- Do not blame yourself

Advice to children if you see someone else being bullied

- Make sure that you do not get involved in the bullying as an easy way out of the situation
- Do not ignore it – think how you would feel in the victim’s position
- Remember that bullying doesn’t go away by itself
- Find a teacher and explain what you have seen/heard

Advice on how to try to avoid being bullied

- Be friendly – friends can help you!
- Think positively about yourself
- Don’t make unpleasant remarks about anyone, even if you intend them as a joke

Advice on how to avoid being a bully

- Talk about problems rather than taking them out on someone else
- Try to avoid confrontations – find somewhere to cool down
- Think before you act or speak or *click*: will your words or actions hurt or upset anybody?

THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

At Spring Grove, we always treat bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's social and moral principles, and potentially with its policy on equal opportunities, and will not be tolerated.

Bullying can be so serious that it causes physical, emotional and psychological damage, eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are victims of bullying will be supported. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving.

Bullying which occurs on school trips or outside of the school's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on school premises. Teachers will, where appropriate, discipline pupils for misbehaviour outside school premises and outside school hours.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school;
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- Books, bags, money and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the School Office with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class;
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported/ recorded as appropriate (see below).

BULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We take the following preventative measures in order to ensure that bullying does not become a problem which is associated with Spring Grove School:

Pupils

- All new pupils including our youngest pupils are briefed thoroughly on the school's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished and will be supported;
- We use appropriate assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our PSHE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce messages about community involvement and taking care of each other;
- Other lessons, particularly RS, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by developing social skills and by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable;
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place;

Staff

- Upon induction, all new members of staff are given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to and record allegations of bullying at Spring Grove School. All school staff understand the principles of the school policy, their legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent problems and sources of further support;
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are logged securely on the school network in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored;
- We have a strong and experienced team who support the Headmaster and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and who are alert to possible signs of bullying;
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour;
- The school has the right, and duty, to investigate incidents of bullying involving our pupils which take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips or that otherwise occur outside of school. The school has the right to take disciplinary measures in respect of such acts.

Parents

- We encourage close contact between the Headmaster/Teachers and parents/ guardians, and will always make contact if we are worried about a pupil's well-being; and
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures and all other aspects and results of this anti-bullying policy.

CYBERBULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

For the prevention of cyber-bullying, in addition to the measures described above, Spring Grove School:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its policy for the safe use of the internet/ E-Safety Policy. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use;
- May impose disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet;
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from "friend" lists and sharing personal data;
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe;
- Does not allow the use of mobile phones in classrooms, public areas of the school, or where they may cause annoyance to others; and
- Does not allow the use of cameras/ mobile phone cameras in toilets, washing and changing areas.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

Spring Grove School ensures that all instances of or concerns about bullying and cyberbullying on and away from school premises are easy to report and that they are recorded properly. Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying will be kept in the Headmaster's files, and also on pupil files and files relating to safeguarding where appropriate, in order to enable the school to identify patterns of behaviour and to evaluate the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported, or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved;
- He/she will inform an appropriate member of staff as soon as possible;
- The victim will be interviewed on his/ her own (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and asked to write an account of events;
- The bully/ bullies, and all others who were involved, will immediately be interviewed individually (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and asked to write an account of events;
- The incident should be recorded on a school incident form and signed and dated before it is given to the Headmaster who is responsible for keeping all records of bullying and other serious disciplinary offences, securely in a locked cabinet in his/ her office. If it is not practicable to use the form, the incident must still be written down, signed and dated, and held securely with the Headmaster;
- The Headmaster will inform the teachers of both the bully/ bullies and the victim[s] as soon as possible;
- The victim will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the staff, separately from the alleged perpetrator. He/ she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself. It will be made clear to him/ her why revenge or retaliation is inappropriate;
- The alleged bully will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the staff, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/ her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/ she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour. The school's Behaviour Management Policy may also be invoked. Sanctions under the Behaviour Management Policy might include, for example, detention, withdrawal of privileges or suspension from school. The school may exclude a pupil, either temporarily or permanently, in cases of severe or persistent bullying or in the event that the support put in place for the bully does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level.
- The parents/ guardians of all parties will be informed and may be invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support will be sought;
- A way forward, including where appropriate disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be determined, and where possible agreed with all parties. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for pupils who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with disciplinary measures in accordance with the school's Behaviour Management Policy if appropriate;

- As part of this process, a meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, may be convened to help develop a strategy which enables all concerned to close the episode;
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place and put on record;
- In very serious cases, and only after the Headmaster has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to Social Services. However, in many cases it will be possible to resolve such issues internally under this policy and the school's Behaviour Management Policy

NURSERY/EYFS CHILDREN

Even the youngest children at Spring Grove School are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They are encouraged to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect others' possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity. Mrs Carol Clarke, the Head of Early Years, is in charge of the management of behaviour in the Nursery Department.

We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions in the Nursery Department; but sometimes we may remove a treat for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see the Headmaster, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action; but such instances are rare. Parents are always informed via a note in the homework diary when any sanction or reproof is needed, and in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, they will be invited into the school to discuss the situation with their child's teacher and the Head of Early Years, to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.

Copies of our Behaviour Management Policy for EYFS children are available upon request for parents and their children to read together.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our Complaints Procedure (which is published on our website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of EYES children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted, if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled (The Complaints Procedure explains how to complain to Ofsted).

Bill Jones
Headmaster
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