



Foremarke Hall

Repton Preparatory School

Policy Statement

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy is a whole school policy including EYFS. It applies to all pupils from Early Years to Year 8 and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Cyber Bullying policy
- Portable Electronic Devices Policy
- Behaviour Management policy
- Boarding Handbook
- Safeguarding Policy
- Searching Pupils and their Possessions Policy

Introduction: Aims and Objectives

Foremarke Hall stands against bullying in two ways:

- By sustaining a general ethos that discourages bullying by providing positive alternatives and encourages the children to discuss the issues concerned in an open manner.
- By having clear procedures, understood by children, staff and parents that are followed when bullying is reported.

This policy has been written in accordance with DfE guidelines “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” October 2014.

Definition

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school’s first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case. Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for ‘virtual’ bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

The Nature and Seriousness of Bullying

Victims are often chosen because they are in some way different and/or vulnerable. Children more at risk include those who: lack close friends, read social cues less well, are shy, come from over protective families, are in a minority racial group, have special educational needs, have a physical impairment or disability.

Children are often loathed to 'tell' if they know that the 'bully' will automatically be punished. They want the situation resolved permanently. Just punishing a bully could make the situation worse.

In dealing with incidents of bullying the children should be enlisted to help devise solutions, not just make the allegations. They need to have a sense that they are part of the answer, not that everything is off-loaded onto the staff for them to 'do something'.

It is common to speak of 'victim' and 'bully' but it is very important for family and school to remember that experience shows that very often the allocation of blame these terms presume is far from simple. It is especially important in such an emotive matter as bullying to keep an open mind as the investigation begins, to rely on facts not rumours and to be mindful of the fact that it may be never possible actually to 'prove' every last detail about what did or did not happen.

Procedure to Follow

Bullying thrives in 'darkness' but withers in the 'light'. It is therefore essential that those children who feel they are being bullied tell an adult, a teacher or their parents. It is essential that concerned parents contact the school **immediately**. It is immeasurably more difficult for staff and parents to address bullying if they have not been informed of incidents from the onset. Though the matter will clearly be emotive, it is very helpful to staff if discussions with parents are measured, reasonable and supportive. It is imperative that no presumption of blame is made. As a school we make every effort to work positively with 'the bully', 'the victim', parents of both parties and staff to ensure that such behaviour is not repeated or condoned.

Upon receiving a report of bullying the following action will be taken:

1. An initial 'Possible Bullying Report' is to be completed by the person who has had the situation reported to them and handed to the Assistant Head (Pastoral) (Y5-8) or the Head of Lower School (Y3-4) Head of Pre-Prep (EYFS, Y1-2) or to the Head of Boarding if the incident has taken place in boarding time.
2. A member of staff will be appointed by the person to whom the bullying was reported as a mediator to deal specifically with the allegation. This will usually be the Assistant Head Pastoral or may be the Year Group Head, the form teacher or another member of staff, but will certainly be someone with whom the child is comfortable.
3. *Within one week* of the initial report or allegation, the mediator will gather information by talking one-to-one with all parties involved in the incident(s). It is vital that no reference is made to one child or a group of children as 'the bully' or 'the victim'. The mediator will then inform the parents or house-parents of all the children involved *if bullying has taken place*, ensuring that they have a copy of this policy and that they are clear about the steps the school will be taking.
4. The mediator will decide whether it is appropriate to sit down and talk with both 'victim' and 'bully' together, and in doing so ask them to express their own views to each other and maybe agree an appropriate written plan of action, which would be communicated to all parties concerned (other involved staff, parents, etc.)
5. Follow-up meetings may take place, as appropriate, to monitor progress.
6. Additional meetings will be arranged as necessary. The mediator is responsible for keeping a 'watching brief' on the situation thereafter.

7. The Headmaster is to be kept informed by the mediator throughout the process. A written record of all the above should be kept by the mediator using the forms provided, with copies being made available for the parents and colleagues concerned. The record, which is to be kept in the confidential pupil files of the children concerned, should include personal accounts from children old enough to express themselves in writing as appropriate.
8. In addition all incidents should be recorded in the pastoral section of School Manager which is monitored by the Assistant Head Pastoral to ensure there are no worrying trends. A Bullying log is kept by the Assistant Head Pastoral.

All records will be treated as confidential and in addition to notes kept in individual confidential pupil files will also be retained in a 'bullying reports' file kept in the school office.

Raising Pupil Awareness

- Pupils in Years 1 to 8 cover a topic on bullying relevant to their age and stage of learning in PSHE lessons.
- In the Pre Prep children discuss 'appropriate behaviour towards others' throughout the curriculum. In addition to this, an annual 'Anti-Bullying Week' takes place each November. This week focuses on the issues surrounding bullying, through external speakers, assemblies and competitions.
- During this week the school carries out its annual bullying survey which is used to track trends and attitudes and inform staff where bullying has taken place. Lower School children take part in the competitions and the whole school dress in blue on Blue Friday.

Raising Staff Awareness

- Weekly Safeguarding emails are sent to all staff and these may contain issues to raise awareness of Bullying.
- Anti - Bullying week raises awareness of bullying in the whole school community.
- The Anti-Bullying questionnaire, completed annually, ensures that Form Tutors are kept up to date with current trends and issues and ensures they are aware of concerns within their form.
- The annual Safeguarding update to all staff covers issues of bullying.

Bullying and the Behaviour Management Policy

The Anti-Bullying policy dovetails with the school's Behaviour Management policy.

Review

Last revised Summer 2016

Next review Summer 2018