Caldecote Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

April 2020

1.   Introduction

Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood.
By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, Caldecote School can help to create a safe, disciplined environment where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

This policy has therefore been produced to help prevent, identify and respond to bullying.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Positive Behaviour Policy.

1.1.   Rationale

It is the basic entitlement of all pupils at Caldecote School that they receive an education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse.

Education is a compulsory factor in our society and therefore it is our responsibility at the School to ensure that it takes place in an atmosphere which is caring and protective. We have this responsibility towards the pupils and also towards parents; that they may send their children to our school with the confident knowledge that the children will be protected from bullies.

1.2.   What is Bullying? Our 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, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care 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 the school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; staff 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.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

1.3   Bullying Forms and Types

Research has identified various different types of bullying which reflect different causations. Bullying behaviour across all types of bullying can represent itself in a number of different forms. Children and young people can be bullied in ways that are:

Physical – by being punched, pushed or hurt; made to give up money or belongings; having property, clothes or belongings damaged; being forced to do something they don't want to do.

Verbal – by being teased in a nasty way; called gay (whether or not it's true); insulted about their race, religion or culture; called names in other ways or having offensive comments directed at them.

Indirect – by having nasty stories told about them; being left out, ignored or excluded from groups.

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 Education Act 2011 states that 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.

Refer to the Acceptable Internet use Policy and Online Safety Policy in conjunction with this policy.

2. Bullies and Victims

2.1 Definition of a Bully

The school recognises that bullying is a complex type of behaviour occurring between individuals and groups. Different roles within bullying situations can be identified and include:

- the ring-leader, the person who through their position of power can direct bullying activity

- assistants/associates, who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring-leader)

- reinforcers, who give positive feedback to the bully, perhaps by smiling or laughing

- outsiders/bystanders, who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour

- defenders, who try and intervene to stop the bullying or comfort pupils who experience bullying.

Some pupils can adopt different roles at different times, or at the same time (a bullied pupil might be bullying another pupil at the same time, or a seeming 'reinforcer' might become a 'defender' when the ringleader is not around).

2.2 Why Pupils May Bully

The school recognises the fact that pupils may bully for a variety of reasons. Recognising why pupils bully supports the school in identifying those who are at risk of engaging with this type of behaviour. This enables the school to intervene at an early stage to prevent the likelihood of bullying occurring and to respond promptly to incidents of bullying as they occur. Understanding the emotional health and well-being of pupils who bully is key to selecting the right responsive strategies and to engaging the right external support. Possible reasons for why some pupils may engage in bullying include:

- struggling to cope with a difficult personal situation e.g. bereavement, changes in family circumstances

- liking the feeling of power and using bullying behaviour to get their own way

- having a temperament that may be aggressive, quick tempered or jealous

- having been abused or bullied in some way

- feeling frustrated, insecure, inadequate, humiliated

- finding it difficult to socialise and make friends

- being overly self-orientated (possibly displaying good self-esteem) and finding it difficult to empathise with the needs of others

- being unable to resist negative peer pressure

- being under pressure to succeed at all costs

2.3 Signs and Symptoms of being Bullied

The following physical signs and behaviour could indicate other problems but bullying will be considered as a possibility:

- being frightened of walking to or from school

- losing self-confidence and self-esteem

- being frightened to say what's wrong

- developing unexplained cuts, bruises and other injuries

- unwilling to go to school, development of school phobia and unusual patterns of non attendance

- failing to achieve potential in school work

- becoming withdrawn, nervous and losing concentration

- becoming isolated and disengaged from other pupils

- developing changes in physical behaviour such as stammering and nervous ticks

- regularly having books or clothes destroyed

- having possessions go 'missing' or 'lost' including packed lunch and money

- starting to steal money (to pay the perpetrator)

- becoming easily distressed, disruptive or aggressive

- developing problems with eating and food

- running away

- developing sleep problems and having nightmares

- developing suicidal thoughts or attempting suicide

Where pupils are exhibiting extreme signs of distress and changes in behaviour, the school will liaise with parents/carers and where appropriate, relevant health professionals and agencies such as family workers, the G.P. and the Mental Health Service.

3. Prevention

We have created an ethos of positive 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 dining hall, the playground, and beyond the school gates including travel to and from school and trips. 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.

3.1   Identifying and Reporting Incidents of Bullying

Our response to bullying does not start at the point at which a pupil has been bullied. We proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. The school has a rigorous behaviour reporting system (details in Positive Behaviour Policy) in which behaviour logs are regularly analysed for patterns which may identify bullying.

Staff will talk to pupils about issues of difference, perhaps in lessons, through dedicated events or projects, or through assemblies. Staff themselves will be able to determine what will work best for pupils, depending on the particular issues they need to address.

The school encourages the whole school community to report all incidents of bullying, including pupils who have experienced being bullied and bystanders who have witnessed an incident.

3.2   Successful Implementation of this Anti-Bullying Policy

To successfully implement this policy, the school intends to:

- involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the pupil, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home

- involve pupils. All pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders

- regularly evaluate and update their approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers

- implement disciplinary sanctions (refer to Positive Behaviour Policy). The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable

- openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference. Also, pupils with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. We also teach pupils that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable

- use specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems. We draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with a proven track record and/or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying

- provide effective staff training. Our anti-bullying policy is most effective when all school staff understand the principles and purpose of the policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support. We invest in specialised skills to help staff understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) pupils

- work with the wider community such as the police and children's services to agree a clearly understood approach to cases where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed.

- make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying

- create an inclusive environment. We strive to create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination.

- celebrate success. Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue.

- raise the profile of bullying and the effect it has on children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing, life chances and achievement

- make clear to everyone within our whole school community that no form of bullying is acceptable and to prevent, de-escalate and /or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour

- encourage and equip the whole school community to report all incidents of bullying, including those who have experienced being bullied and bystanders who have witnessed an incident

- respond quickly and effectively to incidents of bullying within the overall positive behaviour management policy

- safeguard and offer support and comfort to pupils who have been bullied

- apply reasonable and proportionate disciplinary sanctions to pupils causing the bullying

- support pupils who are bullying in recognising the seriousness of their behaviour and to offer support and counselling to help them to readjust their behaviour

- provide longer term support to promote the self-esteem of those who have been bullied to reduce the likelihood of long term damage and also to address the emotional and behavioural needs of pupils who bully others to reduce the likelihood of repeated incidents of bullying

- identify vulnerable pupils and those critical moments and transitions when they may become vulnerable, and provide additional support/safeguarding when needed

- ensure all staff are trained and supported and model positive relationships

- regularly monitor incidents of bullying and harassment and report to the governing body

- deliver lessons on a regular basis as part of the Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum that includes learning about bullying, discrimination and personal safety. Online safety is also taught as part of the Computing curriculum

- offer support to parents on how to help their children engage safely and responsibly with social media, through parents' information evenings, advice in the school newsletter and signposting to other sources of support and advice. Creating a good school- parent relationship helps create an atmosphere of trust that encourages parents to raise concerns in an appropriate manner

4.   Guidelines for Staff

- Once bullying has been identified it is dealt with swiftly. When it occurs, all staff are consistent in their approach

- Pupils are supervised well at all times

- All staff are made aware of pupils who need extra support and/or monitoring in and around school

- Staff to encourage pupils to "tell" the nearest adult of their problems and not to retaliate. Let them know that they are cared for and if there is anything or anyone troubling them that they must inform a member of staff

- Some pupils are paired up with a trusted member of staff who may 'check in' on that child regularly

- Staff are always prepared to listen to any complaints concerning harm or harassment, investigating them thoroughly without appearing to take side.

5.   Intervention

Immediate actions following report or identification of bullying:

- calm the situation as quickly as possible removing victim and/or bully from the scene

- listen carefully to all pupil's accounts separately and record all of the facts in the behaviour log book

- offer immediate support to any distressed pupils

- use of reasonable force can be used if necessary to keep pupils safe (see Details in Positive Behaviour Policy)

- inform the SLT of the incident and action taken

- ensure that the incident is followed up and support offered to both victim and bully where needed.

- ensure Positive Behaviour Policy 'Consequences and Sanctions' are followed

5.2   Support for Pupils who are Bullied

In all cases the school has a responsibility to support pupils who are bullied and make appropriate provision for a pupil'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 pastoral team to provide support, providing formal counselling, engaging with parents, referring to local authority children's services, completing a Common Assessment Framework or referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

5.3 Where Bullying has a Severe Impact

In some circumstances, the consequences of bullying may lead to a child or young person experiencing pronounced social, emotional or mental health difficulties. In this case, we would ensure we made appropriate provision for a pupil's short term needs, including setting out what actions we are taking when bullying has had a serious impact on a pupil's ability to learn. If the bullying leads to persistent, long-lasting difficulties that cause the child or young person to have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age, then we would consider whether the pupil would benefit from being assessed for SEN**.**

6.   Bullying of Staff

It is equally important that we make it clear that bullying of staff, whether by pupils, parents or colleagues, is unacceptable, including via social media or email.

The SLT, teachers, school staff, parents and pupils all have rights and responsibilities in relation to bullying and aim to work together to create an environment in which pupils can learn and develop and staff can have fulfilling careers free from harassment and bullying.

Refer to our Persistent Complaints and Harassment Policy for more details.

7. Evaluating our Policy

We will undertake an Annual Bullying Review drawing together the views and perceptions of pupils, staff and feedback from parents. This review will in particular examine and assess any reports that have been made in the year and inform any learning that can be adopted into day to day practice. The review will be circulated through our Newsletters and also be presented at the Governors Pupil, Safeguarding and Curriculum Committee.

We will also evaluate the success of this policy using the following indicators:
- The number of incidents reported to staff over a given period
- Pupils' perceptions of bullying in school through structured discussions in class time.
- The number of days of absence which are thought to arise as a consequence of bullying.
- We will investigate patterns of absence to ensure that pupils are not taking unnecessary days off school due to fear of being bullied.
- The number of complaints and compliments that we receive from parents.
- From the comments made by visitors and other people connected with the school.

7.   Policy Review

The Policy statement will be reviewed in line with the rolling programme of Policy reviews.

Headteacher: …….………………………………   Date:………………………

Chair of Governors: ………..………………….….   Date: ……………………..