



# FOREST SCHOOL

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Whole School including EYFS

**v1.1**

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## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At Forest School, we place the highest possible premium on three broad values which underpin The Forest Community:

- Respect for self
- Respect for others
- Respect for the school

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.

Forest School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/ guardians have an important role in supporting Forest 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, on request. It is also communicated to all staff and pupils via the intranet and staff and pupil dashboards.

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 are unacceptable at our school 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 Early Years Foundation Stage and applies to actions undertaken both inside, and outside of the School.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with;

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Behaviour Policy

School rules

Learning Support Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

E-Safety Policy

Responsible Use Policy for Pupils

Complaints Procedure

Safe Handling – searches, contact and restraints policy

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying can 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 for Education).

Put another way, 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 intimidating, often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim whether that be a physical, psychological or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator having the capacity to socially isolate the victim.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities (SEND), or because of a child's familial circumstances, such as they are adopted, in care or that they have caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Further information on peer on peer abuse can be found within the Schools Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents. Further information can be found:

[DfE guidance; Prevent and Tackling Bullying July 2017](#)

[DfE guidance Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)

[Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff \(2014\)](#)

## Prejudice-Based Bullying

Prejudice-based bullying is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice based on an individual's actual or perceived identity; it can be based on characteristics unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

## 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 communications 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.

The School acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take many different forms including: cyber-stalking, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images, encouraging derogative comments on online platforms, upskirting and sexting.

The School has a role to play in teaching pupils about the underpinning knowledge and behaviours that can help them to navigate the online world safely and confidently regardless of the device, platform or app. In taking this forward, the School has regard to the [DfE's non-statutory guidance on Teaching online safety in school \(updated June 2019\)](#).

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide 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. Please read the Safe Handling - searches, contact and restraint policy for more details

## THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

At Forest School 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.

In the context of [Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(July 2017\)](#) , the School has a duty to take action in the case of bullying involving Forest School pupils, even when it takes place beyond the confines of the School or the School day (Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006). This includes any such behaviour taking place online.

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 that is proven 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 Medical Centre 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).

## VULNERABLE PUPILS

Bullying can happen to all children and young people and it can affect their social, mental and emotional health. School staff should support all pupils who are bullied. This means being alert to the effect any form of bullying can have and being especially alert to where it may have a severe impact. There is evidence to suggest that pupils that are badly bullied in school are more likely to be bullied out of school, for instance either on their way to or from school or through cyberbullying.

Some pupils are more likely to be the target of bullying because of the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. For example those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem, those with caring responsibilities, or LGBTQ+ pupils may be more likely to experience bullying because of difference.

Children in care that are frequently on the move may also be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer.

These young people are often the same young people who might need greater support to deal with the impact of bullying, for example those who are going through a personal or family crisis. In addition children with special educational needs or disabilities can often lack the social or communication skills to report such incidents so it is important that staff are alert to the potential bullying this group faces and that their mechanisms for reporting are accessible to all.

The impact of bullying can be severe because of the nature and extent of the bullying or because it is combined with other factors such as those mentioned above that also affect the social, mental and emotional health of the pupil.

## BULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We take the following preventative measures in order to ensure that bullying does not become a problem at Forest School:

### **Pupils**

- All new 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 Tutor Programme and Wellbeing Education provision (formerly known as PSHEE) 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. Projects, stories, literature, with discussions of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-

based language;

- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place;
- All pupils are given clear advice about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.
- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private. This helpline is called Childline and the phone number is 0800 1111;
- We provide leadership training to our Head Boys/ Girls and their team of Prefects/ house captains/senior pupils which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils.

### **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 Forest 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;
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of Teachers, Tutors, Heads of House and Heads of Section who support the Deputy Head Pastoral and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and who are alert to possible signs of bullying;
- Our Deputy Head Pastoral and Heads of Section give support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies. Inset sessions are held regularly, using outside experts;
- Our trained School Counsellor and Place2Be organisation are an important part of our pastoral support service, providing specialist skills of assessment and counselling. They are available to give confidential advice and counselling support to pupils who can refer themselves when they have social, emotional or behavioural concerns. On occasion, a member of staff team may refer a pupil to them as appropriate;
- The Chaplain can provide confidential advice and seek to encourage the development of tolerance, understanding and respect for others in a multi-faith community;
- 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.
- Staff will always consider the motive behind bullying behaviour and whether it raises any concerns for the welfare of the perpetrator. If staff reasonably suspect that a pupil may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, they should follow the procedures set out in the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and discuss their concerns with the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay.

## Parents

- This policy is readily available on the School's website so that they are clear on the School's approach to bullying and what to do if their child experiences bullying;
- We encourage close contact between the Heads of House, Teachers, Tutors and parents/ guardians, and will always make contact if we are worried about a pupil's well-being;
- If parents know or suspect that their child, or another pupil, is being bullied, they should contact the School without delay. All concerns will be taken seriously;
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures and all other aspects and implementation of this anti-bullying policy.

## CYBERBULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

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

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its Responsible Use of IT and 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;
- Issues all pupils with their own personal school email address.
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHEE 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.

Forest School recognises and aims to follow the DfE document [Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff \(2014\)](#), and ['Teaching Online Safety in School'](#) DfE, June 2019

## PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

Forest 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 including any outcomes will be kept 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 alleged bullying is reported, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The School will investigate all concerns fully.
- 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. The member of staff must ensure that all pupils concerned are safe. If the member of staff has any concerns that this is not the case, they must escort relevant pupils to the Head of Section without delay.
- Advice to colleagues on suitable responses may be sought from any senior member of staff. Safeguarding will be considered as a priority.
- A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Please refer to Forest School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Pupils are encouraged to report incidents immediately to a teacher.
- If the teacher deems the incident to be a minor, one-off occurrence s/he may decide to deal with the matter directly. However, in all cases, the incident must be recorded and reported to relevant colleagues:
  - In the Preparatory School (PS) to the Form Teacher or Anna Manlangit – Deputy Head Pastoral.
  - In the Senior School, relevant House Tutors and Heads of House.

## SENIOR SCHOOL

- In cases that require further investigation, all parties should be interviewed by Tutor or Heads of House or Head of Section (dependant on the seriousness of the allegation) individually. These records must be kept with the relevant School office.
- Heads of Section will co-ordinate investigations involving pupils in different houses/year groups. Heads of House will co-ordinate investigations which only involve pupils in their House and will report to the relevant Head of Section.
- The situation must continue to be monitored by the teacher responsible (Head of Section or Head of House) for as long as is necessary to prevent further incidents. We recognise the need for on-going support for all pupil(s) involved.
- Upon completion of initial information-gathering, parents will be informed of the ongoing investigation.
- The investigation will continue until the 'lead' teacher, i.e. Head of House or Head of Section has attained all necessary information.
- Allegations of bullying can be complicated and multi-layered and not all cases will be proven or indeed constitute clear evidence of bullying. In such cases, ongoing support will be provided with clear communication to parents.

Upon completion of an investigation, a way forward, including where appropriate disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be determined, and where possible agreed with all parties.

Parents will be updated at this stage and in some cases will be asked to attend school to meet with relevant staff. 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 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 – likely to include very severe, persistent and/or repeated instances of bullying - the Head of Section will refer the matter to the Deputy Head Pastoral who will decide upon next steps, for example Temporary Exclusion or referral to the Warden who – in turn - may decide to convene a Determination Meeting.
- The Deputy Head Pastoral may, at any time and on behalf of the school, take advice from social services and/or the Safer Schools Police Officer in certain cases.
- Where bullying outside School is reported to school staff, it should be immediately reported to the Head of Section who will then investigate and follow the same steps outlined above.
- The school has the authority to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

## CRIMINAL LAW

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, 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, and the Public Order Act 1986.

The school have excellent links with Social Services and the Safer Schools Police Team with whom we speak to and attain advice on a regular basis.

## RECORDING

### SENIOR SCHOOL

Concerns will be recorded via a file note which will be stored electronically. The sanctions log will record all incidents that resulted in a sanction being implemented. This is reviewed regularly by the Deputy Head Pastoral and presented to the Leadership Team on a termly basis. This is vital in enabling us to identify and respond to patterns. We undertake to take action when necessary to reduce the risk of bullying at times and places when it seems to be most likely.

### PREPARATORY SCHOOL

All incidents will be recorded by the Form Teacher, and if bullying is suspected will raise the issue with the Deputy Head Pastoral (Prep). Sanction logs are updated, retained and reviewed to enable patterns to be identified for the purposes of monitoring the situation.

Both the bullied and the alleged bully will be interviewed and a record made.

Except for minor incidents parents of all parties will be informed and asked into School to discuss the matter and support the agreed course of action.

The Head of the Preparatory School is kept informed of all concerns whenever necessary and always through weekly meetings with the Deputy Head Pastoral (Prep).

## EYFS CHILDREN

Even the youngest children at Forest 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. The Head of Pre-Prep is in charge of the management of behaviour in the Reception Classes.

We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions in the Reception Classroom; but sometimes we may remove a treat for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see the Head of Prep, 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 Pre-Prep or the Head of the Preparatory School to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.

## RAISING AWARENESS

Staff are given training so that the principles of the policy above are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support are identified. Where necessary, staff are given particular training relating to the needs of pupils with particular educational needs or disabilities such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Where necessary staff are also trained in other needs such as mental health, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils and staff.

Staff are made aware that those with disabilities or special educational needs are more vulnerable to bullying and therefore monitor accordingly.

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/> Anti-Bullying alliance offers advice and guidance to staff.

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Parents 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 or the Independent Schools Inspectorate, if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled.