

THE FOREST SCHOOL

POLICY TITLE	Anti-Bullying Policy
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICY	SLT: Pupil behaviour

WHO IS GOVERNED BY THIS POLICY

All pupils and staff

POINT (S) OF CONTACT

SLT: Pupil behaviour, Community Leaders

LINKS TO THE FOLLOWING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Safeguarding, Child Protection, Behaviour, Inclusion, Diversity and Equality, Equal Opportunities

MAIN ECM OUTCOMES (EVERY CHILD MATTERS)

Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve

INTRODUCTION

Bullying is **not** an inevitable part of school life, nor is it a necessary part of growing up. It rarely, if ever, sorts itself out. Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those who witness it, or are aware of it happening, and even normally non-aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure.

It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a youngster best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at the school.

WHY IS AN ANTI-BULLYING POLICY NECESSARY?

At The Forest School, we believe that each of our pupils has the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Our community will not tolerate any unkind actions or remarks, and bullying in and around the school, or on a journey to and from school, will be regarded as a serious matter and be dealt with accordingly. We are a "Telling" school. Bullying is too important not to report.

All institutions, both large and small, contain some individuals with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. The school, in promoting good citizenship, must make it clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour; that it is **WRONG** and will not be tolerated.

It is important, therefore, that the school promotes this belief, clearly, and ensures that both pupils and parents/guardians are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is any single or repetitive act that hurts, threatens or frightens someone else. It may be physical, verbal or psychological in nature. Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

- a) **PHYSICAL**
A person may be physically pushed, punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.
- b) **VERBAL**
Verbal abuse can take the form of name-calling. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, or personality, etc.
- c) **EXCLUSION**
A person can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.
- d) **DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT**
People may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the victim will hand over property to them.

KEY PEOPLE TO TALK TO IF YOU FEEL YOU ARE BEING BULLIED

- Your tutor, or associate tutor, if you have one
- Your Community Leader
- Another adult in the school who you like, respect and trust

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is **WRONG!**
- b) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- e) Be assertive – shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- f) Fighting back is likely to make things worse. Avoid it.
- g) Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.

School staff will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED:

- a) **TAKE ACTION!** Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- b) If you feel you cannot get involved to support the victim, tell an adult **IMMEDIATELY**. School staff have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- c) Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

AS A PARENT:

- a) Look for unusual behaviour in your son. For example, he may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to his normal standard.

- b) Always take an active role in your son's education. Enquire how his day has gone, who he has spent his time with, how lunchtime was spent etc.
- c) If you feel your son may be a victim of bullying, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- d) It is important that you advise your son not to fight back. It is likely to make matters worse and can put him in the wrong!
- e) Tell your son that it is not his fault that he is being bullied.
- f) Make sure your child is fully aware of our policy concerning bullying and encourage him not to be afraid to ask for help.
- g) Ask your son to make you a "friend" on his Facebook or other social networking page – this is a simple way to monitor any possibility of cyber-bullying.

AS A SCHOOL WE MUST ENSURE THAT:

- a) The school community is organised in a way that minimises opportunities for bullying, e.g. by providing increased supervision at 'problem' times; allowing mobile phones only in exceptional circumstances and by negotiation, to prevent text bullying; and discouraging cyber bullying.
- b) We use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. the Personal Development Curriculum.
- c) We all deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- d) The School Policy is reviewed regularly and its degree of success monitored closely. Statistics dealing with bullying are reported to Governors once a term.
- e) The school staff continues to operate a firm but fair discipline structure. The rules are few, simple and easy to understand. Key rules are **'Hands off people and their possessions'** and **'Nothing nice to say, say nothing'**.
- f) There is no use made of teaching materials or equipment which gives a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc.
- g) Pupils are encouraged to discuss how they get on with others and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a review of what friendship really is.
- h) Pupils are encouraged to treat everyone with respect.
- i) We treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school. This includes reports of cyber-bullying, whether it is done at school or outside school.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODY:

The Governing Body has the responsibility for approving the policy and ensuring its implementation.

THE ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER:

The Headteacher has the day to day responsibility for the welfare of the pupils at The Forest School. They will strive to promote a safe and caring environment in and around the school and electronically where equal opportunities are provided for all. The Headteacher reserves the right to take action, where they deem it appropriate, to address bullying that takes place outside the school, including cyber-bullying, where it has a direct impact on a pupil's well-being and progress in school. They will ensure that staff, pupils, Governors and parents are aware of The Forest School's policy on bullying.

ROLE OF THE FOREST STAFF IN GENERAL:

All staff give serious consideration and attention to any form of reported bullying.

- Pupils are encouraged to disclose any form of bullying at the earliest opportunity. They should feel secure in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously and the matter dealt

with promptly.

- Staff should be punctual to lessons and registrations.
- Students should be supervised carefully in changing rooms, corridors, stairs and dining areas.
- Duty staff should arrive promptly in their areas and be vigilant in pre-empting possible problem situations.
- No pupil should be allowed out of lessons other than in exceptional circumstances. The Progress Diary should then be signed by the teacher.
- All teachers are role models. As such it is important they show respect for pupils and colleagues so that this is reciprocated and reflected in pupils' behaviour.

ROLE OF PUPILS:

- All pupils should show respect for each other and their teachers as defined in the school's Code of Conduct including those for computer use.
- Pupils should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying. Older pupils have a very important role to play in this respect.
- Bus prefects should be alert to any misdemeanours en route to and from school, and report back incidents promptly to a member of staff.
- Several pupils have now become qualified peer trainers, able to assist small groups or individuals to help themselves and tackle problems relating to bullying.

ROLE OF PARENTS:

- To support the aim and ethos of The Forest School to ensure that every pupil can be educated in a safe and caring environment.
- To inform the school of any domestic factors which may influence the behaviour of their child at school.
- To report at an early stage any cause for concern they may have with regard to any form of suspected bullying of their son. This could include "cyber bullying" by Forest pupils even if it took place out of school.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED

If bullying is suspected we must talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:

Help, support and counselling will be given that is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies:

We support the **victims** in the following ways:

- by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their form tutor, associate tutor if they have one, Community Leader or another adult, if they choose
- by informing the victim's parents/guardians
- by offering continuing support when they feel they need it
- by arranging for them to be escorted to and from the school premises
- by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying

We also discipline, yet try to help, the **bully** in the following ways:

- By talking about what has happened, to discover why they became involved
- by informing the bully's parents/guardians
- by continuing to work with the bully in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible. This may include counselling.
- by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying

DISCIPLINARY STEPS:

1. Bullies will be warned officially to stop offending.
2. Bullies' parents/guardians will be informed and meet with an appropriate member of staff.
3. In cases of cyber-bullying, whether it is done at school or outside school, the bullies' parents / guardians will be informed and a meeting will usually be arranged with the school's Police Liaison Officer, who will outline the legal issues pertaining to such offences.
4. Bullies may be placed in isolation at break and/or lunch times.
5. In extreme cases, bullies may be reported to the police. If the police decide to follow up the case, the school is required to take no further action until the police investigation is complete.
6. In cases of racial or homophobic bullying or bullying linked to a disability, the bullies will be reported to the Local Authority and their bullying reported as a hate crime.
7. We may arrange for bullies to be escorted to and from the school premises.
8. If they do not stop bullying they will be suspended for a fixed period.
9. If they then repeat the offence they will be recommended for suspension for a major fixed period (normally up to five days).
10. If they will not end such behaviour, bullies will be recommended for permanent exclusion.