



Arbour House

Anti-bullying policy

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1. Introduction

Arbour House School recognises the right of our children and young people to develop with confidence in an environment that is safe and free from the emotional and physical distress that can be seen as a result of bullying. It is the responsibility of Arbour House School to ensure that procedures are in place that will monitor and address anti-bullying issues. Arbour House School works with young people and children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and a range of learning disabilities, some mental health difficulties and Speech & Language Difficulties.

Bullying will not be accepted or condoned. All forms of bullying will be addressed.

Bullying can include:

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc.
- Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation, and the continual ignoring of individuals
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual comments, and/or suggestions
- Unwanted physical contact
- Children from ethnic minorities, disabled children, young people who are gay, lesbian or trans-gender, or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.
- Appropriate staff and volunteers should have access to training on anti-bullying
- Where a child is found to be exhibiting sexually harmful behaviour to another child, it is important to involve the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board as soon as possible. Each establishment should have clear policies and procedures to ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of the differences between sexually harmful behaviour and bullying behaviour.
- Where a child's bullying behaviour is of a particularly violent or aggressive nature and the establishment is unable to address the behaviour through behaviour management strategies within a reasonable time, it is worth considering instigating child protection procedures.
- Incidents should be recorded and actioned in line with Arbour House's Policy and Procedures.

2. Definition of bullying

Bullying can be defined in a number of ways. We follow DfES guidance which defines bullying as:

“Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated often over a period of time or on isolated occasions, where somebody deliberately intimidates or harasses another”.

Bullying has been described by pupils as:

- name calling
- teasing
- physical abuse eg hitting, pushing, pinching or kicking
- having personal possessions taken eg bag or mobile phone
- receiving abusive text messages or e-mails
- being forced to hand over money
- being forced to do things they don't want to do
- being ignored or left out
- being attacked in any way due to religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance or racial or ethnic origin.

Specific Examples of Bullying

Racist bullying – an incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. This can be in the form of:

- verbal abuse, name calling, racist jokes, offensive mimicry;
- physical threats or attacks;
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia;
- bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines;
- inciting others to behave in a racist way;
- racist graffiti or other written insults, even against food, music, dress or customs;
- refusing to co-operate in work or play.

Sexual bullying – this is generally characterised by:

- abusive name calling;
- looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- inappropriate and uninvited touching;
- sexual innuendos and propositions;
- pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content;
- in its most extreme form, sexual assault or rape.

Sexual orientation – this can happen even if the pupils are not lesbian, gay or bisexual. Just being different may be enough. This can be in the form of:

- use of homophobic language;
- looks and comments about sexual orientation or appearance.

SEN or disability – These pupils are often at greater risk of bullying. This can be characterised by:

- name calling;
- comments on appearance;
- comments with regard to perceived ability and achievement levels.

The need for adult sensitivity should be taken into account in a number of instances, e.g. when grouping children, marking children's work, sharing of results and assessment arrangements as well as an awareness of appropriate language being used when addressing pupils.

Text/Cyber bullying – this is on the increase and can involve pupils receiving threatening or disturbing messages from possibly anonymous callers. Pupils' phones are placed in the form phone boxes, which are stored in the office until the end of the school day.

3. School Policy and Procedures

This school believes that:

- Bullying is unacceptable;
- Bullying is a problem to which solutions can be found;
- Seeking help and openness are regarded as signs of strength not weakness;
- All members of the school community will be listened to and taken seriously;
- Everyone has the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from fear;
- All of us have a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others;
- Young people should talk to an adult if they are worried about bullying and have a right to expect that their concerns will be listened to and treated seriously;
- Young people should be involved in decision making about matters that concern them;
- We all have a duty to work together to protect vulnerable individuals from bullying and other forms of abuse.

4. Aims of the Policy

- To create an ethos in which school is a positive experience for all members of Arbour House community;
- To make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable at school;
- To enable everyone to feel safe while at school and encourage pupils to report incidences of bullying;
- To deal effectively with bullying;
- To support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to;
- To help and support bullies to change their attitudes as well as their behaviour and understand why it needs to change;
- To liaise with parents and other appropriate members of the school community;
- To ensure all members of the school community feel responsible for combating bullying.

5. Objectives

- To ensure all parents and pupils have received and had opportunity to comment upon the school anti-bullying policy;
- To maintain and develop effective listening systems for pupils and staff within the school;
- To involve all staff in dealing with incidents of bullying effectively and promptly;
- To equip all staff with the skills necessary to deal with bullying;
- To involve the wider school community in dealing effectively with, and if necessary referring, bullying incidents;
- To communicate with parents and the wider school community effectively on the subject of bullying;
- To acknowledge the key role of the class teacher and teaching assistants in dealing with incidents of bullying;
- To ensure that all incidents of bullying are recorded in the anti-bullying log and appropriate use is made of the information and where appropriate shared with relevant organisations.

6. **Specific School Targets**

- To ensure all parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff have seen this policy;
- To ensure all staff are familiar with reporting incidents procedures and to ensure all incidents of bullying are recorded;
- To ensure every pupil receives regular opportunities to discuss the policy in PSHE, SEAL lessons, ELSA support and whole school meetings;
- To develop peer to peer support strategies.

7. **Code of Conduct (with regard to positive behavior support and relationships within the school community)**

All adults at Arbour House school are role models for pupils. The way in which we behave towards each other and to pupils is particularly important in terms of providing positive role models. Therefore, as adults we must:

- show respect for every pupil and other colleagues within the Arbour House community as individuals;
- be aware of particularly vulnerable pupils;
- criticise the behaviour rather than the individual;
- avoid favouritism;
- always be fair;
- have high expectations of pupils;
- actively seek to develop a praise culture within the school.

Children and young people also have a responsibility to role model appropriate behaviour for their peers. We, therefore, believe that all pupils must:

- show respect for their fellow pupils and adults working within the Arbour House Community;
- support and be sensitive to others when they may be feeling vulnerable;
- actively seek to develop a praise culture within the school;
- actively support the school anti-bullying policy;
- take responsibility for their own behaviour.

8. Equal Opportunities

Every member of the school community is entitled to expect equality of protection from bullying as well as protection and support from school policies and procedures designed to ensure that the school remains a safe environment in which to work and learn.

9. Procedures and Dealing with Incidents – A Whole School Approach

a) Role of pupils in recording a bullying incident

Follow the school guide to reporting and dealing with bullying incidents

b) Guidance for parents and carers

If your child has been bullied:

- Calmly talk with your child about his/ her experiences;
- Make a note of what your child says including who was involved, how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what happened;
- Reassure your child that he/ she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying;
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to a teacher or member of school staff immediately;
- Make an appointment to see your child's teacher;
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing.

When talking with teachers about bullying:

- Try to stay calm and bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident;
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved;
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take;
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school;
- Stay in touch with the school and let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

If you are not satisfied:

- Check with the school anti-bullying policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed;

- Make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Head teacher and keep a record of the meeting;
- If this does not help follow the complaints procedure set out in the School Handbook, which all parents are given a copy of when joining the school and also regular updates as required.

If your child is bullying others:

- Talk with your child and explain that what s/he is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy;
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want;
- Show your child how he/ she can join in with other children without bullying;
- Make an appointment to see your child's teacher and explain the problems your child is experiencing as well as discussing how you can work together to stop him/her bullying others;
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school;
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when s/ he is co-operative or kind to other people.

If your child is experiencing any form of electronic bullying:

- Ensure your child is careful whom they give their mobile phone number and e-mail address to;
- Check exactly when a threatening message was sent;
- Where necessary report incidents to the police.

c) Role of staff

- Talk privately with the offending individual(s);
- Attempt to include an excluded pupil in lessons, perhaps by controlling the groupings;
- Intervene to diffuse a blatant act of bullying;
- On discovering the details, deal sympathetically with all the pupils involved;
- Do not bully the bully or humiliate him/her. Try to look objectively at the incident;
- Listen to what is being said and take notes if necessary;
- Reassure the pupil but do not promise confidentiality. (Refer to child protection policy procedures);
- Follow the school guide to reporting and dealing with bullying incidents.

10. Strategies to Reduce Bullying

The school will adopt a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and bullies. Including:

- Co-operative group work.
- The support group approach/No Blame Approach.
- Buddy systems.
- ELSA support programmes;
- PSHEe programmes of study.

11. Confidentiality

Arbour House School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff must make this clear to pupils. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made.

It is very rare for a pupil to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement whether or not a third party needs to be informed. This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the pupil may be experiencing;
- The pupil's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.

Where it is clear that a pupil would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek consent of the pupil to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the pupil. Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/ carer.

An underlying principle in supporting pupils in our school is that all children are listened to sensitively and objectively and all incidences of bullying will be taken seriously.

Although the school cannot guarantee confidentiality pupils will be informed of national and local help lines, if appropriate, where confidentiality can be maintained.

12. Support for Pupils who Experience Bullying

If you are being bullied

- Tell an adult or somebody you trust what has happened straight away;
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible.;
- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can;
- Be firm and clear – look them in the eye and, if possible, tell them to stop and tell them how you feel.

After you have been bullied

- Tell a teacher or another adult you trust within school;
- Tell your family or carers;
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you;
- Keep on speaking until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying;
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened.

When you are talking to an adult about bullying be clear about:

- What has happened to you;
- How often it has happened;
- Who was involved;
- Who saw what was happening;
- Where it happened;
- What you have done about it already.

If you experience bullying by mobile phone text messages or e-mail

- Tell a friend, parent or teacher;
- Be careful who you give your mobile phone number or e-mail address to;
- Make a note of exactly when a threatening message was sent.

For contacts and details of where to seek help outside school see appendix 1.

13. Policy Review

This policy will be evaluated and updated where necessary annually by the whole school. The views of pupils and staff will be used to make changes and improvements to the policy on an ongoing basis.

All parents are given a copy of the School Handbook, which contains several policies including Anti-Bullying. Updated reviews are sent as required. Copies of the policy are posted in every form room for pupils' attention. Copies of all policies are also available from the School office.

Appendix 1

Contacts

Childline : Telephone number 0800 1111 (Open 24 hours a day). For children who are deaf or hard of hearing textphone service 0800 400222

NSPCC : Telephone number 0808 800 5000. A registered charity dedicated to stopping cruelty to children

Kidscape: Telephone number 020 7730 3300. (Bullying councillor available Monday – Friday 10.00am-4.00pm)

Anti Bullying Campaign: Telephone number 0207 378 1446. (Advice line for parents and children 9.30am-5.00pm)

Advisory Centre for Education Telephone number 0207 354 8321. (Advice line for parents on all school matters open Monday – Friday 2.00pm-5.00pm)

Ofsted: Telephone number 07002 637833

e-mail: freepublications@ofsted.gov.uk

Parentline Plus: Telephone number 0808 800 2222

(National helpline for parents Monday – Friday 9.00am-9.00pm, Saturday 9.30am-5.00pm, Sunday 10.00am-3.00pm)