



Policy Reference P03 **Anti Bullying Policy**

Every school within Cumbria Futures Federation aims to provide a safe and hardworking environment where every child can be successful, whatever their abilities.

Our Values

- Courage and Compassion
- Inclusion and Equality
- Respect and Courtesy
- Optimism and Perseverance
- Forgiveness and Tolerance
- Ambition and Achievement

Version No	Author/Owner	Date Written	Note of amendments made
01-2018	JR	September 2018	New policy created from previous policies
01-2021	JR/TH	October 2021	Review in line with KCSIE 2021 and updated safeguarding and peer-on-peer abuse policies
2022-01	JSU/TH/JR	September 2022	Review in line with KCSIE 2022
2023-01	TH/ST/AY	October 2023	Updated to include amendments identified by Solway and Beacon Hill School Council student representatives.

1. Background and Rationale

Everyone in our federation schools has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos.

Where bullying exists, the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied students and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

Bullying is an antisocial behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, all students should know who to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

This document outlines how we make this possible within our schools.

2. What is bullying?

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time

The four main types of bullying are:

- **Physical** (hitting, kicking, theft, etc)
- **Verbal** (name calling, racist, homophobic, sexist or sexual bullying or remarks related to disability or SEN)
- **Indirect** (spreading rumours, excluding someone from a social group, etc)
- **Cyberbullying** (text messages, abuse of email, chat room messages, etc)

3. Why is it Important to respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

We all (staff, students, parents) have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

4. Aims of this policy

- To create an ethos where all members of our school community feel positive about attending school
- To make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable
- To ensure everyone at our schools feel safe
- To have procedures to deal effectively with bullying
- To support victims of bullying
- To help and support bullies to change their behaviour and attitudes
- To ensure that all members of the community feel responsible for combating bullying

5. Staff, student and parental responsibilities

We ALL have a responsibility to promote a high standard of behaviour and social responsibility - inside and outside the classroom. Children who are secure and content are much more likely to fulfil their potential than those who are not. Whatever job we do in the school (teacher, support staff, etc) we must never forget the importance of treating all students with a proper level of respect. It is vital that we endeavour to act as good role models at all times.

We must ALL be alert to situations where children's behaviour/body language leads us to suspect that things may not be well (e.g., those children, who are in tears, who never smile, who are loners, etc). We should take seriously reports from children concerning their peers and, if we do not feel we are in a position to deal with the problem, inform someone who will look into it, and ask for feedback on the outcome.

Everyone within school is expected to:

- Act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another
- Adhere to and promote the objectives of this policy

Students:

- Report all incidents of bullying to themselves and to others, including suspected incidents that victims may be afraid to report. Incidents should be reported to a member of the school staff
- Support each other and help to ensure that everyone feels safe in school

What can you do if you are being bullied?

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

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is wrong!
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive – shout "no!" walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back may make things worse. If you decide to fight back, talk to a teacher or parent/guardian first.
- Generally, it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. Teachers will take bullying seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse.

Things that may happen include:

Statements will be taken

Witnesses will be sought

The bullying will be investigated

Students will be spoken to

Parents will be informed (where appropriate)

Restorative meetings will take place when/if appropriate

Staff will be made aware of the situation, to ensure vigilance

If you know someone is being bullied

- 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.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately. Teachers have ways of dealing with people who bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with someone who is a bully.

Contribution to the anti-bullying policy

- The students will have an opportunity to review and advise the anti-bullying policy through the school council.
- Peer mentors will have anti-bullying training as part of their role.

Parents:

We are firmly committed to working in partnership with parents and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs. We recognise the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as victim or a perpetrator. Parents will be informed about the schools anti bullying policy at the induction meeting held before the start of year 7.

- Parents who believe their children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe
- All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Where parents have concerns about with regard to bullying they should contact their child's tutor in the first instance
- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard. Always take an active role in your child's

education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc

- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the school policy concerning bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help
- Help to establish an anti-bullying culture outside school

6. Signs and symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber-message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

7. Reinforcing the anti-bullying ethos in school

The following strategies have been put in place to reinforce the anti-bullying ethos at the school.

- Not to use teaching materials or equipment which gives a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, or gender
- Encourage students to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a review of what friendship really is
- Encourage students to treat everyone with respect
- At whole school level – through assemblies when students will be informed of the school's zero-tolerance policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place
- Anti-Bullying Week in November will be used as an opportunity to raise the profile of this issue
- Police work with the students to inform them of the consequences of anti-social behaviours (bullying, cyber bullying etc)
- At classroom level – especially through Personal Development lessons the focus will be on developing strong anti-bullying messages
- Vertical tutor groups support the anti-bullying ethos

The school's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy explains how we aim to create a supportive and inclusive environment where students behave well and take responsibility for each other's emotional and social wellbeing.

School assemblies will be used to reinforce the message that bullying behaviour is anti-social and unacceptable.

The curriculum will be used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and our anti-bullying policy
- Increase understanding for victims and help build an anti-bullying ethos
- Teach students how to constructively manage their relationships with others
- Raise awareness about individual differences and beliefs

Poster campaigns will be used to remind students that bullying is unacceptable and to tell them what to do if they are bullied. Posters will also tell students about Childline and other sources of confidential help outside school.

CCTV cameras operate in school to deter inappropriate behaviour.

8. Who should the student tell?

Any teacher or adult with whom the child feels comfortable such as:

- Form Tutor
- Head of House / Form
- Teaching Assistant
- Canteen staff
- Administration staff
- Student leadership group; Head girl/Head boy/Prefects, Student Ambassadors, School Council
- Peer mentors
- Older students

Students who see others being bullied should also report this to one of the above.

Members of staff who receive reports that a student has been bullied should report this to the student's Form Tutor or Head of House.

Reports of bullying will be logged on Arbor &/or CPOMS by member of staff dealing with it, or Form tutors or Head of House.

For some incidents of bullying, we may involve the Police.

All reports will be taken seriously and will be followed up by Form Tutors/Head of House/Executive Headteacher

Students will also be advised of an email system of reporting Bullying.

'Stay safe'

EMAIL – staysafe@solway.cumbria.sch.uk
or staysafe@beaconhill.cumbria.sch.uk

9. Investigation Process

On coming across a bullying incident

1. Remove the victim from the scene, where appropriate.

2. Tell the bully he/she will be dealt with later, not necessarily specifying how or when. **There is nothing to be gained by showing aggression towards the bully – this may only escalate his/her behaviour later.**
3. Avoid physical intervention unless the victim is to be protected.
4. Inform the relevant Form Tutors who, in conjunction with the Head of House, will take appropriate action.
5. Follow up the incident with Form tutor/Head of House to ensure the incident has been addressed.

Investigation of bullying events

1. Adopt a sensitive, firm and caring approach.
2. Listen carefully and record all incidents.
3. Offer the victim immediate help and support. Endeavour to build up their self-esteem and aim to improve their skills in communication, assertion and making friends in subsequent meetings.
4. Be available if the victim needs to talk – if you can't meet at the time they request, explain and re-arrange as soon as possible.
5. Keep records on Arbor/ file of any agreements reached.
6. Interview all students concerned separately and ask bully and victim to record the events in writing.
7. Allow parents access to all information regarding their child, but not of others' names.
8. Keep Head of House / Head of Form/ form tutor informed.
9. Follow up after incidents to check that the bullying has not started again.
10. Inform parents when necessary.

Dealing with the victim

As a school we will:

- RECORD ALL INCIDENTS
- Provide support to students who are bullied and help them feel safe
- Reassure students that it was right to report the incident, that they do not deserve to be bullied and that it is not their fault
- Listen to their version of events and ascertain the extent of the problem
- Encourage them to talk about how they feel and write that down
- Involve them in seeking a solution to the situation
- Discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe
- Ask them to report immediately any further incidents
- Affirm that bullying can be stopped and that the school will persist with intervention until it does
- Record incidents on Arbor/CPOMS
- Check that the bullying has not started again by talking to the victim in a timely manner
- School will seek to follow up the incident to check it is not continuing.

Dealing with the bully

As a school we will:

- RECORD ALL INCIDENTS
- Listen to their version of events
- Talk to any witnesses to the bullying
- Reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable and that we expect bullying to stop. Seek a commitment to this from the bully
- Confirm that it is right for students to let us know when they are being bullied
- Adopt a joint problem-solving approach and encourage students to take responsibility for the emotional and social needs of others
- Advise students responsible for bullying that checks will be made to ensure that the bullying stops
- Work with parents to ensure the bullying stops

If necessary, we will invoke the full range of sanctions that are detailed in the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy. These include:

- Removal from the group
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- Detention
- Isolation
- Withholding participation in school events that are not an essential part of the curriculum
- Fixed Term Exclusion from school
- Permanent Exclusion will be used as a final sanction for persistent bullying

It is very important to challenge the behaviour, not the person.

It is important to recognise the following “excuses” in order to deal with them effectively (do not accept the words “only” and “just”):

<i>“It was only a joke”</i>	Was everyone laughing, including the victim?
<i>“We were only playing”</i>	Had the victim been invited?
<i>“It was an accident”</i>	Was it a non-accidental accident? - did the bully immediately apologise or help the victim or seek other help?
<i>“I found it”</i>	Why did you keep it?
<i>“I was only borrowing”</i>	Question whether he/she knows the victim well enough.

Make it clear their behaviour must change. Encourage them to look at themselves as others see them, and acknowledge that they are creating problems for themselves. Listen to what they say and assess whether it is a cry for help or a cover-up for other problems. Try and meet that need.

10. Bullying outside the school premises

Schools are not responsible for bullying that occurs off the premises but we know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school. Cyber bullying can also take place out of school. If bullying situations occur outside the school premises and the student involved is a member of the school community, then the Policy as stated above will be followed and appropriate action will be taken.

In addition where a student or parent tells us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Talk to students about how we avoid or handle bullying outside the school
- Talk to the Executive Headteacher of another school whose students are bullying
- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses
- Talk to the police

11. Useful websites which offer support

Advice for young people who are concerned about bullying is available on <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/HealthAndRelationships/Bullying/index.htm>

Advice for teachers and other practitioners: The **Anti-Bullying Alliance**, an umbrella group of over 60 charitable and other organisations working in the anti-bullying field, has a range of information and resources for practitioners on their website. <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Advice for parents on dealing with the bullying of their child is available on the **Family Lives** website. <https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/bullying>

12. Complaints

We recognise there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying – and we would ask that this is brought to the Headteacher’s notice. If the Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school’s Complaints Procedure.

13. Evaluating our policy

We will evaluate our anti-bullying policy using the following measures:

- The number of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period.
- Students’ perception of bullying in school through structured discussions with pastoral staff
- We will investigate patterns of absence to ensure that children are not taking unnecessary days off school due to fear of being bullied
- The number of concerns and compliments received after the follow up review
- This policy will be formally reviewed annually after adoption

14. Ownership of this policy

This policy applies to all staff and to all students within our Federation of schools, whether temporarily or permanently on the school roll.

The Headteacher is responsible for introducing and implementing this policy. However all staff, all students and their parents have an active part to play in the development and maintenance of the policy, and in its success.