



Foxford Community School Anti-Bullying Policy

Castle Phoenix Trust

Approved by governors September 2019

Rationale

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Foxford Community School, whether it is in the school or during off-site activities. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

All members of staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and what the school's procedures are for responding to bullying. As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that we do not tolerate bullying and that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

1. What Is Bullying?

At Foxford School we define bullying as actions or words that are deliberately hurtful, repeated often over a period of time and difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

Bullying can be:

- emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures);
- interference with possessions;
- physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- sexist – controlling and/or demanding behaviour towards someone because of their sex;
- homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality;
- directed towards someone with Special Educational Needs – because of learning or physical disabilities;
- verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing because of appearance etc.;
- cyber - all areas of internet use, such as e-mail and internet chat room /social media misuse;
- mobile phone threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, ie camera and video facilities.

2. Why is it important to respond to bullying?

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

We all have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

3. Signs and Symptoms

A student may indicate by signs, words or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. To those who know the student this may simply be a feeling that 'things aren't quite right'. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student:

- does not want to walk to and from school;
- does not want to use public transport to come to and from school;
- insists that they are driven to and from school;
- changes their normal routine;
- begins to truant for no apparent reason;
- becomes withdrawn or displays a sudden lack of confidence;
- is reticent to speak to other peers or teachers;
- self-harms eg cutting or scratching;
- attempts or threatens to commit suicide;
- runs away from home;
- is upset at night and has displayed a disruptive sleep pattern, possibly linked with increased nightmares;
- is continuously complaining of feeling unwell in the morning and at school;
- displays a downturn in their academic standards;
- has possessions and clothes which are torn or damaged or go missing;
- asks for money or steals money (to pay bully);
- loses dinner money on a regular basis;
- has a sudden increase in bruises or cuts which the student finds difficult or is unwilling to explain;
- comes home hungry (money or lunch has been stolen);
- stops eating;
- suddenly displays unusual aggressive and disruptive behaviour;
- starts to bully other peers or family siblings;
- is reticent or unwilling to talk about what is going wrong;
- changes their use of mobile phones or social media.

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

4. Bullying outside school premises

- Staff will investigate bullying incidents outside of school when reported by a parent, student or member of the community.
- The school will discipline students for bullying/misbehaving outside of the school premises eg public transport, shops, streets etc. if appropriate.
- Parents will be informed in a timely manner of an incident. They will be kept updated as the matter is being investigated at suitable intervals, using a method of communication agreed with the parents. Any action taken by the school will be shared with the parents. The school will consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police should the nature of the incident be criminal or pose a serious threat to a member of the community. Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling,

threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages, hate crimes. The school will liaise with parents to judge who is best placed to notify the police.

5. Responsibilities

Schools must also follow anti-discrimination law. This means staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school.

The Head Teacher will:

- ensure that all staff have an opportunity to discuss strategies and review them;
- determine the strategies and procedures;
- discuss development of the strategies with the Leadership Team;
- ensure appropriate training is available;
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and students;

The Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral) will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems;
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both those being bullied and the bullies;
- keep the Head Teacher informed of incidents
- arrange relevant staff training;
- determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems;
- present a termly report to the Head Teacher.

Directors of Learning will:

- be responsible for ensuring that the schools positive strategies are put into practice;
- know the Head Teacher's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.

Form Tutors will:

- be responsible for liaising with Directors of Learning over all incidents involving students in their form;
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution.

What the school will do to prevent bullying

We will ensure that everyone understands what bullying is and how to deal with it through:

- communication of this policy to parents, students, staff and governors;
- lessons, assemblies and the Tutorial/PSHE Programme;
- induction programme for new students;
- regular reminders about kind, courteous and respectful behaviour in normal lessons and everyday activities within the school;
- publication of advice through Student Voice
- one to one counselling of victims and perpetrators

All incidents of bullying will be seen as important and will be dealt with in a sensitive, consistent and urgent matter. Sanctions and counselling will be put in place. Students will be encouraged to feel able to report ALL incidents of bullying and to support each other when witnessing incidents. Friends of victims will be encouraged to report bullying if they are aware of it, even if the victims ask them not to. In all cases the victims will be given support to reassure them.

Some incidents may be relatively minor e.g. hiding a bag or a coat or using nicknames etc and may be dealt with by reprimand, a warning and a clear statement that such behaviour is unacceptable and contravenes the values of Foxford Community School. However, minor cases will be recorded and passed to the appropriate Tutor or Director of Learning. Repetition or serious cases of abuse or bullying will result in parents being notified and/or interviewed and, in more severe cases, sanctions being used with the bully eg fixed-term exclusion

6. Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum

The School will define and raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through the PSHE programme, assemblies, the Student Council, use of tutorial time and in the national curriculum programmes of study as appropriate.

The Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral) is responsible for initiating and developing, with the Directors of Learning, an anti-bullying programme as part of PSHE and Directors of Teaching and Learning are responsible for introducing anti bullying material in their programmes of study as appropriate.

Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will play a major part in the strategies used by the school.

7. Anti-Bullying Procedures: Parents

If parents suspect their child is being bullied they should contact the Form Tutor and/or the Director of Learning. Parents should be prepared to talk about the signs and symptoms and any suspicions they have regarding those carrying out the bullying.

Parents must leave the initial investigation to the school. Any attempt to resolve the issue themselves could, potentially, make the matter worse.

Parents should encourage their child to talk to their Form Tutor/ Director of Learning or another member of staff in the first instance.

8. Anti-Bullying Procedures: Students

If a student thinks they are being bullied they must tell an adult, parent, Form Tutor/ Director of Learning or another member of staff and be prepared to explain what form the bullying is taking and how it affects them.

Students who witness bullying or strongly suspect bullying must tell an adult, parent or any member of staff.

9. Anti-Bullying Procedures: Staff Response

In cases of reported or suspected bullying the school will:

- make it clear to students that bullying is unacceptable;
- teach students how to co-operate in controlling bullying e.g. posters, newsletters etc.;
- respond immediately if a student reports an incident of bullying by either dealing with it or referring it to the student's Tutor or Director of Learning;
- interview the victim(s) and friends to get a written account;
- interview the bully and friends to get a written account;
- complete an incident report form for the Tutor or Director of Learning;
- record the incident on CPOMS;
- discuss the incident with the victim and the bully together to resolve the situation if possible;
- inform parents of the victim and the bully of the incident and the actions taken;
- meet with the parents of the victim and bully if necessary;
- exclude the bully if appropriate;
- involve the Police if appropriate;
- try to make sure that the bullying is prevented by being vigilant and proactive on duty before and after school, at break and lunch time and during lesson changeovers;
- deploy strategies for improving the self-esteem of and offering care for the victim e.g. inter-agency work, resolution meetings, rewards, listening and valuing what the victim says, giving direct access to Tutors, Directors of Learning and the Leadership Team, providing opportunities for confidential conversations with learning mentors etc.;
- deploy strategies for changing the behaviour of the bully e.g. inter-agency work, resolution meetings, behaviour support plans, mentoring etc.;
- follow the normal procedures of the Behaviour for Learning policy unless there is a need for 'fast-track' action to help the victim or the bully.

10. Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- the offer of an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with form tutor, Director of Learning or member of staff of their choice;
- reassurance;
- the offer of continuous support with a designated member of staff;
- restoring self-esteem and self-confidence;
- referral to a Peer Mentor if appropriate;
- referral to an external agency;
- the offer to parents of continuous support and advice;
- the provision of information about the outcome of the investigation into their concerns.

11. Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened;
- discovering why the student became involved;
- establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change;
- informing parents to help change the attitude of the student;

- referral to a mentor/ external counsellor

Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the positive strategies used by the school. However, the school recognises that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies.

12. Sanctions

Students who have bullied will be punished appropriately according to their behaviour, in accordance with the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy. For persistent offences or incidents considered as gross acts of aggression, a student may be permanently excluded and or reported to the police.

13. Complaints

If a parent or carer is dissatisfied with the nature or swiftness of a response made by the school following a reported incident of bullying, he/she may wish to make a complaint. The complaints procedure for a case of bullying follows the guidance of the School's Complaints Policy. The underlying principle of the policy is that any concerns raised should be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures. If however the informal procedures are unsuccessful and the complainant wishes to take the matter further, formal measures will have to be taken.

14. Equal Opportunities

In implementing this policy all members of staff must take into account the School's Equal Opportunities Policy. Staff must ensure that no student involved in any incident of bullying, is disadvantaged on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

15. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Foxford Community School will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Date for review – September 2021