



Belmont School

Anti-bullying Policy

1 Statement of Intent

- 1.1 Belmont School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe and secure environment for all of our children so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere, without anxiety. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it in so far as is reasonably practicable, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- 1.2 If bullying does occur, all pupils and their parents should be able to tell, knowing that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a **TELLING** school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

2 The School's aims with regard to bullying

- 2.1 This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur. In order to achieve this we aim:
 - to make clear to children, staff, parents and guardians that bullying is not acceptable.
 - to encourage a climate of openness in which children, staff and parents act immediately if there is any suspicion of bullying.
 - to provide a clear framework for dealing with incidents of bullying.
 - to educate children in resisting bullying.
 - to provide support for those being bullied and their parents and a framework within which those bullying others may recognise and reform their behaviour.
 - in accordance with the school's ethos to instil in all members of the school community a sense of caring and kindness for one another.
 - that all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
 - to ensure that all governors and teaching and non-teaching staff know what the school policy is on bullying, and to follow it when bullying is reported.
 - to ensure that all pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
 - to ensure that as a school we take all reports of bullying seriously.
 - to assure pupils and parents

3 What is Bullying?

- 3.1 At Belmont, we understand bullying to be behaviour repeated over time by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting, physically or emotionally, another child or group of children (whether or not such child or children are themselves subject to such repetitive behaviour). Bullying may occur directly or indirectly or through cyber-technology.
- 3.2 A child is considered to be bullying if she/he engages in such behaviour, and a child is considered to be being bullied if he/she repeatedly suffers from such behaviour.

3.3 Bullying can be:

- Emotional, - being unfriendly, tormenting someone (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), deliberately excluding someone from social groups or an activity, subjecting someone to malicious rumours e-mails or text messages.
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, taking or hiding belongings, punching or any use of violence; deliberately destroying or damaging work or possessions or removing property.
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality or gender including LGBT pupils
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Religious or cultural.
- Directed at those with special educational needs or disability or because a child is adopted or a carer.
- Cyber bullying (including bullying using social websites. Mobile phones, text messaging, photographs and e mails).
- Intimidatory behaviour - threats of any of the aforementioned

4 Signs and Symptoms

4.1 A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Staff and parents should be aware of these possible signs and these may include where a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school.
- Doesn't want to go on the school bus.
- Begs to be driven to school instead of using the school bus.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic).
- Begins truanting.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- 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 go "missing".
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully).
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Stops eating.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

The School also recognises that children identified with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to being bullied and staff will be alert to such a possibility.

4.2 These signs and behaviours could indicate other safeguarding issues such as abuse and neglect, and staff need to be alert to such possibilities and follow the procedures set out in the School's "Safeguarding - Child Protection Policy", but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. Do not ignore such signs for it is the responsibility of all staff and

parents to bring such signs to the attention of the Form Tutor of the affected child in the first instance who will then raise it through the School's regular staff meetings so that all staff can monitor it.

5 Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying is serious: it hurts and can cause psychological damage. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. As a School, we have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

6 Anti-Bullying Strategies adopted by Belmont School:

- 6.1 We seek to make it easy for adults and children to report bullying including cyber-bullying and bullying outside the school and we acknowledge that bullying is a problem. Bullying may happen anywhere in our society, including the staff-room. We maintain a high level of awareness amongst staff so that all staff understand this Policy, know their legal responsibilities, know how to tackle bullying and where to seek help in so doing. Under the School's "Safeguarding - Child Protection Policy" the School's safeguarding team receive training in child protection matters which include equipping them in how to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management and this is passed on to staff through the training organised by the safeguarding team as part of their responsibilities under the Safeguarding Policy. The Head will always be informed where bullying is suspected and will ensure that every incident is being followed up diligently.
- 6.2 We adopt a whole school approach to the prevention of bullying in which children and staff work together to create an environment in which children understand the importance of respect for each other and where bullying is not tolerated. This is done in PSHE lessons, Form periods, and during assemblies and may include: discussions about what is and is not bullying; why it is not acceptable; what to do when it is encountered or witnessed; writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying; reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly; and making up role plays. We look to parents to support this work at home by encouraging their child(ren) to be a positive member of the School and supporting the School's Anti-Bullying policy which is available on the School's website.
- 6.3 We seek to raise the awareness of staff through training, so that the principles of this policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support are available. We involve pupils in anti-bullying work, as this is far more likely to succeed than if ideas are imposed on them as children often have the best approaches to solving problems within their peer groups and we acknowledge and reward children who help prevent bullying.
- 6.4 We find constructive ways to help those who are bullying change their behaviour. Punishing bullies doesn't end bullying - changing behaviour does. It is important to stress that it is the bullying behaviour that is not liked, rather than the person.
- 6.5 We use support schemes that encourage children to make friends. Having friends is one of the best defences against bullying, but not everyone has the right social skills to make friends easily. Teaching assertiveness skills and confidence-building to the class may be a way to make more children make friends.

7 Reporting Bullying

- 7.1 As noted above, we are a TELLING school. Where bullying occurs or there is a suspicion of it: staff understand the importance of reporting it; children are made to understand that reporting it is the right thing to do (whether because they themselves are being bullied or they find themselves as bystanders and/or think others are being bullied); and parents are encouraged to do likewise where their child, or another child, may be involved in or suffering from bullying.
- 7.2 Accordingly, acts that could constitute bullying or any suspicion that bullying is taking place, witnessed by or coming to the attention of:
- Parents, pupils or a member of the School's support staff should be reported without delay to any member of the School's teaching staff; or
 - any member of the School's teaching staff or Teaching Assistants should be reported to the Form Tutor(s) of each of the pupils who may be involved in the bullying and those pupils who may be suffering from it. The fact of such report having been made will be entered into the School's Daybook (held electronically)

8 Dealing with Bullying

- 8.1 All reports of possible bullying by a pupil will be subject to such investigation as is appropriate to the circumstances of the matter and will be conducted by the pupil's Form Tutor or by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) where pupils of more than one Form Tutor are involved or, in the absence of either, a member of the senior management team who, if thought appropriate, may involve other colleagues. Such investigations will be aimed at establishing the facts and may involve interviewing those thought to be bullying and those subject to it as well as witnesses. Detailed notes will be kept of the investigation and the conclusions reached and any action taken including any sanctions imposed in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy. Such notes will be entered into the School's Daybook and the Form Tutor of those pupils who may have suffered from such bullying action will be informed.
- 8.2 If as a result of a series of incidents it becomes clear that a child is engaged in bullying, the Head will be informed who will invite the parents of the child into School to discuss the situation and during which suitable sanctions will be decided in line with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy, and which may include being placed on a Report Card and/or a temporary suspension. Parents will also be advised that continuation of the bullying behaviour may result in permanent exclusion.
- 8.3 We will review all incidences of bullying carefully and the notes that have been recorded, including cyber-bullying, so that we can evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted and enable patterns to be identified.

9 Support for Children Subject to Bullying and their Parents

- 9.1 The School is very aware that the existence of any actual or perceived bullying is a matter of anxiety not only for the child being bullied but for his/her parents and that all reports of possible bullying will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.
- 9.2 Parents will be told:
- By the Form Tutor of their child of any report that he/she may be being bullied

- By the Form Tutor or, as appropriate, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) of the result of any investigation, triggered by a report from their child or the parent, of their concern that their child is being bullied or of any other investigations as a result of which the School has concluded that their child is being bullied
- Where, following investigation it becomes clear that a child is being bullied, his/her parents will be kept informed of the steps being taken to prevent further incidents of the bullying and the support being offered by the School for their child. Such support depends upon the individual situation but could involve an assigned group of staff or group of pupils formed through a pupil support scheme. Such schemes such as buddying, peer listening, or peer mediation can create a happier, friendly environment and offer much needed support to children who have been bullied.

10 Bullying as a Child Protection Issue

10.1 Staff need to be alert to the possibility that the signs and symptoms referred to above that might indicate bullying is occurring may in fact indicate the possibility that the child is subject to some form of abuse and neglect. Likewise where there is actual bullying, the School needs to be alert to the possibility that:

- the victim is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm
- the bullying behaviour of the perpetrator may itself be symptomatic of abuse or neglect

10.2 It is important therefore that staff understand that this policy should be seen in the wider context of the School's "Safeguarding - Child Protection Policy" and should keep an open mind to the possibility that other factors may explain the behaviour of the victim or perpetrator which may require referral to the Multi-Agency Partnership.

11 Monitoring and review

11.1 The Deputy Head (Pastoral) has responsibility for the day-to-day monitoring of the implementation and effectiveness of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy and reports regularly to the Head. This Policy is subject to an annual review by the Governors' Compliance Sub Committee who report each term to the full meeting of the Board of Governors.

11.2 Entries into the Daybook of reports of incidents that might constitute bullying and the results of subsequent investigations into such incidents are an important means by which the School is able to identify patterns of behaviour that indicate that bullying is taking place and those that are being bullied. Teaching staff understand their responsibility to make prompt entries as required into the Daybook.

Author Mrs Rachel Eastment, Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Date September 2020

Approved by Safeguarding Committee

Date 07 October 2020

Approved by Legal and Compliance Committee

Date 17 November 2020

Review due Michaelmas Term 2021