



Anti-bullying & Peer on Peer Abuse Policy 2024

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by a committee of the Governing Body every two years.

This Policy was last reviewed and agreed on 28th November 2024.

Review Date: 27th November 2026

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Contents

Bullying Definition.....	5
Peer on Peer Definition.....	5
The aims of the school.....	5
Methods used to try to prevent bullying & peer on peer abuse	6
Types of Bullying that may be encountered	6
Racial or Cultural	6
Sexual.....	7
Bullying associated with disability	7
Religious.....	7
Cyber Bullying	7
Bullying associated with high achieving.....	7
Useful Guidelines.....	8
Strategy for dealing with Bullying and Peer to Peer Abuse	9
Bullying off the School Premises.....	10
Bullying of, or by, Adults.....	10

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Policy for Dealing with Bullying & Peer on Peer Abuse

Bullying Definition

Bullying can be described as being a deliberate act done to cause distress solely to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. Bullying can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical intimidation, assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident that casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents causing a child to feel unhappy, scared or depressed for much of the time possibly leaving them psychologically damaged or even suicidal.

Peer on Peer Definition

There is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as abusive and incidents that are more properly dealt with as bullying, sexual experimentation etc. This is a matter of professional judgement.

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as abusive if:

- There is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- The perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
- There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused.

Staff, parents and children at Alumwell Junior School will work together to create a happy, caring and safe learning environment. Bullying, whether verbal, physical or indirect, will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of everyone to report and deal with any incidents quickly.

Incidents should be reported in the first instance to the Social Mentor Lana Tolley.

The aims of the school

- to provide a safe, caring environment for the whole school community, especially the children in our care
- to instil in children the knowledge that bullying is unacceptable and that reports of bullying will be taken seriously, recorded and acted upon
- to reassure children that they will be listened to, and that it is alright to tell someone what is happening
- to consider parents and keep them informed of actions taken in response to a complaint
- to investigate fully and keep detailed records of any incidents, reports or complaints
- to take appropriate action, including possible exclusion in cases of severe or repeated bullying

Methods used to try to prevent bullying & peer on peer abuse

- assemblies will be used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying
- RE and PSHE will be used to reinforce the message through stories (both fiction and non-fiction), role play, current affairs and other suitable activities
- circle time gives opportunities to talk about kindness to others
- children will learn to respond positively to cultural, social and physical diversity (often the causes of bullying) as part of their curriculum
- staff will endeavour at all times to create surroundings where each individual feels confident and at ease in school
- we will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable
- A child watch list will be available at unstructured times to monitor any peer on peer abuse allegations
- Using the Restorative Practice approach in supporting the process for children to promote an ethos where pupils are reflective, resilient and responsible. Drawing upon core values to illustrate prevention and resolution on bullying

In order to try to reduce incidents of bullying and to recognise bullies, all staff watches for early signs of distress and marked changes in normal behaviour. We listen, believe and act.

All staff receive training in recognising and dealing with bullying. This training is updated regularly.

Pupils with special educational needs might not be able to articulate experiences as fluently as other children. However, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, as a result of their disability. Staff must be aware of this, and must make sure that their own behaviour does not unintentionally trigger bullying by singling out these children for special attention. They must also be careful not to make comments related to pupils' appearance or perceived character. Teachers try to make classroom activities and lessons sensitive to the needs of all children. They teach assertiveness and other social skills and teach 'victims' to say 'No' and how to get help.

Types of Bullying that may be encountered

Physical

Bullying is associated with harm to others through kicking, hitting, pushing and taking away their belongings

Verbal

Bullying is associated with name calling, mocking and making offensive comments to others

Emotional

Bullying which includes isolating an individual or spreading rumours about them

Racial or Cultural

Bullying occurs when someone is motivated by racial, ethnic and cultural prejudice. This is based on the colour of a child's skin or hair type, or on any difference associated with culture. It may take the

form of verbal abuse, bringing racist literature into school, writing abusive notes or inciting others to racist behaviour or refusing to sit next to or play with children from other cultures.

Sexual

Bullying is associated where someone makes unwanted physical contact and may involve inappropriate touching, makes sexually abusive comments, or sexual notes or drawings being passed to other children. Comments may be made about appearance, attractiveness or emerging puberty, and there may be sexual innuendos or sexual harassment.

Sexist

Bullying occurs when this is motivated by prejudice against someone because of their gender.

Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic

Bullying occurs when it is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people or those that identify as trans. It will most likely involve name-calling or ostracising a child (or children),

Bullying associated with disability

This will include bullying associated with obesity or its opposite, as well as that concerned with any physical or mental disability. Particularly vulnerable are children who cannot compete with others equally such as those with a learning disability, and those with Downs Syndrome or cerebral palsy, or who are confined to a wheelchair.

Also vulnerable are children with behavioural problems such as ADHD who are often targets for bullying. Taunting or ridiculing children for their disability is probably the most common form of bullying in this category.

Religious

This form of bullying is based around differences in worship, and practice e.g. non-celebration of Christmas or other festivals. Children who are withdrawn from assemblies or RE lessons may be the targets for unpleasant remarks or teasing, and also those who wear different clothes or have certain foods forbidden for religious reasons.

Cyber Bullying

This form of bullying is insidious and not easily controlled. It includes unpleasant or threatening text messages frequently sent, or repeated and abusive phone calls. Most children have computers at home and threats and bullying messages may be sent by email, sometimes with upsetting photographs. Children may become involved with a chat room or other social media websites and may become victims of cyber bullying in that way.

Bullying associated with high achieving

Children who achieve highly are often targets for bullying, sometimes to the extent that they become afraid to answer correctly in class for fear of being ridiculed or called names. They may have their belongings hidden or moved or may be ostracised. This form of bullying is often based on jealousy and should be taken just as seriously as other forms of bullying.

It is not always easy to spot when a child is being bullied as each child will respond to it in their own way.

Useful Guidelines

Children may:

- become upset and not want to come to school
- become introverted and isolate themselves
- appear worried or afraid
- react aggressively
- cling to adults
- develop nervous habits e.g. nail biting

Strategy for dealing with Bullying and Peer to Peer Abuse

Strategies have been introduced at Alumwell Junior School to reduce bullying and peer-to-peer abuse. These strategies cover raising awareness of the nature of abuse, bullying and the anti-bullying policy, increasing understanding for victims and bullies and teaching pupils how to manage relationships in a constructive way.

In dealing with bullying, staff follow these fundamental guidelines;

- never ignore suspected bullying
- do not make premature assumptions
- listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils with the same version does not necessarily mean it is the truth
- adopt a problem-solving approach that allows pupils to move forward from self-justification
- always follow up proven cases to check that bullying has not returned
- keep detailed records

In response to a complaint of bullying, staff should initially follow the procedures set out in the schools 'Behaviour and Discipline Policy' applying sanctions as necessary.

If the bullying behaviour continues, the member of staff must report it to the Lead Behaviour Professional and if necessary, the Heads of School, who will proceed as follows:

1. Discuss the nature of the bullying with the 'victim' at length, recording all the facts. This will require patience and understanding.
2. Identify the alleged bully/bullies and any witnesses.
3. Interview witnesses.
4. Discuss the incident(s) with the alleged bullies. Confront them with the allegations and ask them to tell the truth about the situation. Make it clear that this is only an investigation into the truth at this stage.
5. If the bully owns up, make it understood that bullying is not acceptable at Alumwell Junior School. Explain the effect it has on the 'victim' and on other children in the class. Apply sanctions relevant to the type of bullying.
6. If the allegation of bullying is denied, investigate further. If there is sufficient evidence, apply relevant sanctions.
7. Hold separate discussions with the parents of both victim and bully.
8. Sanctions for the bully(ies) include:
 - Withdrawal from favoured activities for a specified length of time, for example, a school visit or a match.
 - Loss of playtimes/dinnertimes for a specified length of time.
 - Loss of a responsibility
 - Making some reparation to the victim for any damage to property that may have occurred.
 - In some cases it may be necessary to exclude the bully from school for a specified length of time after consultation with the governing body. Parents have the right of appeal to the governing body against any decision to exclude their child.
9. Provide a Pastoral Support programme for the victim, monitoring and observing at break times and lunchtimes, and through discussion to make sure there is no repetition.
10. Provide a pastoral Support Programme for the bully/ies. This will include a Behaviour Support Programme and opportunities for the children to discuss relationships, feelings and the effect

bullying can have on individuals. The child's class teacher will support them during this programme and will keep a daily written record of behaviour.

Parents must be kept informed at all stages of the process and must be given opportunities to discuss their child's progress and the sanctions to be employed.

Bullying off the School Premises

Alumwell Junior School cannot be held directly responsible for bullying that takes place off the school premises. However, if both the victim and the bully are from our school, action will be taken as if the incident had occurred on school property, and this includes informing parents.

Bullying of, or by, Adults

Although bullying in school is mostly associated with the bullying of children by other children, other instances may occur. Occasionally bullying of a child by an adult may be reported and must be investigated using the procedures outlined above. Where a member of staff is involved, the governing body must be immediately informed and suitable sanctions imposed.

If a member of staff feels that they are being bullied or victimised by another member of staff, this should be immediately reported to the Heads of School who will offer support and help to the victim. Full discussion with both parties should try to get to the bottom of the problem and the governors should be informed. Sanctions will follow if appropriate.