



Belmont
Community
School

Anti-Bullying Policy

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SIGNATURES:

Headteacher	
Chair of Governors	

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Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

Belmont Community School is committed to preventing and tackling all forms of bullying. This type of behaviour is totally unacceptable in our school. Bullying can cause serious suffering in the short term and can have lasting effects on a person's life. It can threaten the safety and well being of students as well as having a detrimental impact on their social and educational development. We believe that all students and staff have the right to study and work in a supportive, caring and safe environment.

Research has shown that no school can exempt itself from concern about bullying. Schools have a lasting impact on students' personal and social development and preparation for adult life. To prevent bullying students, teachers, parents and governors need to agree on a clear policy and clear guidelines on dealing with bullying and adhere to them.

Definitions

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone physically or emotionally.
- often aimed at certain groups, eg because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation or any other aspect such as appearance or disability.

Bullying is an intentional abuse of power by an individual or group over another individual or group. It is usually a deliberate plan to maltreat, hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. The hurt can be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature. It may occur frequently or infrequently, regularly or irregularly. Bullying is not limited to student/student or adult/student but can involve adult/adult student/adult relationships.

In more serious instances the abuse of power by an adult over a child, or by a child over a child may be viewed as child abuse and bullying should be seen within this context.

Bullying can involve many types of actions and behaviour. This includes name calling, taunting, mocking, use of offensive comments, belittling words and actions, kicking, hitting, spitting, taking or damaging belongings, untruthful rumour spreading, graffiti and sending inappropriate and threatening electronic messages

Types of Bullying

Bullying can happen to anyone at any time and often for no particular reason. The most common types of bullying can include:

- Race, religion or culture – treating people differently because of their skin colour or where they are from
- Students with special educational needs
- Appearance or health conditions such as those who wear glasses or have ginger hair
- Sexist or sexual
- Homophobic – treating people unkindly due to their perceived sexual orientation
- Biphobic – treating those people unkindly who identify as bisexual
- Transphobic – treating those people unkindly who do not conform to society's gender expectations
- Classist – someone is seen to be from a different social class and seen as a snob or a 'chav'
- Those who are younger and/ or weaker
- Those who are often seen alone and without friends
- Cyber bullying

Bullying is not dependant on an intention to cause distress or hurt but is assessed by the impact on the recipient.

Bullying often occurs because of prejudice, ignorance or perceived differences between the victim and the perpetrator. There are occasions where the bully may not fully understand the impact of their behaviour.

Intention

All students have the right to enjoy to the fullest possible extent the education provided by the school and Local Authority. In order to make the most of these benefits students need to be educated in a school:

- 1 where students can feel secure and where order, safety, care and support are openly visible and where an atmosphere of tolerance prevails.
- 2 which values students' and staff opinions and involves them, where appropriate, in deciding school policy and rules;
- 3 which shows awareness of students' individual needs and attempts to meet them;
- 4 which believes in fair and equal treatment for all people in school;
- 5 where students know the school code of conduct, school routines and expectations and observe them in practice;
- 6 where all incidents of bullying will be investigated according to the school guidelines found on page 3

Principles

- 1 Everyone is encouraged to act with courtesy and consideration for others at all times.
- 2 All students accept responsibility for their own conduct and will develop self-awareness and respect for other students and all school staff.

- 3 All students will be encouraged to discuss bullying openly, investigate and put into practice coping strategies i.e. ways of dealing with bullying to prevent bullying.
- 4 All staff, parents, students and governors are aware that bullying will always be viewed seriously as a discipline issue and that concerted action will be taken to overcome it and effectiveness monitored.
- 5 A sense of community and belonging is valued by all. Particular education regarding the nature of the bullying incident for the perpetrators where necessary is provided.

Implementation

The procedure for dealing with bullying detailed below will be communicated to all students, staff, non-teaching staff, parents and governors and will be included in the school prospectus for parents and students. Detailed guidelines are also included in students' school planners.

- 1 All incidents of bullying will be investigated thoroughly. The consequences of bullying incidents are clearly outlined in the school's behaviour policy. Alleged victims will be listened to, taken seriously, told of action to be taken with regard to the incident(s) and their future safety and the time scale of such investigations. Alleged perpetrators will be listened to, taken seriously and told of action to be taken.
- 2 Written records of all incidents and actions taken will be recorded by Assistant Headteachers/Achievement Leaders in SIMs. After an investigation the incident will then be logged as Bullying/Racist incident/Homophobic.
- 3 Parents / Carers of victims and perpetrators will be informed of incidents of bullying and action to be taken. Parents will be asked to work with the school and contribute to discussions on eliminating any recurrence of bullying by counselling perpetrators and supporting victims.
- 4 Where appropriate perpetrators and victims will receive social skills training and counselling to enable them to cope with their particular problems and to meet their individual needs through confidence building and improving self-esteem. Outcomes of such training being monitored by Assistant Headteachers/Achievement Leaders.
- 5 The school curriculum and pastoral system will contain specific sections and provide occasions when bullying can be discussed openly, including the effects of racist, sexist and homophobic language and actions and cyberbullying, as well as discrimination against those with disabilities.
- 6 Pupil movement during the school day will be closely monitored by staff and prefects.

Bullying will be given a high profile and awareness maintained by:

- (a) displays around school, in particular sources of support;
- (b) being a recurring theme in school assemblies;
- (c) staff visits to primary feeder schools to pre-empt fears and worries about bullying;
- (d) the input of the Peer Support Group;

- (e) specific reference at the Induction Meeting for students and staff to anti-bullying strategies;
- (f) opportunities in the curriculum to discuss social behaviour, develop social skills, encourage co-operation, respect individuality and to work in groups other than friendship groups;
- (g) promoting the principle that everyone needs to get on with those they work with – not just their friends.
- (h) a confidential “concern box” is available for all students to express their concerns. This is placed in reception.
- (i) making all students aware of Durham LA’s and the school’s anti-bullying e-mail service (abc@belmontschool.org.uk).

Cyberbullying

Belmont Community School defines cyberbullying as “the use of Information and Communication Technology especially including mobile phones and internet to deliberately upset someone”.

Cyberbullying is online social aggression which involves communication using digital technologies, e.g. – Facebook , Twitter, BBM , trolling.

Incidents involve communication that creates disruption in school and interferes with a student’s ability to participate in educational activities and programmes.

Belmont Community School aim to educate students through PHSCE and ICT lessons to use social networking as a responsible and useful method of communication.

The misuse of mobile phones and information technology in school will be dealt with by the school consequence system.

Belmont Community School will make reference to cyber bullying as a “method” of bullying. All types of bullying including racist and homophobic bullying, bullying related to age, gender, SEND and unacceptable behaviours including insults, harassment and threats can be included in cyber bullying if the perpetrator is using digital technology.

Belmont Community School acknowledges the use of cyberbullying as an extension of face to face bullying often giving the perpetrator additional means to continue bullying. The subsequent invasion of personal space and home life can add additional stress to the victim and is something Belmont Community School takes very seriously.

Finally, Belmont Community School strives to protect all people in school and will additionally protect all members of staff from ridicule, threats and harassment from cyber bullying.

Glossary

Perpetrator – Person responsible (for inflicting suffering on another)

Maltreat – To treat badly, cruelly or violently

Tolerance – Accepting other people's rights to their own beliefs, opinions or actions

Consequences – Results or effects (of bullying)

Alleged – Stated but not proved

Counselling – Giving advice and guidance

Racist / racism – Hostile or oppressive behaviour towards people of a different race

Sexist / sexism – Discrimination against the members of one sex

Homophobic / Homophobia – Discrimination against homosexuals

Disability – Physical or mental illness that restricts the way someone lives their life

Facebook – a social networking site

Twitter- an online service that allows you to share updates with other users.

BBM- an instant messenger service between blackberry phones.

Trolling- using the internet to make offensive remarks about others.

LA – Local Authority