



Ranelagh Primary School
Pauls Road Ipswich IP2 0AN
Telephone: (01473) 251608
Email: admin@ranelagh.suffolk.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs N Ling

Anti-Bullying & Dealing with Prejudice Related Incidents Policy

Reviewed on: 20th January 2025

Next Review due: Spring 2027

Signed by:

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Chair of Committee

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N. Ling', written over a horizontal line.

Headteacher

Introduction

This policy should be read and applied in conjunction with the school's behaviour policy, to which it is closely linked. Having a separate policy which complements the Behaviour policy will show pupils and parents that the school takes seriously the job of maintaining and improving the safety and happiness of the children. It also sends a signal to bullies that their behaviour is not acceptable.

This policy has been drawn up after consultation with staff, governors, children and parents.

This policy incorporates the Local Authority Advice and Guidance on *Dealing with Prejudice Related Incidents in Schools* (2009).

This policy incorporates the Dealing with Racist Incidents in Schools Advice and Guidance.

This Policy should be used in conjunction with the above Advice and Guidance Documents.

Aims of the Policy

- To work towards ensuring an environment where all children feel safe, happy and secure in school.
- To ensure that all pupils, staff, parents and governors have an understanding of what bullying and prejudice mean and their impact on the victim's emotional well-being.
- To ensure that all pupils, staff and parents have guidance and strategies to deal with and resolve bullying and prejudice related incidents when they occur.
- To eliminate racism and sexism in our school.
- To encourage children to behave in a responsible manner toward each other, taking responsibility for their own behaviour in accordance with our behaviour policy.
- To ensure that the curriculum teaches why bullying/prejudice is unacceptable and how it can be dealt with.

Underlying Principles

Each prejudice related incident holds unique and distinctive features, which need to be considered; schools' responses should be informed by the principles below. These principles need to be adopted if schools are to challenge and counter prejudice related incidents and ensure the wellbeing and achievement of all children and young people within the school community.

- All pupils are entitled to an education, which respects and values their identity, individuality and background and is free from prejudice, harassment and adverse discrimination.
- Prejudice related bullying could prevent children from learning and be a significant barrier to their achievement.
- Prejudice related bullying impacts on a child's social and emotional wellbeing.
- Strategies for dealing with discrimination need to be linked to the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policy.
- All staff, children, parents, carers and governors should be aware of the school's policy and procedures for dealing with prejudice related incidents.
- All allegations of prejudice related bullying should be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
- Schools should keep parents, carers and children informed during an investigation and advise them of any action that is taken. This should be discussed sensitively with the child or young person beforehand.
- Schools and the local authority will be open and honest in their dealings with pupils, parents, carers and members of local communities about prejudice related incidents and will value their help and support in tackling these issues.

Definition of Bullying (Peer on Peer Abuse)

From *Keeping Children Safe in Education* September 2022:

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with. The policy should reflect the different forms peer on peer abuse can take, make clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". It should be clear as to how victims of peer on peer abuse will be supported.

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- *bullying (including cyberbullying);*
- *physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;*
- *sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;*
- *sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;*
- *upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;*
- *sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and*
- *initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.*

All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

We consider that bullying is **repeated, deliberate** behaviour that makes another person feel threatened, distressed, hurt or upset. Occasionally the distress caused

may not be consciously intended by the perpetrator, this will depend upon the perpetrator's age and/or ability to understand the consequences of their behaviour.

Definition of Prejudice Related Incidents

A **racist incident** is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

A **disability related incident** is any incident which is perceived to be so by the victim or any other person.

A **homophobic/transgender related incident** is any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person. Furthermore, the victim does not have to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender to experience homophobic/transgender bullying, but may be targeted because they are perceived to be gay, or because a member of their family is gay, for example.

Forms of Bullying and Prejudice Related Incidents

Verbal (Name-Calling, Taunting, Mocking)

This covers name-calling, insults, threats and prejudice related 'jokes'; and incitement of others to behave in a prejudiced way. It also includes ridicule of a person's appearance, speech/accent, background, religion, culture; the regular use, consciously or unconsciously of offensive and discriminatory language. An example of this would be the 'casual' use of homophobic language such as the use of gay to mean stupid. Staff will challenge all such derogatory language.

Written

This includes offensive writing, drawings, emails and text messages as well as items posted on the web, including social networking sites.

Graffiti

This includes offensive writing and drawings in public places and anywhere in the school such as walls, desks, and toilets.

Physical

This includes a range of violent actions involving hitting, kicking, and the use of weapons, pushing, shoving or tripping someone.

Intimidation/coercion

This includes making fun of children and adults, offensive gestures, mimicry, intimidating body language and obstruction, for example when entering a school classroom or within the school environment, as well as making someone do or say something against their will.

Extortion

Extortion specifically relates to forcing someone to give up something they own, or have in their custody, such as money, personal possessions or school property.

Personal possessions taken or damaged

This includes deliberately damaging or breaking a person's property, spoiling or destroying a piece of work, hiding a pupil's bag, pens, shoes and other personal property or the school's property that is in the possession of or being used by the victim.

Isolation, being ignored or left out

This includes a refusal to sit next to or work with another child, for example, in working groups, lunchtime queues, and playground activities.

Spreading rumours

The spreading of rumours and/or malicious gossip, particularly with the intention of causing hurt those named in the rumours.

Cyber (Email, Internet, text)

Cyberbullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. As such, technology is often the vehicle for the bullying, and therefore spreading rumours, for example, may be done via the internet, and would therefore be both 'Spreading rumours' and 'Cyber.'

Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Sexual Violence refers to criminal acts: rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault, as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Sexual harassment is described as 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated.

Sexting

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages.

Other prejudice related incidents

This includes the wearing of specific badges, T-shirts carrying slogans or bringing discriminatory literature into school; attempting to recruit others to organisations and groups that promote any form of prejudice.

Normal Peer Conflict or Bullying?

The harm caused by bullying/prejudice should not be underestimated. It can cause considerable stress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development.

Normal Peer Conflict	Bullying
Equal power or friends.	Imbalance of power – not friends.
Happens occasionally.	Repeated unwelcome actions.
Accidental or not premeditated harm.	Deliberate harm or the threat of physical or emotional harm.
Not seeking power or attention.	Seeking power, control of material things.
Generally not trying to get something.	May attempt to get material things or power.
Remorse – will take responsibility.	No remorse – may blame the victim.

Action we can take to prevent bullying/prejudice related incidents

It is important that we create an atmosphere in school where victims of bullying/prejudice feel able to tell an adult what is happening; put their side of the argument; and know that they will be listened to and heeded. Also children accused of bullying/prejudice behaviour should feel able to tell their side of the story and be listened to.

How this can be achieved:

- Raise the awareness of what bullying and prejudice are through direct teaching – PSHE and incidental discussions, including assemblies.
- All members of the school community creating a caring, calm, ordered and friendly atmosphere in school.
- Parents are informed of incidents of bullying/prejudice by the child's class teacher and offered advice on how to support their child, be they victim or perpetrator.
- Children feel valued, by means of teaching through the curriculum and displays; recognition of achievement; rewards and celebrating varied heritages.
- Ensure that consistent behaviour management and high quality activities are available at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- All members of the school community follow policy and are consistent when handling incidents.
- The promotion of anti-bullying/prejudice campaigns, eg Anti-Bullying Week.
- Canvass pupils' views on the extent and nature of bullying.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

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

- refuses to go outside at break times or refuses to stay at school for school dinners
- requests to change classes or school
- behaves immaturely, i.e. the child reverts to a previous behaviour such as thumb-sucking

- becomes withdrawn, clingy, moody, uncooperative or non-communicative
- finds it difficult to concentrate or school performance deteriorates
- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine – time leaving or route taken to/from school
- 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
- self-harms (eg scratches themselves)
- 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 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 or jumpy when a text/MSN message or email is received
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

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

Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism

Pupils who are exposed to bullying are more vulnerable to radicalisation. See the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (and revisions) for further information. Suffolk Prevent Risk Assessment - Extremism and Radicalisation in Education Settings is in place, please use for guidance.

Responding to Bullying or Prejudice Related Incidents

All prejudiced behaviour should be treated as a serious matter. It is crucially important that the member of staff who first encounters the incident shows firm disapproval and takes positive action to deal with the situation. A failure to respond could be seen as condoning prejudiced behaviour and could discourage pupils and parents / carers from reporting incidents and sharing their concerns with staff.

Prompt, appropriate and consistent responses from all members of staff can encourage pupils who might otherwise suffer in silence to report incidents and share their concerns and worries. In dealing with the perpetrators of prejudice related bullying or other discriminatory incidents, **it is important that it is the behaviour that is disapproved of and not the pupils themselves.**

Effective action could include:

- drawing the perpetrator to one side and explaining clearly and calmly why the behaviour was wrong and hurtful or offensive;
- seeking an assurance that the pupil understands why the behaviour was wrong and that it will not be repeated;
- correcting any misinformation that was used as part of the prejudice related behaviour;
- where an assurance is forthcoming, asking the pupil to apologise for his or her action, where possible mediate between the children or young people;
- investigating the background or particular circumstances which led up to the incident – witnesses should be sought to verify the account;
- referring the matter, where appropriate, to a senior member of staff for disciplinary action;
- arranging a meeting or informing the parents / carers in order to make it clear to them that such behaviour is unacceptable and that further disciplinary action will be taken if there is any repetition (if such behaviour appears to be condoned or encouraged by the parents, staff should refer the parents to the headteacher) ;
- in appropriate cases, considering the use of positive strategies other than sanctions and punishment that might help and encourage the pupil to overcome his or her prejudices and to desist from engaging in similar behaviour in the future;
- checking the recording and reporting data to see if the pupil has been involved in any earlier incidents. If this is the case, a senior member of staff should meet with the parents / carers of the perpetrator. The meeting should enlist the support of these parents and carers to stop such behaviour and to stress that a similar incident in the future could have serious consequences for the child. In some cases, this could lead to a fixed-term or permanent exclusion and possible action by the police if the aggrieved victim took action against the perpetrator.
- Safe to Learn: Homophobic Bullying, (DCSF-00668-2007) contains detailed, step-by-step approaches for dealing with homophobic incidents, including scripted responses for how to support a pupil who has been the victim of homophobic bullying as well as ideas for how to address homophobic bullying at Key Stage 1, 2, 3, 4 and 16+.

Recording and Reporting Procedures

Members of school staff may not be sure when they should record an incident as prejudice-related following remarks made by children related to ethnicity, culture, religion, disability or homophobia. The following questions may be helpful to assist this decision.

- If the answer to any of the following 3 questions is 'Yes' then the incident should be recorded:
- was anyone offended/hurt/upset by the remark?
- would a representative of the community concerned have been offended? (If in doubt record)

- was the way the remark was formulated or delivered derogatory, mocking or negative about the group or individual or character concerned? (if in doubt record)

Every incident that is perceived to be based on prejudice should be reported and recorded, however minor it may appear at the time.

- All bullying or prejudice related incidents must be recorded on the CPOMS.
- The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will be responsible for overseeing the reporting procedure and monitoring the incidence of prejudice related incidents on a regular basis.
- The information provided by these records will be reported termly to governors by the Headteacher and provide data for the annual statistical return to the local authority. It is a legal requirement for racist incidents to be reported.
- The record of incidents will be completed by teachers and teaching assistants. Other members of staff should report incidents to the class teacher or a member of senior staff for action to be taken.

Following up an incident

It is often helpful, once the immediate situation has been dealt with, for staff to reflect on the incident, to consider what further action may be necessary in respect of the perpetrator and victim and to see if there are any lessons to be learned from the experience.

Effective action could include:

- Considering the actions of the perpetrator to see if there were any underlying causes which may have prompted this behaviour;
- Checking data records to see if the pupil has been involved in any previous incidents. If this is the case, a senior member of staff should meet with the parents of the perpetrator, seek their support in stopping such behaviour and make them aware that a similar incident in the future could have serious consequences for their child;
- Monitoring the perpetrator's future behaviour;
- Considering which other members of staff need to be informed, for example, the headteacher, key stage leader or class teacher;
- Checking to see if there are any times in the school day, or any places in the school, where pupils feel particularly vulnerable. If so, try to find ways of overcoming this. For example, if incidents have occurred in the playground, check that staff are on the alert for such behaviour at lunch and break times;
- Considering if it would be beneficial to discuss the issues further in a school assembly or class discussion. This requires careful judgement. It may expose the victim in an embarrassing and uncomfortable way and could be treated inappropriately by other pupils. On the other hand, it may be an opportunity to develop positive attitudes towards diversity. This will help pupils to understand the damaging effects of prejudice and the determination of the school to combat this.
- Asking all members of staff to keep a protective eye on a known victim(s) of prejudice and taking positive steps over time to build up their trust and to encourage them to report any further incidents;

- Making sure all members of staff are alert for other pupils who may be suffering in silence;
- Asking all members of staff to keep a watchful eye on known perpetrators to prevent further prejudiced incidents.
- Further bullying prevention work may be undertaken as part of the curriculum.

Consequences & Support

Consequences for the inappropriate actions of the perpetrator are important but may not prevent further incidents of bullying. It is, therefore, essential that the perpetrator is helped to understand the impact of their actions; the reasons for their actions and then given strategies and support to prevent recurrence. This may require long-term in-school support and the involvement of external agencies.

Consequences may include: the bully (bullies) may be asked to apologise. Other sanctions/consequences may take place e.g. loss of playtime, isolation (at break time and/or lunch time) parents might be informed, and/or exclusion.

Support for the victim may include: 1:1 time with an adult to help build self-esteem; peer support; a “trusted” adult at lunchtime who is fully aware of the issues and can offer protection; regular home-school contact between parents and teachers; “open-door” policy for parents with class teacher and senior leaders; access to nurture group facilities.

Support for the perpetrator may include: If possible, the children will be reconciled through a restorative conversation approach, 1:1 time with an adult to help build self-esteem and social skills; social skills group; peer support; a “trusted” adult at lunchtime who is fully aware of the issues and is able to rapidly intervene in any incident; regular home-school contact between parents and teachers; “open-door” policy for parents with class teacher and senior leaders; access to nurture group facilities; pastoral support programme if a risk of permanent exclusion.

Conclusion

We will not be able to eradicate bullying entirely, but by becoming vigilant and raising the awareness of the children to bullying as a cause for concern, we reduce the general level of bullying within the school, and ensure that incidents are reported and dealt with promptly.