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## OP. Anti-bullying Policy (including cyber bullying)

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<b>Recommended by:</b>	Principal
<b>Recommendation Date:</b>	April 2021
<b>Ratified by:</b>	LAGB
<b>Signed:</b>	 _____
<b>Position on the Board:</b>	Chair of LAGB _____
<b>Ratification Date</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
<b>Next Review:</b>	April 2024
<b>Policy Tier (Central/Hub/School):</b>	School (OP)

## **Statement of Intent**

***Oldbury Park Primary RSA Academy is committed to ensuring an environment free from bullying and harassment.***

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying, racism and homophobic or biphobia issues of any kind will not be tolerated in our school. Anyone who knows of any such incident is expected to report it and tell a member of the school staff. All children have an absolute right to be educated in a safe and secure environment. All pupils must be aware of the distress these incidents can cause and not ignore anything they see or hear.

Oldbury Park recognises the importance and value in dealing with the issue of bullying, racist, sexual, and homophobic or biphobia incidents. The school expects all members of its community to be aware of any incidents and know what action to be taken. There is no justification whatsoever for this behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form. Bullying, racist, sexual, and homophobic or biphobia incidents or behaviour is an issue for both bully and the victim. Both parties will be dealt with in positive and constructive ways which provides opportunities for change and development for the bully and victim alike.

The school also recognises and values the home / school partnership in dealing with these incidents. Effective management of these incidents is a shared responsibility involving all adults who work in school, alongside pupils and parents.

## **Framework**

This policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:

- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying' •
- DfE (2018) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy

### **Definition of Bullying**

For the purpose of this policy, “bullying” is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

### **Types of bullying**

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (Cyber)

**Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion, or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

**Homophobic/biphobia bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

**Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person’s gender ‘variance’ or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

**Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate, or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

**Sexual bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal, or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

**Prejudicial bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.

**Relational bullying:** Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating, and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

### **Preventing bullying in our School**

Keeping all pupils safe is a commitment shared with the whole school community at regular points throughout the academic year. We also continually highlight the different forms of bullying and how all stakeholders should respond to any form of bullying through assemblies, the curriculum and at an individual level.

Pupils are positively encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying and parents who believe their children are the victims of bullying should report their concerns to school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in the future.

### **Dealing with an Incident of bullying**

Staff will challenge unpleasantness between pupils at all levels and treat allegations of bullying seriously. In all such cases the school reacts firmly and promptly in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Any pupil who has knowledge of an incident of bullying whether directed personally or towards others should speak to a trusted adult.
2. Where possible, information will be confidential.
3. All adults working in school should be vigilant both in class and around the school. Any pupil who feels threatened for any reason should be listened to, taken seriously, and given appropriate support.
4. Cases should be directed for prompt attention in the usual route:  
Class teacher → Phase Leader → Senior Leadership team.
5. Incidents are recorded on behaviour logs via Myconcern and staff members should alert the appropriate Phase Leader and Principal.
6. An early enquiry should be instigated with evidence from witnesses and victim(s) as appropriate and parents notified as soon as possible, that an incident occurred in school.
7. Where there is proof or strong suspicion, parents of both parties should be involved at an early stage.
8. Assistance of Support Services (e.g. Educational Psychologist) could be enlisted at an appropriate stage to help counsel the victim in appropriate ways of counteracting incidents of bullying, and where necessary advise on strategies to modify behaviour of the instigator.
9. Sanctions should be applied in cases where bullying is proven. These may include:
  - Engagement with the instigator to reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable
  - Education of the bully regarding issues such as racism, sexism, and homophobia
  - Signing of a contract
  - Internal exclusion
  - Exclusion from school at specific times e.g. lunchtime
  - Fixed Term Exclusion from school

- The police will be involved where necessary.
- Permanent Exclusion from school

### **Post Incident Response for Victims of Bullying**

We offer a proactive, sympathetic, and supportive response to any victims of bullying; the support provided in each case will be assessed on an individual basis. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the pupil's individual needs and may include:

- Positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- Sympathy and empathy
- Strategies to stop future incidents
- 1-1 Thrive sessions
- Friendship buddy
- Extra supervision and monitoring
- Creation of a Support Group
- Peer mediation / mentoring
- Informing and involving parents
- Parents contacted daily or weekly to update on progress

### **Cyber-Bullying**

Cyber-bullying takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites. Like other forms of bullying, it is the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

### **Preventing and Addressing Cyber-Bullying**

To help prevent cyber-bullying, we will ensure that pupils understand what it is and what to do if they become aware of it happening to them or others. We will ensure that pupils know how they can report any incidents and are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than the victim.

The school will actively discuss cyber-bullying with pupils, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be.

In relation to a specific incident of cyber-bullying, the school will follow the processes set out in the school behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate, or harmful material has been spread among pupils, the school will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the incident is contained. The DSL will consider whether the incident should be reported to the police if it involves illegal material and will work with external services if it is deemed necessary to do so.

### **Examining Electronic Devices**

School staff have the specific power under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (which has been increased by the Education Act 2011) to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices, including mobile phones, iPads, and other tablet devices, where

they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so. When deciding whether there is a good reason to examine or erase data or files on an electronic device, staff must reasonably suspect that the data or file in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm and/or break school rules.

If inappropriate material is found on the device, it is up to the staff member in conjunction with the DSL or other member of the senior leadership team to decide whether they should:

- delete that material, or
- retain it as evidence (of a criminal offence or a breach of school discipline), and/or
- report it to the police. Any complaints about searching for or deleting inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices will be dealt with through the school complaints procedure.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating**

Any incidents of bullying should be recorded on the school Myconcern system in a consistent way that allows for the ongoing monitoring of behaviour. The DSL will monitor behaviour logs and analyse these on a half termly basis and more frequently if necessary, for individual pupils.

***Following the above protocols will enable us to maintain a happy and safe environment for everyone.***