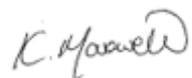


APPLEGARTH PRIMARY SCHOOL



Anti – Bullying policy

Document Status

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Statement of intent

At Applegarth, we believe that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment. This means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive culture as set out in the Vision and Values of the school:

“Our school community will be able to celebrate their own unique qualities whilst showing respect and care for the diverse and ever-changing world around them.”

Children need to feel confident to approach a member of staff with any concerns. Taking these concerns seriously and leaving the child with the feeling that the matter has been dealt with and resolved is the key to an effective anti-bullying procedure.

All staff, families and pupils work together to prevent or quickly resolve all instances of bullying at the school. Our pupils know that we do not tolerate bullying at Applegarth.

1. Definition

We have adopted The Anti-Bullying Alliance's definition of bullying as:

"The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online."

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.

We teach our younger pupils to identify potential bullying using a hook:

STOP (Several Times On Purpose)

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.

Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils with SEND
- LGBTQIA+
- Young carers
- Pupils who are looked after or previously looked after
- Pupils suffering from a mental or physical health problem

2. Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to a variety of characteristics: appearance; race and faith (including Gypsy Roma Traveller and Show people); gender; sexual-orientation (LGBTQIA+); looked after status; mental and physical health issues; young carers; and SEND are **some** of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online

3. Roles and responsibilities

The **Governing Body** is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory.
- The strategic implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.

The **Headteacher** is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a record of all reported incidents on CPOMS, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly interval to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members (including through staff induction).

Teachers and Support Staff:

- Treat all reports of bullying seriously never ignoring signs of suspected bullying.
- Make sure unkindness from one pupil towards another is always challenged and never ignored.
- Act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.
- Always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to, or there is a safeguarding concern.
- Will inform the DSL immediately if they believe a pupil is in danger.
- Provide follow-up support to both the victim and bully following any incidents.
- Create seating plans organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying.
- Offer opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Informing their child's teacher or the Headteacher without delay if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involved in bullying in any way.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing staff members of any changes.
- Completing the annual Anti-Bullying questionnaire to help school leaders identify bullying issues and hotspots.

Pupils' responsibilities:

What can you do if you are being bullied?

ACT

Acknowledge - Are you OK?

Care - You are not on your own.

Tell - You need to let others help.

Wherever you are in school, you have the right to feel safe. Nobody has the right to make you feel unhappy. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people who can help you.

A sample of our pupils were asked this question and we have included some of their strategies in the list below:

- Try not to let the bully know that they are making you feel upset.
- Be assertive – stand up to them, look at them directly in the eye, tell them to stop and mean it.
- Stay in a group, bullies usually pick on individuals.
- Get away as quickly as you can.
- Tell someone you can trust – it can be a teacher, a teaching assistant, a midday supervisor, a parent, a friend, a brother, a sister or a relative.
- If you are scared, ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
- If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and give it someone.
- When you tell an adult about the bullying give them as many facts as you can (What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?).
- Keep a diary of what's been happening and refer to it when you tell someone.
- Make a noise about bullying and share your worries. **Mina says, "You need to act!"**
- Praise yourself and know you've done the right thing by telling someone.
- Call a helpline (such as the NSPCC 0800 800 5000).

What can you do if you see someone else being bullied? (*The role of the bystander*)

THINK
True, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary, Kind

There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger. The children have also discussed this question in class and some of the strategies they suggested are listed below:

- Don't smile or laugh at the situation.
- Keep calm.
- Never to join in.
- If safe to do so, encourage the bully to stop their behaviour.
- **Finley W believes it's important to ask the victim what they want, "See how they would like to be helped."**
- If they want you to, let the victim(s) know that you are going to get help.
- Tell a member of staff as soon as you can.
- Try and befriend the person being bullied.
- Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.
- Ask someone you trust about what to do.
- If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and pass it on.

4. Prevention

The most effective way to deal with bullying is to stop it from happening in the first place. Prevention is a prominent aspect of Applegarth's anti-bullying strategy.

- We have an Anti-Bullying Action Plan which is written by leaders, governors and staff.
- The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which is regularly promoted across the whole school.
- All members of the school are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.
- A safe place, supervised by a teacher, is available for pupils to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone. Quiet board games are in Mrs Cross' class and Construction Club is in The Library.
- Before a vulnerable pupil joins the school, the DSL will develop a strategy to prevent bullying from happening – this will include giving the pupil a buddy to help integrate them into the school.
- The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.
- The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.
- The School Council are actively involved in planning Anti-Bullying Week each year, and anti-bullying education is taught through collective worship, PSHE and the wider curriculum throughout the school year.
- Pupil Ambassadors suggested fencing off any blind spots or making sure staff supervise these areas carefully to avoid them becoming hotspots. The tyres and timber trail were mentioned specifically.
- We cover all aspects of bullying through PSHE sessions and collective worship. We supplement this with targeted literature to raise awareness of bullying and its impact:

EYFS & KS1

- *Troll Stinks* by Jeanne Willis and Tony Ross
- *Peggy the Always Sorry Pigeon* by Wendy Meddour and Carmen Saldana
- *How to Be a Lion* by Ed Vere
- *Weirdo* by Zaidi Smith
- *My Shadow is Pink* by Scott Stewart

KS2

- *Fuzzy Mud* by Louis Sachar
- *Cloud Busting* by Malorie Blackman
- *The Boy in the Dress* by David Walliams and Quentin Blake
- *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio



5. Signs of bullying

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school.
- Asking to be driven to school.
- Unwillingness to attend school.
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence.
- Saying that they feel ill in the morning.
- Decreased involvement in schoolwork.
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions.
- Missing possessions.
- Cuts or bruises.
- Lack of appetite.
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices.
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages.
- Lack of eye contact.
- Becoming short tempered.
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home.

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating.

Pupils who display a significant number of these signs are approached by a member of staff, to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the **Headteacher**, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

6. Child on Child Abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons, in line with the Prevention section of this policy.

All staff will:

- Be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers.
- Be aware that abuse can occur inside and outside of school settings.
- Be aware of the scale of harassment or abuse, and that just because it is not being reported does not mean it is not happening.
- Take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims.
- Never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”, and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as “boys being boys”, as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours and one that risks normalising abuse.

- Be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing or initiation-type violence.
- Always challenge any harmful physical behaviour that is sexual in nature, such as inappropriate touching. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Sexual harassment in particular can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Telling sexual stories, making sexual remarks, or calling someone sexualised names.
- Sexual taunting.
- Deliberately brushing against someone.
- Displaying images or video of a sexual nature.
- Upskirting (this is a criminal offence).
- Online sexual harassment, e.g. creating or sharing sexual imagery, sexual comments on social media, or sexual coercion or threats.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to children’s social care and potentially the police, where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

All staff will be aware and sensitive towards the fact that pupils may not be ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused. Pupils being abused may feel embarrassed, humiliated, scared, or threatened.

The school’s Child-on-Child Abuse Policy outlines the school’s stance on addressing child-on-child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed. More information on the school’s approach to preventing and managing instances of child-on-child abuse can be found within this policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

7. Online Bullying

Online bullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Online bullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages.
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips.
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress.
- Silent or abusive phone calls.
- Using the victim’s phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible.
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else’s name.
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom.
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging.
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites.

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and online bullying may take other forms.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to online bullying. The school views online bullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

All members of staff will receive training on *Keeping Children Safe Online (NSPCC)*, in order to identify pupils who may be experiencing issues and intervene effectively.

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is being cyberbullied:

- Avoiding use of the computer.
- Being on their phone routinely.
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages.

Staff will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a pupil is bullying others online:

- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near.
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer or mobile phone.
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone.
- Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away.

Parents/Carers will also be invited to attend **annual** training sessions in order to educate them on the signs and symptoms of online bullying, and will be advised to report to the Headteacher if their child displays any of the signs outlined in this section.

All learning at home will follow procedures outlined in the Remote Education Policy. During times when remote education is being utilised, the school will frequently be in contact with parents to make them aware of their activities online, but also to reinforce the importance of pupils staying safe online, and explaining how filtering and monitoring procedures work.

Staff will be aware that an Online Bullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- **Possible extensive scale and scope** – pupils may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online.
- **The anytime and anywhere nature of Online Bullying** – pupils may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times.
- **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and pupils may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity.
- **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to pupils crossing boundaries without realising.
- **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – pupils may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator.

Staff and pupils will be instructed not to respond or retaliate to online bullying incidents. Evidence of the incident should be recorded, e.g. taking screenshots. Staff will report incidents to their line manager or the Headteacher for the incident to be investigated and support to be provided. Pupils will report incidents to a trusted member of staff.

Where offensive content is posted online targeting a staff member or pupil, the person targeted will be encouraged to use the reporting mechanism on the website or social media platform to request its removal.

Pupils and families are encouraged to keep evidence of Online Bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to online bullying.

Where the person who has posted it is known to the school, the Headteacher will request they remove it directly.

The school will support pupils who have been victims of online bullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with this policy.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. In these cases, the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy will be followed.

8. Procedures

Incidents are reported to the Headteacher, who investigates the incident, sets appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and informs the parents/carers of the victim of the incident and outcome.

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:

- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately **within two school day from the allegation being made.**
- Members of staff make every effort to prevent the possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed, including electronic communication.
- If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to receive first aid or be referred for medical attention.
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews.
- A witness is used for serious incidents.
- If appropriate, the alleged bully, the victim and witnesses, are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture.
- Premature assumptions are not made; it is important not to be judgemental at this stage.
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete.
- All concerned pupils are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils
- Parents/Carers are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken **within 7 school days.**
- If the Headteacher is not able to determine whether or not bullying has taken place, the matter will be referred to another member of the leadership team (e.g. SLT or a governor) for further investigation. A response will be given in this case **within 15 school days.**

9. Sanctions

If the Headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents. The Headteacher informs the pupil of the type of sanction to be used in this instance and future sanctions if the bullying continues.

The following sanctions may be used:

- Report to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher
- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally and/or in writing
- Loss of privileges
- Restoration time during break and lunch to reflect on modifying behaviours
- Spend playtimes and lunchtimes under close supervision with an adult
- Parents/Carers and pupil attend a meeting in school
- Be removed from class and work in isolation
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

If possible, the **Headteacher** will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion is used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully.

The perpetrator is made to realise, by speaking **once per week** with the learning mentor, that pupils do not appreciate the distress they are causing, and that they should change their behaviour. The **teacher/s** monitor all pupils involved (through check ins) over the next **half term** and records a summary once a week on CPOMS.

10. Support

Victim

- For a month after the initial complaint of bullying, the **learning mentor** holds an informal discussion, on a **weekly** basis with the victim, to check whether the bullying has stopped.
- The **Headteacher** holds a formal meeting with the family, on a **monthly** basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped – these formal meetings will continue to take place **once a month** until the **Headteacher** and victim are confident the bullying has stopped.
- If necessary, group dynamics are broken up by members of staff by assigning places in classes.
- The victim is encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.
- The victim is encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school club or activity.
- The school, particularly the **DSL**, will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional therapy.

Perpetrator

- The pupils' **teacher/s** will consider a Person-Centred Behaviour Plan.
- Social and emotional interventions will be considered: Zones of Regulation, Drawing and Talking etc.
- The school will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

11. Follow-up support

The progress of both the bully and the victim are monitored by their **teachers**. If appropriate, follow-up correspondence is arranged with parents **one month** after the incident.

Pupils who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:

- Being listened to.

- Having an immediate opportunity to meet with their Headteacher or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being reassured.
- Being offered continued support.
- Being offered counselling, where appropriate.

Pupils who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions.
- Being able to discuss what happened.
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved.
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour.
- Appropriate assistance from parents/carers.

Pupils who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the DSL will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to CAMHS.

In cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that the pupil cannot successfully reintegrate back into the school, the Headteacher and DSL will look to transfer the pupil to another mainstream school.

Where a child has developed such complex needs that alternative provision is required, the pupil who has been the victim of bullying, their parents, the Headteacher and DSL will meet to discuss the use of alternative provision.

12. Bullying outside of school

The Headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on an educational visit.

The Headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil.

If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed (NPCC *When to Call the Police – Guidance for School and Colleges*).

13. Record keeping

The DSL will ensure that robust records are kept on CPOMS with regard to all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions.

The Headteacher and DSL will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:

- Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain pupils that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
- Reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.
- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school, e.g. whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.
- Responding to any complaints about how cases have been handled.

Appendices

i) Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- DCMS, DSIT, and UK Council for Internet Safety (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- PSHE and RSE Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Remote Education Policy

ii) Statutory implications

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the school's Behaviour Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

The Headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the Headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.