



Preventing Bullying Policy

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1. Legislation, Regulations and Standards

REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

Independent School Standards 2019

Part 3; Welfare, Health & Safety of Pupils: Standard 10 – ‘Ensure that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy’.

The Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015

Part 5: Regulation 34: Policies for the Protection of Children (Part 3) - The registered person must prepare and implement a policy for the prevention of bullying in the home, which must in particular set out the procedure for dealing with an allegation of bullying.

Regulation 11: The positive relationships standard

Regulation 19: Behaviour management and discipline

Regulation 45: Review of the quality of care

National Minimum Standard for Residential Special Schools

The Equality Act 2010

Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Malicious Communications Act 1988

Communications Act 2003

Human Rights Act 1998

2. Aims and Objectives

All members of the Amberleigh Care community have a right to learn and work in a safe, secure and positive environment. Bullying of any kind is wholly unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Amberleigh Care recognises its duties under the Education Act 2011 and Education and Inspections Act 2006 and acknowledges the obligations associated with the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998 prohibiting discrimination. Amberleigh Care follows the guidance laid out in the DfE publication ‘Preventing and Tackling Bullying’ (2017).

As a registered Children’s Home, Amberleigh Care follows the guidance laid out in the Children’s Home Regulations 2015 (England).

We also follow HM Government advice ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’ (2015) and ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (2018).

It is the intention of the procedures within this policy to ensure that appropriate action is taken immediately where it is believed an individual may be at risk or it is alleged that an individual is suspected of being bullied or is bullying others. The prime concern at all times must be the interests and safety of all members of Amberleigh Care community including young people, staff and visitors.

3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as behaviour or actions of a person, group of people or a whole organisation designed to cause distress or to hurt a person or group of people. Bullying can be either physical or emotional. Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups e.g. size/weight, religion, gender, sexual orientation, race or because someone is adopted, has caring responsibilities or is in the care system. Bullying is persistent, repetitive and targeted negative behaviour.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures);
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- **Sexual Orientation** - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality;
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
- **Online bullying** - e.g. using mobile phones or social networking sites to intimidate or bully others.
- **Indirect** – intimidation, isolation, writing on books, bags and walls or displaying literature or materials of a racist, sexist or pornographic nature.

4. Whole School Preventative Measures

Staff must be alert to the risk of bullying and should take all reasonable steps to prevent such behaviour. This includes:

- Implementing a clear policy within the home/school that bullying is not acceptable
- Undertaking risk assessments at point of referral and at appropriate stages thereafter
- Providing information and guidance to students
- Providing clarity to students on acceptable behaviours
- Drafting contracts with relevant students if required
- Help students acquire positive social attitudes by teaching them to respect and relate to other students
- Have discussions about bullying and why it matters including use of external visitors (community police officer)
- Regular discussions about bullying and addressing specific behaviours within the daily community meetings
- Encourage Awareness days, such as Anti-Bullying week to ensure students are informed and knowledgeable

All staff have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Everyone involved in looking after students, shares responsibility for countering bullying and for creating a culture which positively encourages acceptable behaviour and reduces or prevents the likelihood of bullying.

As part of this ethos, everyone must understand what bullying means and what measures should be taken within the home and school and by individual staff to counter bullying.

Everyone should also be clear what measures they should take if they suspect bullying or it is reported to them.

In this respect, everyone should be alert to the fact that bullying may constitute Significant Harm and, if so, must be reported under the Child Protection Referrals Procedure.

The home/school's response to bullying should not start at the point at which the child has been bullied. Instead intelligence should be gathered about issues between student which may provoke bullying. Strategies can then be developed to prevent bullying occurring.

An ethos of good behaviour, where students treat one another and the staff with respect, is the best form of preventing bullying as this models the right way to behave.

Values of respect and a clear understanding of how the actions of individuals affects others should permeate the home/school environment and be reinforced by staff and older students who set a good example to others.

5. Curriculum Support

The school will raise awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through a combination of tutor group sessions, the school council, PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) and other areas of the school curriculum as appropriate e.g.

- Providing opportunities for student to explore issues of bullying e.g. through writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- Reading stories to students about bullying or having stories read to them
- Making use of role-play
- Exploration of issues of bullying through drama
- Awareness weeks

This work is complimented by the extended community meetings and independence programmes.

6. Intervention

Disciplinary measures are in place for students who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Any disciplinary measure taken must be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the student may have.

It is important to consider the motivations behind the bullying and whether it reveals any concerns for the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child carrying out the bullying behaviour may need support. Successful interventions include:

- **Involvement of student:** All students should understand the home/school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including if they find themselves as a bystander.
- **Evaluation:** Update the home/school approach to bullying taking account of developments e.g. in technology and acceptable use of computers. Review the preventing bullying policy annually
- **Implementation of disciplinary sanctions:** Ensure the consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident.
- **Discussions:** Openly discuss the differences between people such as ethnicity, disability, sexuality, gender, religion, age etc. Teach student that prejudice based language is unacceptable.
- **Use of specific resources/organisations:** Draw on the experience of experts in anti-bullying.
- **Provision of effective staff training:** Ensure all staff understand the principles and purpose of the home/school's prevention of bullying and behaviour policies, the legal responsibilities of staff with regard to bullying, how to resolve problems and where to seek help.
- **Creating an inclusive environment:** create a safe environment where students can openly discuss bullying without fear of further bullying or discrimination. Make it easy for students to report bullying assuring them that they will be listened to.
- **Multi-Agency Working:** Involvement from care and therapy to support the young person and support any trauma work that may have resulted in bullying behaviour or trigger any negative emotions or feelings.
- **Responding to a bullying complaint:** The school takes all complaints very seriously from students, parents, staff and external sources, please refer to our School Complaint Policy for further information.

7. Risk Assessment and Planning

Each young person has an individual risk assessment which informs possible risks and strategies for intervention. Dynamics of relationships and groups is considered as part of this and highlights any tendencies to target or upset specific individuals with strategies in place.

As part of the assessment and planning process, the Manager of the home and Head Teacher must ensure that a Risk Assessment is conducted on each student to ascertain whether he may be a victim or perpetrator of bullying. If there is any risk, it should be addressed in the young persons' Placement Plan with details of the strategies that must be adopted to prevent or reduce the bullying.

If risk is not identified in the child's Placement Plan, then refer to section 8 Countering Bullying Day-to-Day

8. Countering Bullying Day-to-Day

If staff have any concerns, they must discuss them with colleagues and the Registered Manager/Head Teacher; who should take what actions are necessary to reduce or prevent it. It may be appropriate to convene a meeting, preferably with the young person/people concerned, to discuss strategies to prevent or reduce the bullying. This may include the following:

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise;
- In serious cases (see Section 6, Notifications, Recording and Review), some form of sanction or exclusion from the other young person will be considered;
- If possible, the young people will be reconciled; through a restorative process
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be continuously monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

If the bullying is persistent or serious, the social worker should be consulted and it may be necessary to conduct a Placement Planning Meetings or a Strategy Discussion in line with Child Protection Referral Procedures.

If the home/school manager is unavailable, staff may take what immediate actions are necessary to reduce or prevent bullying from occurring and then inform the Manager as soon as practicable.

9. Staff Training

Amberleigh School is committed to training all professional staff in effective anti-bullying work including:

- The principles and purpose of our policy
- How to resolve bullying problems
- Where to seek support

10. Notifications, Recording and Review

Minor or Non Persistent Bullying

Where bullying is not persistent or not serious it should be notified to The Registered Manager/Head Teacher at the first opportunity; the manager will decide whether to inform the social worker and what further actions to take.

Persistent or Serious Bullying

Serious or persistent bullying must be notified immediately to the Home's Manager and the relevant Social Worker notified within 1 working day - the social worker should be consulted and consideration given to whether a Child Protection Referral should be made, if so, see Child Protection Referrals Procedure.

Recording and Review

All incidents must be recorded in the Home/School's Daily Log (Handover) and relevant young person's daily Record.

An Incident Report / Significant Conversation must also be completed on CPOMS (with the specific category of bullying e.g. verbal/physical/online identified and highlighted so that different incidents of bullying can be tracked and monitored as required). This is shared with the community for awareness.

The Young Person's Placement Plan should be reviewed with a view to incorporating strategies to reduce or prevent future incidents. The Young Persons Risk Assessment will also be updated.

The Registered Manager/Head Teacher is responsible for reviewing the incidents and nature of bullying as part regular Quality Audits.

The Head Teacher is responsible for 'behaviour and safety' in the school and will need to demonstrate the impact of the prevention of bullying policy to Ofsted.