



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

At Tor View School we have a zero tolerance policy with regards to bullying. This includes pupils/students, staff and cyber bullying.

Statement for Inclusion for the school brochure

Tor View School is totally opposed to bullying in any of its forms and it will not be tolerated in school. We have a comprehensive anti-bullying policy which operates within Tor View. All pupils, parents and staff are made aware of the content of the policy and what to do should a pupil feel they are being bullied and what to do with a perpetrator.

We are committed to providing a safe, caring environment for all students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure environment.

Principle

The principle underpinning any anti-bullying policy is one of ensuring that all our pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; all teachers will make their own judgements about each specific case.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need 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; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

At Tor View School we endeavour to comply with the new Equality Duty.

The Act also makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way it provides education for pupils, provision of pupil access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Safeguarding children and young people

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, staff at Tor View School will report their concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as per the Child Protection Flow Chart. The school Online Safety Policy further details how pupils are kept safe when using the internet and mobile technology.

Criminal law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If staff at Tor View School feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from a member of the senior management team.

Bullying outside school premises and extended school activities

Senior members of staff have 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 senior staff members the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. 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 should be investigated and acted on. The senior member of staff should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 gives teacher's stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images or files on electronic devices, including mobile phones. The senior member of staff must be informed of any such incidents beforehand.

Dealing with bullying

At Tor View School any kind of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with anti-bullying laws and guidance and at the senior member of staff's discretion. All staff working at Tor View School will follow the procedure to monitoring any kind of bullying related behaviour. This involves the class/form teacher being informed along with the head of department.

Pupils who **have been bullied** should be supported by:

- being offered an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a key worker or member of staff of their choice
- being reassured
- provided continuous support
- restored self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils who **have bullied** will also be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- informing parents or carers to help change the attitude of the pupil.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken (broadly in order from least to most important):

- sanctions as agreed in the School Behaviour Policy
- detention
- official warnings to cease offending
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- minor fixed-term exclusion
- major fixed-term exclusion
- there should be the opportunity for restorative approaches in order to address the hurt and damage incurred.

Prevention

At Tor View School we have created an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. We reward pupils for their good behaviour. Values of respect for pupils and staff, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest. We use our PSHCE lessons and our assemblies that follow the SEAL themes to teach our pupils and students about bullying.

It is essential that staff try to understand the reason and the purpose of the bullying, for instance, a pupil might be wanting/needing attention but doesn't know how to get it appropriately or might be trying to communicate. Staff need to be aware and alert to individual circumstances of pupils, e.g. pupils who come from mainstream schools to Tor View may have been the victim of bullying. These pupils should be closely monitored to prevent them from becoming a perpetrator. We work closely with parents and passenger assistants to manage behaviour to and from school and within the community.

Intervention

We will apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of their special educational needs or disabilities. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

All cases of bullying will be immediately sanctioned. We hope the consistent approaches and relevant sanctions used will be a learning opportunity for the pupils.

At Tor View School we will also:

- **involve parents** to ensure that they are clear that our school does not tolerate bullying and to make them aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents feel confident that we will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child. We will ask that parents reinforce the value of good behaviour at home;
- **involve pupils.** All pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders;
- **regularly evaluate** and update the approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers;
- **implement disciplinary sanctions.** The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable;
- **openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying,** such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, gender identity or sexuality. Also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. We also teach children that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable;
- **use resources for help with particular problems.** We have numerous resources to help pupils and students learn about bullying. We also have contact with the PSHCE advisor for Lancashire.
- **provide effective staff training.** All staff including passenger assistants and welfare staff have access to and understand the principles and purpose of our policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support.
- **work with the wider community** such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed.
- **make it easy for pupils to report bullying** so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying;

- **create an inclusive environment.** We create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination; and
- **celebrate success and appropriate behaviour.** Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue.

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Written By:	SC	2012
Reviewed:	SDi	2018
	EW	June 19
	EW	July 19