The Coppice Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

Written by	**Billy Hutt**
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1. INTRODUCTION

Everyone at The Coppice Primary School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. We aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly climate for learning for all our pupils to allow them to improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential. We also aim to produce an inclusive environment for all pupils which openly discusses differences between people and celebrates diversity.

We expect our pupils to act safely, and feel safe, in and outside of school – we do not tolerate any form of bullying and we are committed to preventing and tackling it. We recognise that as children learn and grow together, they may experience fallouts with their peers, but we are committed to supporting our pupils to resolve these 'relational conflicts' and stop them from progressing to bullying behaviours.

'Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. If left unaddressed, it can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, schools can help to create safe, disciplined environments where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by: developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable' (Preventing and tackling bullying: advice for Headteachers, staff and Governing bodies 2017)

If an incident of bullying does occur, we believe our pupils, parents/carers and staff should feel confident in reporting it and know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Bullying will never be tolerated at our school. At The Coppice, we encourage open discussions around differences between people and we actively challenge prejudice and we celebrate diversity. We adopt a contextual safeguarding approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse, and we are committed to working with families and outside agencies where appropriate.

We believe that children should understand the issues relating to bullying and that they feel confident to seek support from school should they feel unsafe. We also want parents to feel confident that their children are safe and cared for in school and incidents when they do arise are dealt with promptly and well.

The school is aware of its legal obligations (see section F), including the Equalities Act 2010. We are aware of our role within the local community supporting parents/carers and working with other agencies outside the school where appropriate.

2. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This policy has been developed to reflect the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) Statutory Guidance (1st September 2023)

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety. Through raising awareness about bullying behaviour we aim to prevent bullying.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur. We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of any bullying in our school should it arise.

The policy is available online from our website at www.coppice.worcs.sch.uk

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

All staff at our school are aware that children may bully other children, and that this can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. All staff understand the school's Anti-Bullying strategy and approach and know the important role that they each have in preventing and tackling bullying.

THE ROLE OF THE HEAD TEACHER:

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the Board of Trustees about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. At The Coppice, this is known as 'The Coppice Way'. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS:

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and their Deputies in our school are: Billy Hutt (Headteacher), Karen Woodyatt, Lindsey Ashwell (Deputy Headteacher) and Katie Flynn (Early Years Safeguarding Lead)

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all, however all staff, parents/carers and pupils need to be aware of who to report to and how to report any safeguarding concerns.   The nominated Governor with responsibility for Anti-Bullying and Behaviour is Kathryn Byng.

THE ROLE OF TRUSTEES:

The Board of Trustees supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the Board of Trustees does not allow any identified bullying to continue in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The Board of Trustees monitors any incidents of bullying that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The Board of Trustees requires the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the Trustees on request about the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategies.

The Board of Trustees responds within ten days to any request from a parent or carer to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the Board of Trustees notifies the Headteacher and asks him to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the Board of Trustees.

THE ROLE OF ADULTS/SUPPORT STAFF/LUNCHTIME SUPERVISORS:

All adults in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep their own records of incidents of significant concerns and report to the Headteacher.

Adults receive training which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

If adults witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. Teaching Assistants, Lunchtime Supervisors and other adults inform class teachers of any concerns. Teachers will consult the Headteacher, who will inform the child's parents.

Incidents which are considered to be of a bullying nature are recorded on incident sheets **(see Appendix 2).** Where Parents contact school to make allegations of bullying, a Parent Interview is completed to record the conversation and actions to be taken **(see Appendix 3).**

These are monitored by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. Such incidents are uploaded to 'My Concern' so that any bullying trends can be monitored more easily.

If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for a child being bullied, and consequences for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has perpetrated the bullying: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. Parents and Carers will be involved in this process and will be kept informed at all times. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, the matter will be passed to the Headteacher.

Where, for example, initial attempts to resolve the bullying using the school's Behaviour Policy have proven ineffective, the Headteacher will consider excluding or permanently excluding the perpetrator. Where necessary, the police and/or Social Services will be contacted.

5. THE ROLE OF PARENTS:

Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

6. DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING AND HOW IT DIFFERS TO RELATIONAL CONFLICT:

'Behaviour by an individual or group repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'

(Preventing and tackling Bullying – Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies (2017))

'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 through cyberspace'

(Anti-bullying Alliance)

How does bullying differ from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.
- It is usually persistent.

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of hate crime related bullying

We recognise that bullying can take many forms and can affect any child. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups (for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs, or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities). Bullying can be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between pupils, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflicts' or falling out. Relational conflict differs from bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by

accident (not intentional). Usually, following a relational conflict incident, pupils show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

Not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but our school is aware that occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention becomes to cause harm or distress.

Although bullying and relational conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually), pupils who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as 'bystanders'.

Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relational conflict' or 'bullying', our school will address the situation and support the pupils to resolve any negative feelings. Our school will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying. Our school will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that all pupils feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).
and cyberbullying. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required.

7. WHAT DOES BULLYING LOOK LIKE?

At The Coppice Primary School, we consider the context within which incidents and/or behaviours of concern occur. We will consider the motivations behind the behaviours and will take into account the age and stage of development of the pupils involved. Our focus will always be the safety and welfare of all children involved.

Bullying behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

• Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.

• Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling

•Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books/belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation, and coercion

•Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.

•Online / Cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion etc.

•Indirect – can include the exploitation of individuals such as 'false friendships', criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and radicalisation

• Prejudice-related – derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend

who is, because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language and behaviour are generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior.

In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident, and report them to the local authority for monitoring purposes.

Bullying can also relate to:

- appearance or health

- young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances

Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious.

Baiting and Banter:

Baiting:

Baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonise those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretively to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get in to trouble.

Banter:

The dictionary describes banter as: 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks'.

Bullying is often justified as being just banter. It may start as banter, but some types of banter are bullying and need to be addressed as bullying.

Types of Banter:

- **Friendly Banter** - There's no intention to hurt and everyone knows its limits
- **Ignorant Banter** - Crosses the line with no intention to hurt, will often say sorry.
- **Malicious Banter** - Done to humiliate a person-often in public

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying.

This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of hate crime related bullying and cyberbullying. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required

There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.:

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'.

8. Where does bullying take place?

At The Coppice Primary we understand that bullying is not confined to the school premises. Bullying can take place outside of school, on the journey to and from school and in the local community. Bullying may also take place online (this is sometimes referred to as cyberbullying).

We will offer support and guidance to pupils, Parents/Carers and families who have experienced any type of bullying whether this has taken place inside school, outside of school or online. We are committed to working with outside agencies where appropriate to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

9. CYBERBULLYING:

The ever-increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims.

Cyberbullying can take many forms and bullying online can often start in school and then be progressed online or start online and influence behaviour in school.

Whilst most incidents of Cyberbullying occur outside of school, we will still offer support and guidance to Parents/Carers and their children where it is required. We will also involve the police where it is felt to be necessary.

Cyberbullying can include:

- Hacking into someone's accounts/sites
- Posting prejudice / hate messages
- Impersonating someone on line
- Public posting of images
- Exclusion
- Threats and manipulation
- Stalking
- Making fun of others using on social media, in phone messages etc.

We will ensure that our children are taught safe ways to use the internet and taught good online behaviours through our computing curriculum. Online safety guidance documents are provided on the school's website at www.coppice.worcs.sch.uk

10. HOW TO REPORT BULLYING:

Pupils, including bystanders/witnesses

We ask that all pupils report concerns of bullying or bullying behaviour to a member of school staff – this can be any member of teaching or non-teaching staff, including a class teacher, a TA, the Head teacher, a lunchtime supervisor, or a member of the office team. We talk about trusted adults regularly in class and in assemblies to remind our pupils of who they can report concerns to.

The member of staff will listen to the pupil and make an initial note of their concerns, they will then discuss next steps with them and reassure them that they will be supported. The member of staff will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's Safeguard recording system and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

We understand that some pupils may find it difficult to tell a member of staff about their concerns verbally, we therefore have additional reporting mechanisms in place. Our school has a worry box in each classroom where the pupil can put their name/a brief note about their concerns/draw a picture of their concern – these worry boxes are introduced to the pupils at the start of the year and pupils are reminded of them regularly.

Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

Parents/Carers:

We understand that it can be very difficult for a parent/carer to be concerned or hear that their child has been the target of bullying, has experienced bullying behaviour or is an alleged perpetrator of bullying.

We ask that if parents/carers have concerns about their child experiencing or perpetrating bullying, that they contact a member of school staff. Initially we ask parents/carers to contact their child's class teacher (in person/via telephone call/via email/) to explain their concerns. The class teacher will take an initial note of the concerns but may ask to schedule a meeting to allow for more time to discuss the concerns in detail. Following the report and/or the meeting, the teacher will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's Safeguard recording system and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

We ask that parents/carers come directly to the school with their concerns rather than discussing them with other members of the school community in person or online.

Our school remains committed to supporting pupils and their families in all instances of bullying and relational conflict and will respond to reports promptly. Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

School staff:

Our staff work closely with our pupils and therefore may notice a change in a pupil's behaviour or attitude that might indicate that something is wrong before receiving a report from a pupil or a member of the school community. If staff have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or are concerned that a pupil is displaying behaviours that may show they are the target of bullying or perhaps perpetrating bullying, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

We ask that staff report their concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead or directly to the Head teacher. The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's Safeguard recording system and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff must directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

Visitors:

We ensure that all visitors to our school are aware of our Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures and which staff member they should report any concerns to (the member of staff may differ depending on the purpose of the visit e.g., supply teacher, governor, external agency etc.).

We ask that if a visitor to our school has any concerns about bullying behaviour that they have witnessed, or been told about, that they report their concerns at the earliest opportunity in person to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead/the Head teacher/a member of the Senior Leadership Team. We ask that visitors report their concerns in person by the end of the school day. For example, it would not be appropriate to wait until the following day or leave a written note with concerns. The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's Safeguard recording system and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

11. HOW OUR SCHOOL WILL RESPOND TO ACTS OF BULLYING.

At The Coppice Primary, all reports of bullying or reported concerns of bullying behaviours will be taken seriously and investigated. Even if an incident is deemed 'not bullying' or a 'relational conflict', our school remains committed to supporting all pupils who have been involved and affected.

Our school keeps records of all reports of bullying, this information is stored on our school's Safeguarding recording system: My Concern. Incidents will be recorded on an Incident Sheet **(see Appendix 1)** which will be handed to the Headteacher. These records are used to identify trends and inform our school's preventative work. Information from these records is discussed regularly at Year group meetings to ensure that all staff are kept up-to-date and are alert to any ongoing concerns.

Our staff use a contextual approach to safeguarding and each incident will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Our school's responses may include, but may not be limited to:

• Talk to all pupils involved in the reported incident – this may include the target, the alleged perpetrator, and any bystanders/witnesses

During these discussions, we ask our staff to be very careful in the language they use as it can be very emotive and can 'label' children, suggesting permanence. Instead of 'victim 'we ask them to say 'person' (child) who is being bullied, and instead of 'bully', we ask them to say 'person' (child) who is using bullying behaviours/doing the bullying. In this way we are labelling behaviours and roles, not children.

We ask staff to:

- remain calm - they are in charge

- take the incident or report seriously

- reassure the victim/s

- find out as much as you can relating to the incident

- offer concrete help and advice to the victim/s

- make it plain to the child doing the bullying that you disapprove

- encourage the person doing the bullying to see the victim's point of view

- Talk to the parents (of the target and/or the alleged perpetrator)

- Implement appropriate sanctions in accordance with our school's Behaviour Policy. These sanctions will be graded according to the seriousness of the incident, but will send out a message that bullying is unacceptable

- Discuss the report/incident/case with other agencies and organisations when appropriate and make referrals to those organisations when appropriate

- Liaise with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises (e.g. the Police, District Council etc.)

- Keep in touch with the person who reported the incident/behaviour to inform them that action has been taken – this may include a pupil, a parent/carer/guardian, a member of staff or visitor, or another member of the school community. We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

- Implement a range of follow-up support/interventions appropriate to the situation (this may include informal or formal restorative work with the target and alleged perpetrator, solution-focused meetings, individual or group work with the target, individual or group work with the alleged

perpetrator, individual or group work with any witnesses/bystanders, group work with the wider-school community etc.) **(see Appendix 2)**

- Monitor the effectiveness of actions taken and reassess/take more actions if appropriate • Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead if there are safeguarding issues or concerns – a DSL may then refer to the Family Front Door or Worcestershire MASH

If a Parent/Carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's Complaint Policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website and on request from the school office.

12. EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES TO HELP PREVENT BULLYING:

At The Coppice Primary, we are committed to the safety and welfare of our pupils, and therefore we have developed the following strategies to promote friendly and positive behaviours and discourage bullying behaviours. Throughout the academic year, the effectiveness of these strategies is reviewed, and the variety of strategies may be expanded to address specific concerns or meet the needs of all members of our community. The strategies we use include, but are not limited to:

- Active school council with representatives from each year groups

- Taking part in NSPCC Anti-Bullying week annually (November). By focusing on bullying for a week each year we keep the subject in the open and give opportunities for children and Parents to understand what bullying is and how to report concern.

- Taking part in Safer Internet Day annually (February)

- Robust R(S)HE curriculum for all year groups using Jigsaw PSHE & Citizenship programme that contains strategies which encourage children away from bullying i.e. it promotes co-operation, helpfulness and consideration for others.

- Specific curriculum inputs for online safety and cyberbullying

- End of term / end of academic year celebration events

- Opportunities for pupils to share their voice and opinions – through surveys etc.

- Inclusive toys and books throughout the school raising awareness of and celebrating differences

- Whole-school Thrive Social and Emotional Programme

- British Value' themes raise awareness of bullying and also teach other key values such as 'Caring', 'Tolerance' and 'Respect' to deter it.

- Specific interventions for identified individuals or groups

- Regular staff training and development for all staff (including lunchtime supervisors and staff who support our before and after-school clubs)

- All staff model expected behaviour

Bullying is a whole school issue.

By involving Governors, Teachers, Education Support Staff, Parents and Carers, School Councillors and pupils, people become aware of the school policy on bullying and that we are serious about tackling the problem. Publicity is one area that can help and could include:

Childline telephone helpline number will be displayed. **Childline – 0800 1111 (open 24hrs)**

13. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES:

Policy	How it may link
Child-on-child Abuse Policy	**Includes links to bullying – specifically sexualised bullying and exploitation**
Behaviour Policy	**Includes details about the rewards and sanctions for pupils**
Safeguarding Policy	**Includes information about child protection procedures and contextualised safeguarding**
Online Safety / E-Safety / Acceptable Use Policies	**Includes information about children's online behaviour and details about online bullying/cyberbullying**
Equalities Policy	**Includes information about our school's approach to tackling prejudice and celebrating differences. Links to prejudice-related language and crime and the protected characteristics**
RSHE / PSHE Policy	**Includes information about our school's RSHE programme and how we teach about relationships, friendships, and bullying**
Complaints Policy	**Includes information about how to make a complaint if you are not satisfied with the school's response**

14. MONITORING and REVIEW:

This policy is monitored by the Headteacher who reports to The Board of Trustees about the effectiveness of the policy on request. This anti-bullying policy is The Board of Trustees' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's bullying incidences and records on My Concern and by discussion with the Headteacher. The Board of Trustees will analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

15. DATA PROTECTION STATEMENT:

The procedures and practice created by this policy have been reviewed in the light of our GDPR Data Protection Policy.

All data will be handled in accordance with the school's GDPR Data Protection Policy.

Name of policy	Content	Reason for policy	Who does it relate to?	Where is it stored?
Anti-Bullying Policy	Guidelines for bullying	To provide clarity	Pupils	Secure Network drive

As such, our assessment is that this policy:

Has Few / No Data Compliance Requirements	Has A Moderate Level of Data Compliance Requirements	Has a High Level Of Data Compliance Requirements
√		

Bullying Incident Log

Happy, Confident and Successful Learners

C P S

Well Prepared for Life

Reported by:

_____

Complete details of incident and
those involved below
(continue overleaf if necessary)

| *Date:* | *Time:* | *Location:* |

Nature of involvement:	**Name:**	**Class:**

Nature of involvement:	**Name:**	**Class:**

Nature of involvement:	**Name:**	**Class:**

Nature of involvement:	**Name:**	**Class:**

Type of Bullying Incident: check all that apply (✔)

Threats / Intimidation ☐   Rumour Spreading ☐   Physical Bullying ☐   Cyber-Bullying ☐

Taking another's property ☐   Name-calling or mean teasing ☐   Social isolation or exclusion ☐   Other (specify): ☐

Name-calling, mean comments, or gestures with a sexual meaning ☐   Name-calling or mean comments about race or colour ☐

Incident Description:

Action Taken:

The Kingston upon Hull Special Educational Needs Support Service (SENSS) Anti-Bullying Project has developed the support group approach to bullying, building particularly on the work of Maines and Robinson (1991, 1992).

Step 1 - Interview the 'victim' for names of bullies, bystanders and friends:

The victim is interviewed first, sometimes at home if they are away from school. Concentrating on the kind of things that have been happening rather than particular incidents, the victim is allowed to talk about whatever they think needs to be known. This might include the whole history of the problem, or very little about it. All that is said is accepted in a non-judgmental way, without questioning its validity. We do not concentrate on the feelings of the victim or request a picture or piece of writing to illustrate them. Questions such as 'What did you do to make him do that to you?' or similar undermine the victim's confidence and are unnecessary. The victim is told that the bullies will not be in trouble so there will be no problems that they will 'get him' her for it later'. Without this assurance, the victim may be reluctant to give any names. The purpose of this interview is to reassure the victim that the problem can be solved and find out:

- who are the main threatening figures

- the 'bullies' who are present although they may not actively join in the bullying

- the 'bystanders' who the victim finds supportive or, if he has no supporters, whom he would like to have as friends

- The victim is told that the group will be asked to help make him/her happier in school.

Step 2 - Convene the support group:

From these names, a support group is made up, ideally 6-8 pupils. All the main bullies are included with some bystanders and supporters. The support group often needs reassurance at the beginning that they are not in trouble. The pupils are often unsure of why they have been selected, since they are not all 'bullies' or 'friends. It is important that no child is labelled by their selection for the group and having a truly mixed group facilitates this. The group is seen separately from the victim. The group is told that X is unhappy in school, and they have been chosen because they are all able to help. Group members seem to accept the rationale that they can all help; indeed, this is what they have in common. At this point the term bullying is avoided since this suggests a judgement has been made on the nature and causes of the problem. It is equally important, as with the interview with the victim, that a non-judgemental atmosphere is maintained. However, very often the group members use the term anyway. Once the reason for the group is clear and they do not feel threatened, they can be remarkably open about what is happening.

Step 3 - Raise empathy within the group:

Empathy for the victim is heightened by asking if they have ever been unhappy in school. Usually there are a few who will admit to this and say a little about it. The feelings of the victim are not relayed to the group, as Maines and Robinson suggest. Rather, we discuss briefly the feelings of members of the group that have been unhappy in school and say that 'X must be feeling very like that'. This is an effective means of raising empathy without breaching confidentiality.

Step 4 - Explain the purpose of the group:

It is explained that no one should feel unhappy in school and because they know X they probably know better than anyone why and when he or she is unhappy. Members of the group often volunteer information that can be very illuminating at this point. If anyone mentions a name, they are gently interrupted and told

there is no need for any names, in order to maintain the non-judgmental atmosphere. Again all that is said can be accepted, since no punitive action will follow as a result of this discussion.

Step 5 - Ask for suggestions:

The group is asked to make suggestions. Because they know what goes on they are the best people to suggest what can be done to make the situation better for X. We wait for suggestions from them. This part of the process is very variable; some groups are full of ideas, others are very vague or there may be some resentful silence. Simply ignoring resentment and praising any suggestions from members of the group usually ensures that most will either have made a suggestion of their own or will take up a suggestion that someone else has made so that all have a role. The actual suggestions are not in themselves significant except insofar as they demonstrate a commitment to the group goal. Members say things such as 'I will bring her/him some sweets', 'I will watch out for her/him in class'. The only suggestion that has to be gently rejected is of the kind – 'If I see anyone hurting her/him I'll beat them up'! They are not asked to make any promises and are not given jobs. The plan must be owned by the group. If suggestions are not forthcoming, which has happened occasionally, exploring further the circumstances when upset occurs generally gets ideas flowing.

Step 6 - Thank, reassure, pass responsibility and arrange review:

Group members are thanked for their support and told that it looks like they have a good plan that will make all the difference to X. Then they are told that they can report back all they have managed to do in a week's time. In other words, the responsibility is passed to the group at this point. The shift of ownership of the plan and the transfer of the responsibility for its implementation to the whole group is crucial. This is the most powerful single feature of the approach. Inevitably, sometimes, this initial meeting goes better than others but it is curious that no matter how it is seen subjectively, this does not appear to be reflected at all in the outcome.

Step 7 - Review with 'victim' first then group. Compliment everyone:

At the review the victim is seen first to see how things have gone. Generally, things are fine. This review usually takes about 2-5 minutes. The victim is complimented on things going well; attention is not withdrawn because there is no trouble or a provocative victim may be inadvertently encouraged.

The support group members are then seen together and asked how things are going. Usually they are aware the victim is happier although they may occasionally report on an incident not involving members of the support group. Many times they express the improvement in terms of 'He/she is better now', as if they view the problem as lying within the victim. They are encouraged to say how they have helped although their efforts are not matched with the suggestions made at the previous meeting, unless individuals wish to do so. They are also complimented and thanked for their help. Then they are asked if they are willing to continue for another week. No one has ever refused to do this in our experience. On one occasion a group member was unwilling to come to the review meeting and apparently tried to persuade two others to refuse to come but by the following week the other two were eager to come and the dissenter, who was one of the identified bullies, had not bullied the victim further. A new review is arranged as before. Reviews can be continued for as long as necessary but usually two reviews have been sufficient. This avoids creating a false sense of dependency. Individuals can be reinforced informally from then on. It is usually arranged for the whole group, victim as well as supporters, to receive an appropriate reward to reinforce the new status. They may get a certificate or a letter home to parents. Having their photograph taken is very rewarding to primary pupils and it can go up in their classroom or a notice board.

The parents are asked for their views on how things are going and value being kept informed after each review. When they feel involved and therefore not frustrated this can often help rebuild the relationship with the school which was usually strained beforehand.