

Lucton School Anti-Bullying Policy

Aims and objectives

- To encourage staff and pupils to create a climate of mutual respect and tolerance
- To ensure that everyone knows what is meant by bullying, and understands that such behaviour is entirely unacceptable
- To prevent bullying happening in school, as far as possible
- To deal with bullying swiftly and effectively when it does occur

The governors, teachers, staff and pupils of Lucton School will not tolerate any form of bullying. It is the duty of everyone to support the victim by reporting any incident immediately. We believe that everyone at Lucton School should be able to work and live in a secure, relaxed and happy environment.

Pupil Anti-Bullying Policy

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy which is issued to pupils and staff and is published on the website is as follows:

What is bullying?

Bullying is any conscious behaviour over a period of time which makes another person uncomfortable and is intended to hurt, frighten or upset. It can take the form of:

Physical bullying	this can accompany verbal bullying and involves things like kicking, hitting, biting, pinching, hair pulling, or threats of physical harm.
Verbal bullying	this usually involves name-calling, incessant mocking, mimicking and ridiculing.
Disability bullying	this might involve inappropriate physical contact or verbal bullying regarding a pupil's disability.
Racist bullying	this preys on children through racial slurs, offensive gestures, or making jokes about a child's cultural traditions.
Sexual bullying	this involves unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or inappropriate comments.
Emotional bullying	this can be more subtle and can involve isolating or excluding a child or spreading rumours.
Cyber bullying	Any of the above carried out through electronic means e.g. mobile telephone, email, internet messaging etc.

Who is involved?

There are three categories of people involved in bullying:

- The Bully
- The Victim
- The Bystander

The Bully

Children who bully like to feel powerful and in control, and they will do it through a number of different ways, so we can say that bullying has many names, amongst them:

- Gossip
- Exclusion
- Rejection
- Teasing
- Assault
- Harassment

Bullies are often cowards. They tend to bully others when teachers and adults are not watching. They also tend to bully and intimidate others when they have an audience of “friends”. Bullies often look for weakness in their victims. Bullies think that they may gain social status through toughness and aggression.

The Victim

Children who become repeated victims of aggression and bullying tend to be quiet and shy in temperament. They tend not to make any assertive responses to the initial aggression, which is then repeated by the bully. Children who become victims typically lack friends and take the view that there is little or no social support, and they are often not confident in their physical abilities and strength.

While most victims do not do anything to provoke the victimization, there is a tendency in some victims to show irritating and inappropriate social behaviour. These children tend to be impulsive and have poor social skills. It is these "provocative victims" that may also try to bully other children, so they are both bully and victim.

Victims of bullying typically are very unhappy children who suffer from fear, anxiety, and low self-esteem as a result of bullying. They may try to avoid school and to avoid social interaction in an effort to escape the bullying.

Children who are bullied are unlikely to defend themselves or retaliate. Often overlooked is the fact that peer influence makes the victims' life harder:

- reinforcing the aggressor so that the victim feels they are on their own
- failing to intervene in stopping it so that the victim knows they are on their own and
- associating with the bully so that the victim feels they have no friends

What can you do if you are being bullied?

If you are being bullied, it is not because there is something wrong with you. The real problem lies with the bully, who feels inadequate in some way. Bullies need help to enable them to understand that their actions are not acceptable.

If you are being bullied:

- do not be afraid to tell someone;
- tell an adult immediately: a parent, guardian, relative, teacher or other member of staff;
- tell your friends you are being bullied and ask for their company and support;
- do not try to retaliate;
- never resort to physical action (except in self-defence);
- keep a written record of all incidents. Record WHO, WHAT, WHERE and WHEN.

Use the yellow bully box.

Strategies for victims (HA HA SO):

H – Help	Seek assistance from an adult or friend
A – Assert yourself	Make assertive statements to the bully, expressing your feelings in a positive way.
H – Humour	See if you can make a humorous statement and then leave the situation.
A – Avoid	Avoid places where the bully hangs out and join with others rather than be alone.
S – Self-Talk	Think positive statements about yourself
O – Own It	Agree with the bully and leave the situation.

The Bystander

There are a number of reasons why the bystander is called a bystander. They:

- are afraid of associating with the victim for fear the bully will turn on them
- want to help but don't know what to do
- feel guilty for not acting
- fear that reporting will make them a 'dobber'
- don't like what they see, but feel powerless
- feel unsafe and unable to take action
- feel a loss of control

They don't get involved for fear of retaliation or they don't know what they can do or even worry that they will make things worse. Many think they will lose their own standing with their peers and saddest of all, some feel that adults will not help either; but the silent majority must become the caring majority.

Strategies for bystanders:

- Understand that fears and worries are normal
- Realise that there is strength in numbers
- Communicate the expectation to take action

Use the yellow bully box.

What can pupils do?

If you see someone being bullied or know someone is being bullied, the best action you can take is to inform an adult. The bully will never be told that it was you who gave the information.

When someone is being bullied or is in distress, think how you can help them. Watching and doing nothing looks as if you support the bully.

Only accept people who do not bully others. Bullies will soon stop if everyone socially excludes them.

Use the yellow bully box.

What can teachers and other members of staff do?

Staff should be watchful for signs of bullying. Every member of staff must accept the responsibility to act if they observe bullying. To ignore bullying is to condone it. Staff should listen carefully to reports of bullying, offer support to the victim and record details of incidents. An Incident Report Form should be completed.

Staff who are aware of a child being a bully should talk to the child. Keep in mind that a bully will try to deny or minimize his or her wrong-doing.

- Make it clear that you will not tolerate this kind of behaviour, and discuss with the child the negative impact bullying has on the victims. Do not accept explanations that "it was all in fun."
- Arrange for an effective, non-violent consequence, which is in proportion with the severity of the child's actions, and his or her age and stage of development.
- Increase the supervision of the child's activities and whereabouts, and who they are associating with.
- Frequent communication with parents is important to find out how the child is doing in changing his or her behaviour.
- Praise the efforts the child makes toward non-violent and responsible behaviour.
- Seek help from the chaplain, matron or other qualified person.

All serious instances of bullying must be reported to the Headmistress and Deputy Head as soon as possible.

What can parents or guardians do?

Do not ignore any report of bullying.

If your child is a victim or a witness to bullying, please inform a member of the school staff at the earliest opportunity.

Parents and the School need to work together, in partnership, to resolve any incidences of bullying and so close communication between them is essential. In particular, all the strategies/ decisions agreed with parents at meetings or other conversations will be noted.

The school will strive to make parents feel included in the process, and that their opinions are valued.

What will the school do?

The Deputy Head regularly checks the yellow bully box.

All complaints of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated, whether or not it appears that the claim has resulted from a breakdown in the friendship group or that the behaviour complained about does not appear to be significant.

If the school is informed of an alleged incidence of bullying by the parents of the victim, they and the pupil will be assured, that their complaint will be investigated and that they will be informed of the outcome. Incidents occurring outside of school will be carefully considered as, in some cases, action by the school might be appropriate or the incident might indicate that bullying is also occurring in school. Possible examples include bullying via text messaging, instant messaging, incidents on transport to and from school, when pupils are in uniform or particularly severe incidents such as assault.

Initially, pupils involved will be counselled about the effects of anti-social behaviour which might lead to bullying or the cause of stress or ill-feeling. A full picture of the situation will be built up by talking to all concerned: the victim of the bullying, the bully and anyone else (staff or pupil) who might have additional information. Notes will be kept of all meetings, including those with pupils and any discussions with parents.

If bullying is confirmed

A member of staff will meet with the parents or guardians of the victim after the investigation to discuss the findings and strategies for dealing with the situation/supporting the victim. In addition, a similar meeting should be arranged with the parents of the bully to discuss the appropriate response to their behaviour.

There are a wide range of strategies/ sanctions available to the school. Resolution of the situation may be reached by discussion, apology, reparation of property, admonition, supervision or fixed term exclusion. In extreme cases, permanent exclusion will be considered and, if a serious assault has taken place, the police may be informed. The agreed strategies will be monitored very closely in school and reviewed regularly. It is important to recognise that it may take some time to modify behaviour and reach a satisfactory outcome.

If there is no evidence of bullying

If, following the investigation, there is no evidence that the pupil has been bullied a member of staff will meet with all those involved to discuss the situation. If the parents of the alleged bully and/ or the alleged victim have been involved, a member of staff will meet with the parents to discuss the findings, and strategies for dealing with the situation. If necessary, a follow-up meeting can be arranged.

Awareness of Bullying

Staff are made aware of bullying; its serious nature, how to recognise it, how to reduce its likelihood and the procedures put in place to deal with it should it occur, through regular formal and informal training.

The school's anti-bullying policy is explained to new members of staff as part of their induction, and copies of the policy are circulated to every member of the teaching staff at the beginning of the academic year.

Pupils are made aware of the effects of bullying, and what to do if bullying does occur, through a variety of ways including PSHE, form time, assemblies and the school council, and via the curriculum.