

Anti-Bullying and Hate Policy

Date Reviewed	June 2022
Reviewed By	Gareth Jones
Next Review Due	June 2023
Ratified By Governors	TBC September 2022

Context:

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is the public sector Equality Duty. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties with 7 categories of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex & sexual orientation. 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, family or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment. In England and Wales the Act applies to all maintained and independent schools, including Academies and Free Schools, and maintained and non-Maintained Special Schools.

Definitions of bullying, hate and child-on-child abuse:

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, cyberbullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on ground of disability, mental health, race, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, religion, gender, sexual orientation (LGBTQ+). Alternative sub culture 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 a schools first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Hate in the context of behaviour and attitude has been defined as “Acts of violence, hostility and intimidation directed towards people because of their identity or perceived difference”.

Defining these with pupils is an on-going process that is reinforced by all staff, and specifically in PSHE lessons, Citizenship and the Tutorial programme. Pupils at PLC are taught through age appropriate materials, and according to the individual need and understanding of our students. This plays a major role in raising awareness of bullying issues, increasing understanding for targets and giving young people enhanced skills to assist them in the management of their relationships with others.

PLC is also committed to developing and teaching social and emotional literacy. We believe that this cross-curricular, whole school approach to developing social and emotional skills in areas such as self-awareness, empathy and management of feelings, makes a major contribution to the reductions of bullying. Opportunities are taken throughout the year to reinforce students’ awareness of the negative consequences of bullying and hate crimes eg Anti-Bullying week.

Child on child abuse:

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse, when a child abuses another child. The types of abuse include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), sexual assaults and harassment, physical abuse or sexting and gender based violence. **Staff should be aware of the implications and ensure that any type of abuse should never be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’ or ‘just having a laugh’.** Policy and procedures are outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy with regards to child on child abuse.

Bullying/child on child abuse can be:

- **Homophobic** because of or focussing on the issue of sexuality and/or gender identity (to include LGBTQ+)
- **Racist** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, name calling

- **Cyber** all areas of internet, such as email, internet chat room or social media misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities
- **Emotional** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- **Physical** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Sexual** unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments or inciting sexting
- **Verbal** name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

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 of school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, as more sophisticated accessories allow for quick sharing and distribution.

PLC are very aware of the particular challenges experienced by cyber- bullying. For example, it is extremely difficult for students to remove themselves from the on-line world, which, by its very nature can invade their homes and personal space on a 24/7 basis, making it very difficult to escape from any negative impact. Although these issues can often originate outside of school, they frequently tip into school, where staff are left to support/manage the distress caused. The school has a moral obligation to become involved and the Education Act 2011 increases and clarifies our powers in this area.

The school has sought to respond to cyber bullying by;

- Implementing additional online safeguarding measure including the use of the iBOSS system
- Building closer links with parents and providing information and guidance to help parents understand the challenges of on line/cyber bullying and how they help to protect their children
- Developing the curriculum and tutorial programme to include input on cyber bullying awareness and keeping safe on-line
- Implementation of an effective ICT Acceptable Use Policy and making this explicit to students and parents. This information is relayed in admissions meeting into PLC.
- Making it clear that, some cyber-bullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws and that the age of criminal responsibility in the UK starts at the age of 10.

Sexting:

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages.

They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops – any device that allows you to share media and messages.

Statement of Intent:

At PLC we acknowledge that a pre-requisite for learning is feeling safe, secure and happy in one's environment. PLC regards all types of bullying or hate related incidents of any kind as unacceptable, which has no place in the school. If these do occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are committed to doing everything possible through our curriculum, organisation and pastoral system to ensure that the problem is minimised. Pupils learn best in a caring, safe and calm environment that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus.

National and local research has shown that the majority of bullying targets are reluctant to tell either their parents/carers or their teachers because they believe that adult intervention may exasperate the situation. PLC believes that it is vital to counter this by creating a trusting atmosphere in which all stakeholders understand the schools approaches, are happy to reveal any problems that may arise and are confident that they will be dealt with effectively and sensitively.

Objectives of this Policy:

- Accepting that some incidents will inevitably take place; we aim to respond in an appropriate, effective, proportionate and consistent manner.
- Apply appropriate sanctions/consequences to the bully to ensure pupils understand the consequences of their actions and attempt to address the causes which have led to the incident.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and hate incidents, and follow it when these are reported.
- All pupils and parents/carers should know what the school policy is, and what they should do if bullying or hate incidents arises.
- As a school we take bullying and hate incidents seriously. Pupils and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when incidents are reported.
- Bullying or hate incidents will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms:

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are a victim of bullying or hate related activity. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a pupil:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence • Attempts or threatens suicide • Feels ill in the morning • Begins to truant • Begins to do poorly in school work • Runs away • Changes their usual routine • Doesn't want to get in their taxi • Frightened getting to and from school • Unwilling to go to school • Comes home with clothes damaged • Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has unexplained cuts or bruises • Stops eating • Has possessions damaged or 'go missing' • Frightened to say what's wrong • Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone • Is nervous or jumpy when receiving a cyber-message • Asks for money or starts stealing money • Has monies continually 'lost' • Is bullying other children or siblings • Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
--	---

These signs and behaviours could well indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Procedures to respond to incidents of bullying and hate crimes:

1. Member of staff made aware of incidents of bullying
2. Record to be made by the member of staff of the incident in SIMS/MyConcern
3. The threats or behaviours must be investigated and stopped quickly
4. Appropriate adult will discuss concerns with pupils involved to explore details fully
5. Where bullying incidents are confirmed, appropriate sanctions will be initiated. For example, reflective learning/discussion with pupil and parent, restorative conversations /repair. For repeat offences internal isolation and/or fixed term exclusion will be used.
6. If possible, reconciliation will occur between all parties using the Restorative Justice Approach.
7. We will always work with victims and perpetrators of bullying to help them change their behaviours.
8. In rare cases where bullying is particularly persistent and the pupil involved is not responding to reparative work and reflection, their onsite programme may be reviewed in order to best support the needs and safety of all our pupils. For example, the pupil may be placed on a bespoke programme which limits their contact with the victim. This may include a period of time on offsite provision, or in another provision area.
9. In serious cases, parents/carers will always be informed and asked to come in to a meeting to discuss with a member of SLT/ELT.
10. If necessary and appropriate, SLT/ELT will share the information with police.
11. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated behaviour does not take place.
12. SLT continue to review all recorded incidents of bullying or hate crimes on a weekly basis at SLT/ELT meetings to ensure these have been managed promptly and effectively.
13. PLC will keep a log of serious incidents at school.

Restorative Justice Approach

When an incident of bullying or hate has been reported, it is vital that the school has clear procedures in place to deal with it in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way, and works in close co-operation with parents. We encourage any parent/carers who are concerned about a possible bullying situation to contact their child's provision lead or tutor in the first instance. Should a situation remain unresolved, further reference can be made to a member of the senior leadership team of the Head Teacher.

PLC has researched and trialled a number of approaches to bullying and hate crimes. Whilst accepting that no single solution will be correct in all circumstances, PLC has chosen to adopt a Restorative Justice Approach.

The Restorative approaches are based on four key features:

Respect: for everyone by listening to other opinions and learning to value them

Responsibility: taking responsibility for your own actions

Repair: developing the skills within our school community so that its individual members have the necessary skills to identify solutions that repair harm and ensure behaviours are not repeated

Re-Integration: working through a structured, supportive process that aims to solve the problem and allows young people to work together

Links to other policies

PLC aims to create and maintain a safe environment for children and to manage situations where there are child welfare concerns. PLC has clearly laid down and recognised procedures for dealing with abuse or suspected abuse. Please refer to the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

In addition, please refer to our;

- Relationships policy
- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- E-safety and acceptable use policies
- Curriculum policy

Links to legislation

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children's Act 1989
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

Supporting Organisations and Guidance

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Pupilline: www.pupilline.org.uk
- DfE: 'Preventing and tackling bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies', and 'supporting pupil and young people who are bullied: advice for schools' July 2017: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf
- DfE: 'No health without mental health': <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk

Cyber-bullying

- Pupilnet International: www.pupilnet.com
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

SEND

- DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>