

# Valley Road School

## Anti Bullying Policy

### Statement of Intent

Valley Road is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

### What Is Bullying?

We recognise that many children and young people will experience conflict in their relationships with other children and young people and as a school we are committed to developing empathy and the skills to manage relationships in a peaceful way that does not harm others.

In Valley Road Primary School, our definition of bullying is:

*“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”*

Bullying can be:

- Emotional      being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, 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
- Homophobic      because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Transphobic      because of gender identity or perceived gender identity
- Verbal      name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber      All areas of the internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse  
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls  
Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities

### Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

There is considerable evidence to show that bullying has both short term and longer-term impact on pupils. Bullying impacts on pupils' wellbeing, can impact on attendance and become a significant barrier to learning.

Bullying is associated with lower levels of school engagement and achievement both in primary and secondary schools and can lead to mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression.

In our school community:

- Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.
- Everybody has the right to feel happy and safe.

- No-one deserves to be a target of bullying.
- Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving. National research has shown that some groups of pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying. These include pupils with SEND, looked after children, pupils from minority ethnic groups or faiths, young carers, LGBTQ+ pupils and those perceived to be LGBTQ+.

### Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should understand what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

### Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)

- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

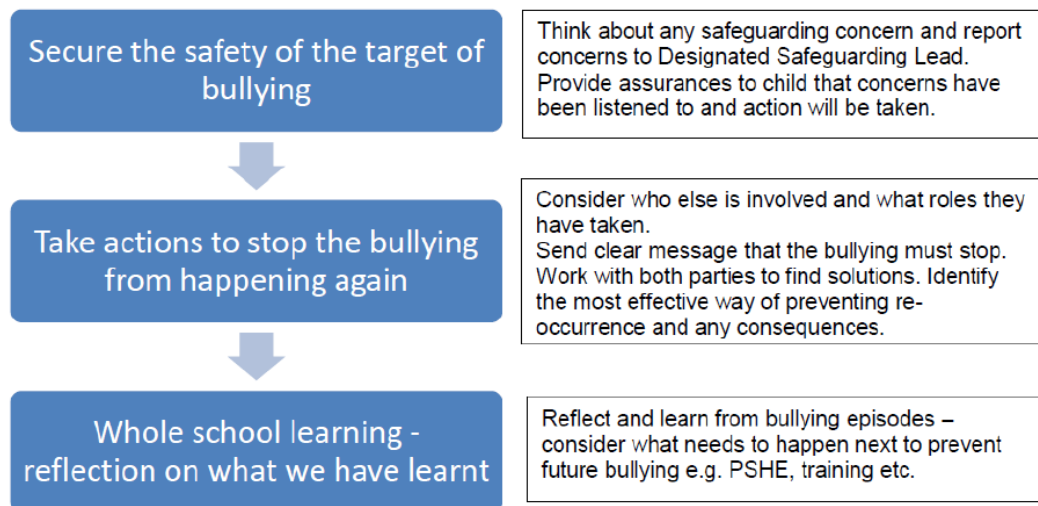
### Procedures

In our school pupils are encouraged to talk to staff when they are unhappy or have concerns. Pupils in our school understand that they have a right to feel and be safe and a responsibility to support others to feel and be safe. Pupils are encouraged to report bullying to:

- A trusted adult
- Their class teacher/TA

Children are taught that it is important to talk to a trusted adult if bullying is taking place outside of school. Parents are also encouraged to report concerns and bullying to named individuals. This is normally the class teacher or TA. When pupils report their concerns, our staff are trained to listen. We involve children as far as possible in finding solutions.

### Responding to Bullying



### Procedures for parents

- If a parent has any concerns about their child, they should speak to the class teacher immediately. If a parent thinks bullying is the issue, the matter will be referred to the

headteacher. The headteacher is always informed of any bullying concerns at Valley Road and monitors the situation carefully.

- If a parent feels unable to talk to the class teacher, they can make an appointment to speak directly with the Headteacher.
- The school will work with both the child and the parents to ensure that any bullying is stopped, and that support is given where needed.
- Parents should not confront the bully or their parents. This can complicate the situation and distress the pupil.
- The school will deal directly with all children involved and their parents directly. Parents will be kept informed of any actions the school is taking.
- If parents feel that their concern has not been dealt with appropriately, they should follow the school's complaints policy.

All members of the school community, including pupils, staff, parents, and governors, are expected to treat everyone with dignity and respect at all times. This includes both face-to-face contact and online.