

THE NATIONAL AUTISTIC SOCIETY

THE HELEN ALLISON SCHOOL

SCHOOL PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

2018.19

Title Anti-Bullying Procedure

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Procedure on Anti-Bullying

Introduction

The purpose of this procedure is to provide staff and volunteers working with children and young people at the Helen Allison School with an understanding of their responsibilities in preventing, tackling and responding to incidents of (or alleged) bullying.

It is based on principles of fairness, equality and diversity within the Helen Allison School that provide for children and young people regardless of disability, ethnicity, race, gender, age, religious belief or sexual orientation.

Bullying could be defined as an intentional act, which inflicts emotional physical harm on another person. By focusing on intentions, this definition helps to avoid labelling some other behaviours (pushing a pupil/student due to poor motor control or hyperactivity removing a personal possession from another pupil/student when there is no understanding of property) as acts of bullying.

The school will consider that a pupil/student is being bullied or victimised when he or she is exposed repeatedly and over duration of time to harmful actions carried out by one or more of the other pupils/students.

At this school there are some behaviours that if displayed intentionally and over time will be considered to be examples of bullying. Bullying falls under five main categories;

- Physical (causing physical pain or taking belongings)
- Verbal (name calling, insults, taunting)
- Non-verbal (eye-rolling, gesturing, ignoring)
- Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding from social groups)
- Cyberbullying (sending malicious emails, texts or social network messages).

Bullying and Autistic Spectrum Disorder

Pupils/students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder find it very difficult to understand other people's mental states as well as the causal relationships between behaviours and specific emotional states.

Although simple emotions such as happiness, sadness and anger may be within their understanding, a severe impairment in interpersonal-affective relatedness could constrain the pupil/student's empathic understanding of the emotions other people experience as a direct consequence of their actions.

In spite of this, it is sometimes the case that some of the pupil/students attending the Helen Allison School will display behaviours which inflict emotional or physical harm on their peers, and therefore immediate and effective action should be taken.

Signs that a child is being bullied

- Pupils who is being bullied may display some of the following common responses:

- Increased anxiety (displayed through increasingly obsessive behaviours, hand movements, repetitive questioning and statement, or short temper)
- Withdrawal
- Aggression
- Seeming over-sensitive or over-reacting to minor occurrences
- Seeking revenge
- Repeatedly exposing him/herself to the same kind of bullying situation. Although the pupil may know it is negative interaction, they may still consider this better than no interaction at all. It becomes a scenario they are familiar with and which follows a predictable sequence.

Strategies to Deal with Bullying

Proactive Strategies

Should be based on the following principles:

- Effective leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
- Use of curriculum/learning opportunities can be used to draw out anti-bullying messages.
- Use of opportunities throughout the school/service calendar and at certain times of the day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying (e.g. Anti-Bullying Week of each year; and school assemblies).
- Engaging children and young people in the process of developing the anti-bullying policy and promoting open and honest reporting.
- Reviewing the school/service environment. In particular looking at staff supervision patterns.
- The student council discuss bullying as a part of their set agenda.

There are a number of principles derived mainly from research on the development and modification of the problem behaviours that could be used to address bullying when it occurs.

The above principles are translated into a number of specific strategies to be used at school, class and individual levels.

Teachers and support workers should use the '*strategies to deal with bullying*' flowchart, when determining the appropriate actions to take. Once all the relevant procedures have been implemented, the **bullying form** with actions completed should be given to the Principal who will check and then delegate if further actions are required.

The school believes that the most effective approach operates on the following three levels:

School Level

It is important to create a school environment characterised by warmth, positive interest and involvement from adults on the one hand, and firm boundaries to unacceptable behaviours on the other.

Individual support plans

Individual support plans (ISP) will state if pupils/students present a history of bullying others or have themselves been victims of bullying. ISP's outline the strategies to be used for each student to support their emotional and behavioural development.

Meeting with Parents

Parents will be informed and asked to co-operate with school staff in addressing bullying behaviours. They may be invited to participate in discussion groups regarding bullying on an individual basis when appropriate.

Class Level

Class meetings to explain rules against bullying.

Teachers will address the rules and expectations during PDE (Personal Development Education which includes PSHE, Sex and Relationships, British Values and Citizenship) sessions as well as covering relevant topics during collective worship and reflection time. The communication of these rules may have to be adapted through the use of pictorial means to enable pupils/students of differing abilities to understand them.

Pupils/students will always be encouraged to speak to their Teacher/Keyworker, if they are the victims of, or have witness, a bullying event.

Individual Level

Teaching Play and Occupational Skills

Pupils/students who engage in bullying behaviours will need to be redirected towards engaging in constructive activities in their free time. These activities will be planned and provided by teachers and the pupils/students will gain positive reinforcement when they occupy themselves constructively.

Reorganisation of the Environment

Specific pupils/students who have the tendency to display inappropriate behaviours may be asked to work individually and programmes may be devised to motivate the pupil/student to work in groups appropriately.

Group activities may be organised in such a way that the pupil/student who engages in bullying is seated near an assertive pupil/student or the teacher.

Reward Systems

Specific behaviours incompatible to bullying will be encouraged and reinforced consistently by school staff. The pupil/student may use a token system whereby he/she can have extra rewards for the display of appropriate behaviours.

High levels of staffing and near constant supervision means that it is difficult for pupils/students to be out of line of sight for extended periods, minimising opportunities for bullying to take place.

Assertiveness

Pupils/students who have been victims of bullying will be taught strategies to protect themselves from those acts. Possible strategies may include:

- Social stories to promote positive attitudes to behaviour and strategies on how to recognise and deal with bullying
- Talking to teacher / Keyworker
- Learning to avoid confrontational situations
- Learning to say 'No'
- Sharing concerns with staff

Programmes of Behaviour Modification

See section on management of behaviour in Behaviour Policy.

Counselling

Pupils/students who have communication skills and have been victims of bullying will have the opportunity to talk about their own feelings, their worries and strategies for protecting themselves in the future.

The Principal, SaLT and Psychologist will be available for consultations on a sessional basis.

Recording of Bullying

Bullying incidents will be recorded in an Incident Report Forms where appropriate. Please see chart below. The Principal receives all Bullying Forms to check what actions have been taken and to ensure oversight of the issues. The Principal gives the Psychology team the forms which they collate in a file, logging all incidents and actions. The Psychology team report to the SLT on incidents. The SLT discuss cases where the situation has not been resolved and therefore further action is required.

Key Points

Schools are required by law to take measures to prevent and act on bullying and to make sure that people with a disability are not discriminated against.

School staff play a vital role in promoting understanding and tolerance of difference.

Training in ASDs can help staff to recognise why pupils with ASD behave in certain ways, detect when they've been bullied, and help to prevent bullying situations from occurring in the first place.

STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH BULLYING

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL PREVENTION

Play and Occupational Skills

Reorganisation of the environment

Reward Systems

Programmes of Behaviour Modification

Discussions with staff

PROCEDURE IF BULLYING OCCURS

If bullying occurs teacher talks to class or individuals.

If bullying continues
Victim completes form with staff support. Staff completes form stating **Actions they have taken.**
Parents contacted by tutor team

Still unresolved
Where appropriate SALT team create Social story and or Psychology team work with individuals

Still unresolved
Parent Meeting/
Phone call re an individual or class

Still unresolved
Parent Meeting with form Teacher

Still unresolved
Parent Meeting with form Teacher and SLT

SCHOOL LEVEL PREVENTION

ISP

Clear class rules regarding appropriate behaviour

PSHE classes
PDE classes
Assembly

Social Skills Group

Schools Council
Discussions and awareness of Bullying