



Vanguard School Anti-Bullying & Promoting Positive Relationships Local Procedure

Reviewed: **December 2020**

Next Review: **December 2021**

Person(s) Responsible: Principal

To be ratified by the Local Governing Body

This local procedure should be read in conjunction with the NAS Anti-bullying in Schools and Children and Young People's Services Policy SO-0193

Anti-Bullying and Promotion of Positive Relationships Local Procedure

1. Position and Values

The Vanguard staff and governors believe that every child has the right to attend school free from abuse or risk of harm. The School's Anti-Bullying Local Procedure will help ensure all students feel:

- Safe;
- Healthy;
- able to achieve and find enjoyment in learning;
- able to contribute to future economic well-being and independence;
- and able to make a positive contribution.

The Vanguard School recognises that autistic children and young people can be more vulnerable than their peers to experiencing bullying because they:

- may have differences in how they communicate and interact with others;
- may find it harder to understand and predict other people's behaviour and intentions;
- may engage in behaviour that challenges or that others might consider unusual (such as stimming);
- may find it hard to form and maintain friendships, leaving them socially isolated.

Bullying can lead to anxiety and school refusal.

The School also recognises that students may not understand socially appropriate conventions and rules and so may demonstrate socially inappropriate behaviour which constitute bullying. Therefore, the School recognises its role in supporting students to develop the skills and to interact appropriately with others and maintain positive social relationships.

To protect the rights of all pupils to have a safe and secure learning environment, Vanguard School will continuously work towards preventing acts of bullying, harassment, and other forms of aggression and violence as these behaviours are unacceptable and interfere with both the School's ability to provide effective education and a child's ability to engage in learning. If such a case arises, the staff at Vanguard School will follow the anti-bullying guidelines laid out in this local procedure. This will enable staff to:

- Intervene in a timely manner to support both the pupil(s) experiencing bullying and the pupil(s) engaging in bullying behaviour
- Provide support based on a functional understanding of the behaviour of concern with the aim of equipping students with the skills to engage positively in the school community and maintain appropriate social relationships
- Maintain the wellbeing and safety of all students.
- Identify signs that indicate a pupil may be experiencing bullying but are not reporting it.

2. Clarification of terms

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined as repeated negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe.

Forms of bullying

- **Physical:** Deliberately hurting particular Pupils on a regular basis
- **Verbal:** Deliberately hurting feelings through name-calling etc.
- **Ostracising:** Making someone feel left out and different by deliberately setting out to exclude them

There are many different kinds of bullying including:

- bullying related to race, religion or culture;

- bullying related to special educational needs;
- bullying related to appearance or health;
- bullying related to sexual orientation;
- bullying of young carers or looked after Pupils, or related to home problems;
- sexist or sexual bullying;
- cyber bullying.

Definition of cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is the use of technology such as mobile phones, email, chat rooms or social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate or target a child. Unlike physical bullying, cyber-bullying can often be difficult to track as the cyber-bully (the person responsible for the acts of cyber-bullying) can remain anonymous when threatening others online, encouraging them to behave more aggressively than they might face-to-face.

Types of cyber-bullying

- **Flaming:** Online fights usually through emails, instant messaging or chat rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged.
- **Denigration:** Putting mean online messages through email, instant messaging, chat rooms, or websites set up to make fun of someone.
- **Exclusion:** Intentionally leaving someone out of a group such as instant messaging, friend sites, or other online group activities.
- **Outing:** Sharing secrets about someone online including private information, pictures, and videos.
- **Trickery:** Tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.
- **Impersonation:** Pretending to be someone else when sending or posting mean or false messages online.
- **Harassment:** Repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online.
- **Cyber-stalking:** Continuously harassing and denigration including threats of physical harm.

Actions NOT considered to be bullying

Many pupils will, from time to time, experience challenges or conflicts within their peer relationships. However, these conflicts may not constitute bullying and will, therefore, be addressed through the Behaviour Local procedure. Actions which might not be considered bullying include an individual:

- communicating that they do not like someone;
- unintentionally excluding someone;
- accidentally bumping into someone;
- prompting other pupils to play games a certain way;
- engaging in a single act of telling a joke about someone;
- engaging in an argument;
- expressing an unpleasant/negative thought or feeling regarding someone;
- engaging in an isolated act of harassment, aggressive behaviour, intimidation, or *meanness*.

Reasons for bullying

Some reasons why pupils might bully include:

- they may think it is *fun*, or that it makes them popular;
- they may feel more powerful or important;
- they may feel insecure or lack confidence or are trying to fit in with a group;
- they may be fearful of other Pupil's perceived differences;
- they may be jealous of another Pupil;
- they may be unhappy;
- they may be copying what they have seen others do before, or what has been done to them;
- they may currently lack the skills to manage interactions, relationship dynamic, or specific situations appropriately

The effects of bullying

All forms of bullying can lead to psychological, emotional and physical stress. Each Pupil's response to being bullied is unique, however some signs that may point to the occurrence of bullying include:

- declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school;

- sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations;
- self-destructive behaviours such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about self-harm;
- the pupil presenting as low in mood and / or anxious;
- loss of interest in activities the pupil used to enjoy
- unexplainable injuries
- lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery
- frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Pupils may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch
- difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares

3. **Roles and responsibilities**

The Education Act 2002, Education and Inspections Act 2006, and Equalities Act 2006 (succeeded by the Equality Act 2010) all make reference to a school's legal responsibility to prevent and tackle bullying. The Independent School Standards (England) 2015 state that the proprietor of an independent school is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented. This means staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school.

A copy of the School's anti-bullying procedure is available from the school office and on the school website for parents, carers, staff and Pupils to access when and as they wish. Schools have the legal power to make sure Pupils behave appropriately and do not engage in bullying behaviour outside of school premises, for example on public transport or in nearby public communal areas. If deemed appropriate, the Principal or staff can choose to report bullying to the police or local council. During school hours, including while Pupils are taking part in school visits, after school clubs and cyber bullying the school has direct responsibility to ensure Pupils feel safe and secure.

The role of governors

The governing body supports the Principal in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the school. The governing body will not condone any act of bullying. Any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors incidents of bullying and reviews the effectiveness of this local procedure regularly. The governors require the Principal to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategies.

A parent/carer who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can make a complaint in line with the school's published complaints policy. The complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the complaints policy which can be accessed from the school's website.

The role of the Principal

It is the responsibility of the Principal to implement the school's anti-bullying strategy, to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the NAS policy and school's local procedure, and that they know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Principal will report to the governing body on the effectiveness of the anti-bullying local procedure on request. Although the Principal has overall responsibility, they may have nominated a staff member to implement the anti-bullying local procedure.

It is the Principal (or designated member of staff) who must ensure that all Pupils know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in school. The Principal will draw the attention of Pupils to this fact at suitable moments. For example, the Principal may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with the Pupils why bullying is wrong.

The Principal will ensure that all members of staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with any incidents of bullying. The Principal will set the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making

bullying less likely. When Pupils feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support

The school operates within a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) framework. Within this framework, school values are behaviourally operationalised across contexts, with a consistent approach to the teaching and reinforcement of positive behaviours. Reward systems are organised around the school values, providing ample opportunity for students to gain feedback and praise for their efforts to engage positively with their peers. School wide PBS supports the team to identify skills deficits so that support can be provided proactively, reducing the risk of challenging behaviours being encountered or escalating (including acts of bullying). Behaviour data is monitored and, where behaviours of concern occur, the transdisciplinary team is involved in the completion of a functional assessment review, helping to ensure that any support provided in the management of the behaviour is appropriate and effective.

The role of the staff

Members of staff will do all that they can to eradicate bullying; they will ensure they follow the school's anti-bullying local procedure. All members of staff will routinely attend training that equips them to identify bullying and to follow school procedures with regard to behaviour management. Staff will use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They will use drama, role-play, stories, school values, direct skills training, feedback etc. within the curriculum, to help Pupils understand the feelings of bullied Pupils and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Ring fenced time will also be used to praise, reward and celebrate the successes of all Pupils (such as celebration evenings or assemblies, reward systems, direct feedback) and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

Members of staff will keep a vigilant watch on students suspected of engaging in 'bullying behaviours'. Any incidents will be managed carefully. The person managing the incident will need to collect all the relevant information and then provide the Principal with a copy in order that he/she can decide on an action. All cases are individual and various strategies will be employed by the Principal to address the issue.

Teachers and support staff will do all they can to support a child who is being bullied and will ensure that all incidents are recorded accurately on the electronic system (CPOMS) used for recording incidents. Incidents must be recorded by staff as soon as practically possible following the incident and appropriate action agreed to communicate the incident and outcomes to parents/carers in a timely manner. Where an incident occurs, and staff are aware of the incident, parents/carers must be informed on the same day and typically before the Pupil goes home. Known incidents will be recorded on the day the incident occurs but no later than 24 hours after the incident.

Bullying in the workplace

Incidents where it has been deemed a member of staff has been bullying a child will be taken very seriously. The Principal, with the support of the governing body, will deal with this; formal action will be taken where necessary. Such action will also be taken if it is deemed that a member of staff is bullying other members of staff.

In the event of the Principal being involved in such incidents, reports will be given immediately to the Director of Education who will also take formal action where necessary.

If you are a member of staff who is experiencing bullying (by other adults or Pupils), you should inform your line manager, a member of the senior leadership team or your union representative as soon as possible. You can contact the governors if you feel the situation is unresolved. For visitors to the school, any concerns should be directed to the Principal (or other senior staff member).

The role of parents/carers

Parents/carers 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 Form Teacher immediately in a calm manner. If they are not satisfied with the action taken they should contact the Assistant Principal. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the procedure detailed above. Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying local

procedure by actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school and this expectation of support is outlined in the home/school agreement.

The role of Pupils

Pupils are encouraged to tell somebody they trust such as a Learning Mentor, Teacher or Senior Leader if they are being bullied, and that, if the bullying continues, they must keep letting people know. Bullying forms are available for pupils to complete and submit if they feel more comfortable raising an issue in writing. Pupils are encouraged to participate fully in activities that raise their awareness about bullying in order that they clearly understand what to do if they, or another Pupil, are being bullied.

4. Cyber bullying

Vanguard School has a separate local procedure related to e-safety addressing the use of mobile technology, social media, appropriate online activity, security, access and monitoring procedures in place. The IT code of conduct is displayed prominently in the IT room and is explained and discussed with Pupils in assemblies, Life Skills lessons and IT lessons.

The Vanguard School recognises and understands the increasing role that e-safety has in supporting pupils' welfare, including protecting pupils from bullying online while at home. Our curriculum includes supportive strategies to address this aspect of bullying.

5. Reporting, sanctions and monitoring

All members of Vanguard School are encouraged to challenge all forms of bullying including prejudice-based bullying if they come across it.

How to report bullying (Pupils)

- I. Talk to an adult that you trust. This can be any member of staff you trust. They will then support you and take the appropriate actions to help you. This is supported with visuals around the school which encourage pupils to talk to an adult if they have a concern. Alternatively, you can write their concern on paper and submit them in the School 'Worry Box', these are situated in the Library and the Canteen. The Positive Behaviour Support Team take regular surveys to check if pupils know the procedure for reporting concern, worries or bullying.

How to report bullying (Parents/Carers)

- I. Inform your child's Form Teacher of your concerns and they will take appropriate actions to resolve the issue.
- II. If you are dissatisfied with the resolution, then you can escalate this in the first instance to the Deputy Principal and Principal.

How to report bullying (Staff)

- I. An incident must be recorded on the school electronic system (CPOMS) as soon as practically possible, typically the same day but no later than 24hrs of the known incident.
- II. All the relevant information must be completed on the electronic form, which must then be submitted and assigned to the Form Tutor and the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- III. The Form Tutor has overall day-to-day responsibility for dealing with reported incidents and will forward details to the relevant member of staff to investigate.
- IV. The DSL may choose to delegate management of the incident to a Deputy DSL if appropriate.

Procedures

The following steps must be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying:

- I. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with swiftly. The DSL Team will lead the management of the incident and may draw upon other staff to support with this.
- II. The Form Tutor will be informed and may be involved in dealing with the incident.
- III. A clear account of the incident will be recorded in writing either by:
-the victim

-the member of staff recording the victim's verbal statement

-the member of staff/other student who observed/witnessed the incident

- IV. The DSL Team will manage the process of interviews with all concerned parties and will record further details of the incident on the school's electronic recording system (CPOMS). All actions taken will also be recorded on CPOMS.
- V. Parents/carers will be kept informed by a member of the DSL Team.
- VI. Staff will be kept informed and asked to monitor the situation.
- VII. A Behaviour of Concern review will be completed by the School team to ensure that management / support measures are based on a functional understanding of the behaviour.
- VIII. The incident and actions will be recorded on the School's Bullying Tracker which enables whole-school oversight of incidents of this kind.

Supportive Measures: incidents of bullying highlight a support need. The School response to bullying will be to define and deliver supports which address the needs of both the individual(s) engaging in bullying behaviour and the recipient(s). The supports provided / actions taken will be specific to each individual case. If appropriate the Principal may inform the police or other appropriate agencies.

There will be a termly audit and analysis of incident logs and interventions to continually improve practice.

6. Monitoring, evaluation and review

- I. Governors, the Principal and relevant staff will review this local procedure biannually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The local procedure will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.
- II. The school council will review the effectiveness of the local procedure biannually and their views given to the Principal.
- III. An approved Pupil questionnaire will be given to Pupils every year. The resulting data will be considered in the annual local procedure review and reported to governors.
- IV. A record of all such incidents will be kept both centrally and on Pupils' files.
- V. The numbers of incidents will be reported to governors termly or provided to them at any time on request.
- VI. Bullying data will be analysed to reflect and re-design further strategies to improve procedures. Data will be reviewed during the weekly safeguarding meeting.

7. Strategies to reduce bullying

Vanguard School has adopted a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviour, including:

- the consistent promotion of the school's code of behaviour which requires all Pupils to respect the rights of others
- Constant promotion of positive behaviour values
- the reinforcement of the clear message that violence has no place at Vanguard School
- consultation with the Student Council on appropriate action
- take part in initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week
- training for all members of staff on anti-bullying local procedure and strategy
- the supervision by school staff of all play areas at lunch times and breaks
- Pupil buddies for KS3 and KS4 Pupils
- providing information to all parents/carers on the symptoms of bullying and the steps to take if the suspect their child is being bullied
- a clear local procedure of mobile phones not permitted to be in use during school hours
- the celebration of all Pupil's backgrounds and cultures through assemblies
- during assemblies and Personal Development and Life Skills learning sessions discuss and explore bullying issues with the Pupils
- raising awareness of cyber bullying and teaching Pupils to safely use technology (including mobile phones, email, internet)
- an effective recording system (CPOMS)

- work with multi-agency teams including police, social care and local authority children's services as appropriate
- contact the parents/carers of both the child being bullied and the bully
- challenge sexual content within verbal abuse especially challenging the word 'gay' and other homophobic language.

8. Useful websites

www.bullying.co.uk

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.each.education

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.youngstonewall.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.stoptextbully.com

www.beyondbullying.com

www.childnet-int.org

www.cyberbullying.org

www.chatdanger.com

www.thinkuknow.co.uk