Amble Links First School
Anti-Bullying Policy

Date Written:	June 2018
By:	Louise Lightley
Responsible Teacher:	Louise Lightley
Responsible Governor:	Barrie Cooper
Adopted by Governors:	June 2018
Date for Review:	June 2019

This policy should be read in conjunction with school policies for Behaviour, Equalities, E-Safety and Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism (PREVENT).

Rationale

Everyone at Amble Links First School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. As an accredited Anti-Bullying School (February 2016)we have regular discussions and assemblies that help us learn about being tolerant of one another and of our differences. We openly discuss what bullying is and how we can prevent it and deal with it. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos. Where bullying exists the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and adults in order to help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

Northumberland County Council and in turn our school seeks to provide a safe, secure and positive environment where:

- Children and young people can achieve their potential, making full use of the opportunities available to them.
- Children and young people involved have the right to have themselves and their property treated with respect and to be free from intimidation.

The County Council seeks to protect these basic human rights by ensuring that those acting on their behalf:

- Are proactive in setting up a range of preventative measures.
- Actively listen to children, young people and where appropriate their parents or carers.

This document outlines how we make this possible at Amble Links First School and predominantly focuses on protecting children from bullying although should be used with other school and local authority policies regarding bullying of adults.

The Nature of Bullying

An individual or group with the intent to cause distress to another individual or group may be defined as bullying. It is deliberately hurtful behaviour that may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature. It is repeated over a period of time on those who feel powerless to resist with the intention of causing distress.

Bullying should always be taken seriously. All bullying is unacceptable. Bullying does not only occur between children. The above definition can also be seen to characterise some relationships between adults or between adults and children.

In more serious instances where adults abuse their power over a child or a child abuses their power over another child, bullying may be viewed as child abuse and should be treated as such. In these cases we would refer to our Child Protection Policy.

Bullying is deliberately hurtful. It typically has seven elements:-

1. an initial desire to hurt
2. the desire is expressed in action
3. someone is hurt either physically or emotionally
4. there is an imbalance of power

5. it is without justification
6. it is typically repeated
7. there is evident enjoyment by those who bully

Bullying can also stem from thoughtlessness, such as in name calling or stem from institutionalised attitudes, for example in relation to gender or race. That does not make it any less unacceptable.

Bullying can typically fall into four main categories

1. Physical bullying - hitting, kicking, taking belongings
2. Verbal bullying - name calling, insulting or writing, making offensive remarks
3. Emotional bullying - spreading nasty stories, exclusion from social groups
4. Cyber bullying- online threats and intimidation, harassment/cyber stalking, unauthorised publication of private information or an image.

Name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics. However, pupils can be called names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour, sexual orientation or some form of disability.

The use of mobile phones to text insulting, obscene or threatening messages is both verbal and indirect bullying. The use of phones, including camera phones to harass or transmit derogatory text messages and/or photographs must also be viewed as bullying and is known as cyber bullying. In this case we would then refer to the E-Safety policy.

Bullying is always significant to the person being bullied.

Bullying by Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Disability

1. <u>Racist Bullying</u>

Following the Stephen Lawrence incident, the 1999 Macpherson report defines racist bullying as "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person."
A child, young person or adult may be targeted for representing a group. Attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse – name calling, racist jokes, offensive mockery / mimicry
- Physical aggression or threats
- Wearing offensive or provocative badges or other insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines into the school or organisation's premises
- Racist inciting of others
- Racist graffiti or other written insults including against food, music, dress or customs
- A refusal to associate with someone of other ethnic origin in work or play

For further information and guidance consult the Northumberland County Council anti-racism policy

2. <u>Sexual Bullying</u>

Sexual bullying is characterised by the following:

- Abusive name calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Pornographic material
- Graffiti with sexual content

In its most extreme form, sexual bullying takes the form of sexual assault or even rape. Under these circumstances police would normally be involved as these are criminal offences.

3. <u>Sexual Orientation</u>

Pupils do not have to be lesbian, gay or bi-sexual to experience this type of bullying. In most cases being different can be enough. Factors hindering schools in challenging homophobic bullying include staff inexperience and parental disapproval.

4. **Religion**

Children and adults are protected from harassment in all aspects of religious belief. This bullying is usually about their specific appearance or just being different. We need to be aware of and sensitive to the cultural and religious needs of our community.

5. **Disabilities**

Children and young people with special needs or disabilities are often at a great risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly. The bullying is usually about their specific difficulties or their appearance. This is compounded by the fact that these children and young people may not be able to articulate their experiences.

Recognising Bullying

Bullying is on-going, deliberate behaviour that upsets the victim. It is behaviour that is targeted and selective and can be direct (physical or verbal) or indirect (e.g. being ignored or cyber bullying). It may be directed by or towards one person or a group.

A recent survey showed that bullying in schools is widespread. Although bullying can occur on journeys to and from school, most takes place in school. Research shows that 75% of bullying in primary schools takes place in the playground. In secondary schools it is also most likely outdoors but other hotspots are classrooms, corridors and toilets, especially when supervision is minimal.

At Amble Links First School we keep a list of vulnerable children within the SEND information as these children ***may*** be more likely to be involved in incidences of bullying.

Both boys and girls bully and can bully as individuals or as members of a group. Children who bully others come from any kind of social or cultural background. Adult bullying of children also occurs and is equally unacceptable.

Bullying always creates inequalities and is damaging to all those involved. The person being bullied, the person who bullies and those who witness or know about the bullying are all affected in some way. Those who bully can experience difficult and unhappy relationships with both peers and adults and frequently need help to overcome these difficulties. A child or young person could have experienced both being bullied and having bullied others. Bullying is not a natural part of growing up and should never be accepted as such.

Those who bully may show aggression through for example, poor control of impulsive actions, a positive view of violence or a desire to dominate. They may exhibit anxiety through for example low self esteem or difficulties in making friends. They may be easily led in joining in bullying or in standing by whilst bullying takes place.

Those who bully may experience difficulty in admitting what they have done; be reluctant to admit that what they have done is wrong; suppress feelings of guilt; feel no remorse and repeat the hurtful action, especially if this goes unchallenged.

Those who are bullied may spend their lives in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and feel that they have done something to attract the bullying. Any child, young person or adult can be bullied.

Those who are being bullied may experience:

- Unhappiness
- A sense of desolation and in some cases, desperation
- Reduced self esteem and self worth
- Poor academic performance
- Exclusion from normal social experience
- A strong desire to escape the situation which may result in absconding or truanting
- A desire to self-harm or even to commit suicide

Those who are being bullied may exhibit the following:

- Unwillingness to attend or participate in activities

- Unwillingness to venture into some areas of a building
- Fear of walking to school or of using public transport
- Underachievement
- Books or clothes destroyed
- Possessions and money going missing
- Signs of distress such as crying easily, lack of appetite
- Becoming withdrawn or disruptive and / or aggressive
- Stammering
- Stealing to pay the bully or replace missing possessions
- A variety of physical symptoms including cuts, bruising, aches, pain, faints, headaches, stomach upsets, bedwetting, disrupted sleep patterns
- A marked change in well-established patterns of behaviour

Those who are bullied are often reluctant to say what is wrong or to seek help. Organisations that tolerate bullying are less effective; morale is lower and absenteeism is more frequent.

Actions to Tackle Bullying

Prevention is better than cure so we are vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously. We will use the curriculum whenever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour. Each term there will be a weekly anti-bullying focus in assembly and PSHE. As part of our school vision we promote an 'It's Ok' ethos within school which teaches children to be understanding and tolerant of each other's differences. We promote 'It's Ok' frequently within classes, through assemblies and displays around school, as well as celebrating differences with special 'It's Ok' days.

Pupils are told that they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult within school, and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a member of staff. Children are taught different ways of reporting incidents including the use of 'Whisper' an anonymous reporting app that installs onto a school website and extends the schools ability to capture reports from staff, children and parents.

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by staff members. A record will be kept of incidents. The Class teacher of the victim will be responsible for questioning the children and will be required to report to the Headteacher who will then fill in an incident report and actions taken form. Older pupils may be asked to write a report themselves. In order to ensure effective monitoring of such occurrences, and to facilitate co-ordinated action, all proven incidences of bullying should be reported to the Head teacher. If bullying includes racist abuse then it should be reported to the Head teacher to be recorded in the Racial Incident sheets.

Upon discovery of an incident of bullying, we will discuss with the children the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. In some instances, a problem-solving approach may help. The adult will try to remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

There are various strategies that can be applied if more than one pupil is involved in bullying another. Role-play and other drama techniques can be used as well as Circle Time. If held regularly, this can be an effective way of sharing information and provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour. It can also be used just within the affected group to confront bullying that already exists.

Victims need to feel secure in the knowledge that assertive behaviour and even walking away can be effective ways of dealing with bullying. Setting up a buddy system, or peer counselling possibly with pupils who already hold a position of responsibility, such as School Council members can also be beneficial.

Parental Involvement

The parents of bullies and their victims will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem. The bully will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for repeated incidents will be clearly explained to him/her. (Persistent bullies may be excluded from school). A monitoring tool may also be used; usually incorporating a reward for achieving desired behaviours.

Parents are reminded to inform their children that they must tell someone should they ever be bullied. Keeping information from the school, or from their parents, will never help a problem to be solved, and will prolong the period a victim has to suffer. Whilst there is little history of bullying at Amble Links First School, we believe that one case is one case too many and we believe it is essential to constantly review this policy to ensure we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue. Where necessary we have and will call on agencies resources such as the Local Inclusion Support Team (LIST) to support our action. This policy is seen as an integral part of our Behaviour Policy and is available to parents on request and on our website.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

The schools website also includes a named section for Anti Bullying which is accessible to parents. This includes a variety of information and resources for parents and children.

Monitoring

At least once every school year Governors should review and update the policy to identify specific actions that have been or need to be taken. Using data from monitoring can inform and be used to update the policy and practice. Bullying and behaviour logs are monitored on a half termly basis by Head teacher and Deputy and on a termly basis by the named governor for safeguarding (Barrie Cooper). A termly report to governors and staff will give the policy high profile. After one year following this procedure schools typically find that one or more of the following happens:

- Staff are more vigilant and responsive to bullying
- Ultimately fewer young people report being bullied or that they bully
- More pupils say they would not join in bullying someone else
- More pupils would tell a member of staff if they were being bullied

Dealing with complaints

If a parent wishes to complain about the provision or the policy, they should, in the first instance, raise it with the class teacher, who will try to resolve the situation.
If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 working days, the parent can submit a formal complaint to the Head teacher in writing or any other accessible format. The Head teacher will reply within 10 working days.
Any issues that remain unresolved at this stage will be managed according to the school's Complaints Policy. This is available, on request, from the school.

Recommended Strategies to Deal with Bullying on School Premises

The list below is a summary of the recommendations by the DfES in the document "Bullying – Don't Suffer in Silence." Available through http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20060213205517/dfes.gov.uk/bullying/

1. Refer to all types of bullying (sexual, racial, disability etc) explicitly within the anti-bullying policy so that all know that discrimination is wrong and will be acted upon
2. Audit the extent and nature of the problem
3. Use separate incident books to record the different types of reported bullying incidents
4. Regularly review and re-inforce the school's approach to anti-bullying at INSET days
5. Offer confidentiality and appropriate advice to lesbian, gay and bi-sexual pupils
6. Develop an understanding of gender relations and suitable strategies through staff training
7. Recognise and consistently challenge sexual, racist and homophobic content within verbal abuse
8. Explore children's and young people's understanding of their use of homophobic language – do they understand it?
9. Explore sexism and sexual bullying through the curriculum
10. Use single sex groupings to explore sensitive issues
11. Ensure that the environment is well supervised
12. Explore issues of difference and diversity

13. Children and young people should be listened to carefully and opportunities should be made available for them to express their views and opinions
14. Explore multi-agency working to support the implementation of the anti-bullying policy
15. Involve parents and the wider community in the decision of what action will be taken
16. Use peer mediation to resolve conflict

This policy will be reviewed annually.

A COPY OF THIS POLICY IS AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT ON REQUEST