

# Friern Barnet School

## Anti-Bullying Policy



<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	December 2024	<b>Next Review:</b>	December 2025
<b>Approved By:</b>	Governing Body	<b>Date</b>	9 December 2024



## Rationale

Friern Barnet School is a friendly and inclusive learning community where everyone has the right to study and work in a safe and secure environment, without harassment, intimidation or fear. We believe that to realise their potential and achieve their aspirations, people need to feel happy, confident and included in their environment. Bullying can seriously damage a young person's confidence, mental wellbeing sense of self-worth and can prevent them from reaching their academic and personal potential.

## Aims

We will aim to reduce and to eradicate wherever possible, instances in which students are made to feel frightened, excluded or unhappy and respond effectively to all instances of bullying that are reported to us.

We strive to foster a strong culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life without concern or fear of bullying. We want to ensure as best we can that students do not experience any targeted bullying particularly in relation to the protected characteristics of the Equality act 2010 (see below). This policy establishes a means of dealing with bullying and providing support to those who have been bullied, as well as guidance to those who are accused of bullying and may be experiencing problems of their own

*The Equality Act 2010 introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) on the school which extends to all **protected characteristics** – race, disability, sex, age (not applicable to students), religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.*

## Practice

### 1. Definitions

Bullying can be defined as behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can be:

- physical – hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings
- verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- indirect – inappropriate text messaging and emailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from social groups; spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours

Pupils can be bullied for a variety of reasons. Specific types of bullying include:

- bullying related to race, religion or culture
- bullying related to SEN or disabilities
- bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- bullying related to sexual orientation (including the use of homophobic language)
- bullying related to gender
- bullying of young carers, looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying

The school holds the view that there is no 'hierarchy' of bullying — all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The school recognises that bullying can be done by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods. Even if the bullying takes place outside of school, it can have a negative impact on the behaviour within school and will be dealt with accordingly. The school has a duty of care to all students that extends beyond the classroom.

## **2. Preventing Bullying**

There are many ways to prevent bullying. Strategies employed include the following:

- Report it anonymously through whisper. This can be found and accessed on firefly which students, staff and parents have access to. It can be found in student resources on the Resilient Schools page under 'Anti-bullying'.
- A highly visible staff presence at breaktime, lunchtime, before and after school
- an attractive physical environment, open, visible social areas – the ongoing development of a new friendship area
- a strong achievement culture rewarding non-aggressive behaviour
- the positive behaviour for learning policy outlining the behaviour expectations, sanctions and rewards
- assemblies about zero tolerance to bullying behaviour
- the Performing Arts Specialism creating a community ethos throughout the school
- Race Mark which encourages inclusivity and looks to educate staff and students on challenging racism, sexism, sexual harassment, LGBTQ+ phobic behaviour
- increased use of "check ins" time with students to encourage empathy, tolerance and understanding.
- development of a pastoral curriculum across the school
- social skills courses provided by in school facilitators and one to one mentoring provided by external consultants
- use of Pastoral Support Plans and reports to modify bullying behaviour by perpetrators

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- the school's involvement in Anti Bullying Week in November to raise the profile of bullying issues
- using student voice, particularly the Student Parliament, to gain a student perspective on bullying; its prevalence within the school and how best to tackle it
- external agencies helping educate and inform students in workshops and to help remove the ignorance that is the cause of a lot of bullying
- We are part of the Resilient schools programme. Our Mental Health Trained 'Peer Champions' are on hand to help support the younger students who are experiencing difficulties in school and with friendships.
- Our Counselling team run a variety of groups that teach students the tools they need to help with anxiety, self-esteem, controlling difficult emotions.

### **3. Responsibilities**

All staff will:

- foster in our students self esteem, self respect and respect for others
- demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our students
- be alert to the signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying
- listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them
- report suspected cases of bullying to the relevant Head of Year/Pastoral Support Manager
- follow any complaint by a parent about bullying and report back promptly and fully on the action taken
- deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures

We expect our students to:

- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying
- report any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying to any member of staff, a Peer Champion or on the report bullying button.

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying

- advising their children to report any bullying to their form tutor, and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other students  
Encouraging children to report bullying through the anonymous report bullying button if they do not want to be involved in the process.
- advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying
- being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken
- informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved
- co-operating with the school if their children are accused of bullying; try to ascertain the truth and point out the implications of bullying both for the children who are bullied and the bullies themselves

#### **4. Responding to Bullying**

Friern Barnet School will always aim to tackle reported instances of bullying in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way. Our primary aim is to prevent and/or stop any continuation of the harmful behaviour, to safeguard the student who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support. The perpetrator can expect sanctions to be applied, but it is perhaps more important that they learn from the experience and develop their own emotional intelligence.

In the event of a disclosure we would seek to:

- establish a supportive and safe environment
- reassure the student for disclosing
- appreciate victim's need to see that positive action is taken
- inform parents, when appropriate
- give feedback to the victim when appropriate
- recognise the need for using agencies as appropriate
- bring about a lasting change of behaviour in the bully
- use restorative approaches to repair the relationship

The following procedure should be followed.

1. The student reports the behaviour on Whisper or discloses to a member of staff or a member of staff suspects bullying.
2. Member of staff receiving the disclosure receives this information and forwards it to the appropriate member of staff (Form tutor, HoY, SLT, PSM, Safeguarding team etc)
3. The alleged perpetrator is interviewed by the appropriate member of staff, without bias, but encouraging all students to be honest, open and expressive.

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4. Friends/colluders/witnesses are interviewed separately by the form tutor, pastoral support manager or Head of Year.
5. Findings are discussed with the victim and parents are informed of the outcome.
6. If the alleged perpetrator is found to be responsible for the bullying, an appropriate disciplinary sanction will be served. Parents will be informed and called in for a meeting, where agreements and targets are made and recorded.
7. If appropriate, the bully and the victim plus friends/colluders are brought together to discuss how to resolve the situation using a restorative approach and if necessary a referral may be made to an appropriate member of staff to facilitate a restorative justice meeting.
8. There is a possibility of a referral to social skills/learning mentor sessions for any of the students involved.

## **5. Monitoring**

**The school monitors incidents of bullying in a number of ways:**

- The schools reporting of incidents on SIMS can be used to identify incidents of bullying, homophobia and racism.
- Key staff analyse the data in relation to students, age groups, locations and patterns of occurrence.
- Regular reviews are undertaken to determine the effectiveness of the schools actions in reducing the incidents of bullying in school.
- Regular review of the Anti-Bullying Policy takes place involving all stakeholders.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Guidance for teachers and parents on recognising signs of bullying**

Students may show one or more of the following behaviours:

- be frightened of walking to or from school
- be unwilling to go to school and develop unidentifiable illnesses like a stomach-ache
- change their route to school deliberately avoiding certain places and times
- start underachieving in their school work or opt out of activities and clubs
- come home regularly with clothes or books damaged or destroyed
- become withdrawn and or distressed
- become more aggressive and argumentative
- experience disturbed sleep
- have unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts
- have their possessions go 'missing'
- ask for money or begin stealing money
- refuse to say what's wrong
- become more reclusive
- give improbable excuses to explain any of the above
- be over generous towards another child because they are frightened not to be their friend

## **Appendix 2**

### **Guidance on recognising if a student has been bullying others**

This can be difficult to ascertain, but some of the following may be indicators:

- They may have access to more money than usual
- There might be changes in their views. They may openly express negative comments and feelings about individual people or groups, e.g. making racist or homophobic insults. This may be reflected in graffiti around the house, on books and on paper
- There might be changes in behaviour. For example, becoming more verbally aggressive or displaying unusual mood changes
- They may have new or different belongings that they didn't buy with unlikely reasons for having these

- They may become more secretive particularly involving communication technology, which could hold images or texts showing patterns of their behaviour

### **Appendix 3**

#### **CONTACT DETAILS FOR SUPPORT GROUPS**

##### **Weblink Support:**

**BBC Schools Site:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/bullying>

This website also gives links to other useful bullying related sites.

**Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP):** <http://ceop.police.uk>

**Childline:** <http://www.childline.org.uk>

Telephone: 0800 11 11

Childline has helped hundreds of thousands of children and young people in trouble or danger. If you or a child does not want to ring them, check out their website. There are fact sheets on many subjects including bullying.