

ASTON FIELDS MIDDLE SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date: May 2023

Date of Review: Annually in September

ASTON FIELDS MIDDLE

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OVERVIEW

In this school, bullying and any other forms of intimidation will not be tolerated. This is promoted to pupils and parents/carers by the Senior Leadership Team and is a message that is also regularly backed up by school staff during assemblies, form periods and relevant lessons. From the first assembly with Year Fives and throughout their four years at this school, all pupils are regularly reminded to 'Tell an Adult you Trust' if they are concerned about anything, so school staff can help them. Year Fives are introduced to the whole Senior Leadership Team and other key staff by the Headteacher during their first assembly so they immediately know several people they could talk to if they are worried about anything from day one. They are also specifically told not to remain silent as staff cannot help them if they don't know how pupils are feeling.

This school has an outstanding reputation for dealing very effectively with bullying and/or alleged bullying and any examples of poor behaviour, and the Governing Body's last parent/carer survey showed 100% of pupils feel safe in school and 100% of parents/carers feel their child is well looked after at school. Governors will continue to measure the impact of its policies to keep children safe and promote good behaviour through the use of such surveys and Pupil Voice activities. Governors themselves have undertaken Pupil Voice activities (without Senior Leadership Team presence) to check pupils feel safe at school and that any bullying is dealt with effectively. Pupils regularly confirm to Governors that it is.

Aston Fields Middle School encourages pupils to treat others with kindness and respect so pupils can come to school without fear, knowing they will be safe in school. If pupils or parents/carers tell us a child is not feeling safe in school or is fearful of coming to school, the school will investigate and do its absolute best to resolve the issue involving parents/carers and other agencies if necessary. School staff will be vigilant and will intervene if there are any signs or reports of bullying.

This policy supports the school's ethos of promoting good manners, courtesy, co-operation and mutual respect.

OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure that pupils feel safe at this school and free from bullying and intimidation, including racist, homophobic, cyber and prejudice-based bullying.
2. To build an ethos where pupils feel safe and free from threat and intimidation.
3. To promote good relationships where pupils and staff are treated with kindness and respect.
4. To act promptly and effectively if a child or parent/carer informs staff of alleged bullying and to investigate the allegation, acting on findings accordingly.
5. To encourage pupils to report any attempted bullying through 'Tell an Adult you Trust' so staff 'know' and can act accordingly.
6. For staff to remain vigilant of potential bullying and intervene if there are signs of this.
7. To have sanctions that deter bullying.
8. To raise awareness of the nature and impact of bullying.
9. To promote the emotional resilience of children and young people to deal more effectively with bullying.

STRATEGIES

1. This school will use its 'Behaviour for Learning Policy' to promote good behaviour so that there is an ethos where bullying is not tolerated.
2. Staff will be vigilant and intervene if any bullying is observed or reported or suspected.
3. Pupils will be regularly encouraged to report bullying and when they do so, they will be listened to and their concerns will be investigated and acted upon accordingly. *'Tell an Adult you Trust'* will be regularly promoted to all pupils in assemblies.
4. Any allegations of bullying, made by parents/carers or school staff should be reported first to the class/form teacher, who will investigate initially, keeping Directors of Year Group informed. If a parent/carer remains unhappy after the class/form tutor has completed initial investigations, it should be next referred to the relevant Director of Year Group who will re-investigate, keeping the Assistant Headteacher informed. If a parent/carer still remains unhappy after the second investigation by the Director of Year Group, it should be passed to the Assistant Headteacher who will conduct a third investigation, keeping the Deputy Headteachers informed. If a parent/carer still remains unhappy after the third investigation by the Assistant Headteacher, it should be passed to Deputy Headteacher (Personal Development, Behaviour & Attitudes) who will conduct a fourth investigation, keeping the Deputy Headteacher and Headteacher informed. If a parent/carer still remains unhappy at this stage of procedures, it should be reported to the Headteacher. It is important that the various stages of investigation have been completed in this order. Parents/carers should note that Senior Leadership Team members will act for each other if one of them is absent. This includes for the Headteacher. There is also a second Deputy Headteacher who will become involved if necessary and in the event of other SLT members being absent. (See Flowchart – Appendix 1)
5. Relevant lessons, such as PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education), will be used to discuss bullying and to ensure that pupils are aware that bullying is not tolerated at Aston Fields Middle School and that the victim should always report alleged bullying to parents/carers, staff or friends.
6. Parents/carers will be informed and involved in any reported incident and will be expected to support this school policy.

APPROPRIATE USE OF LANGUAGE

In line with the school's high expectations of behaviour, Governors expect staff to model positive behaviour in their interactions with each other, with parents and carers and with pupils.

Pupils and staff understand the importance of using inclusive and non-derogatory language. Use of inappropriate interactions, including prejudice-based and aggressive language, will be firmly challenged and dealt with as with any other incident of poor behaviour.

Staff will challenge disparaging language, particularly that related to perceived ability, race, religion, sexuality, appearance or family circumstances, even if used as "banter" between friends.

Pupils are regularly reminded about appropriate use of language and the boundaries between "banter" and behaviour that makes people feel threatened or hurt. Pupils know that use of disparaging language will be challenged, logged and reported to staff as appropriate and action taken.

OUTCOMES AND MONITORING

Aston Fields Middle School will continue to have a warm, friendly, welcoming and safe ethos. It will continue to be a place where bullying is not tolerated and where all will treat others as they themselves would expect to be treated. However, Governors understand that it is unreasonable to expect staff to simply 'know' that a child may be being bullied as some children will display no signs of being bullied or they may choose not to say anything to school staff, despite being regularly reminded to 'Tell an Adult You Trust'. Governors can only reasonably expect staff to remain permanently vigilant of a child being potentially bullied and to act immediately if they have any suspicions. Governors also urge parents/carers to inform school staff immediately if they have detected signs of possible bullying in their child so staff 'know' and are in a position to act accordingly. Governors believe it is crucial to follow this in order to best safeguard a child from bullying or potential bullying. If in doubt, report it to school staff immediately, in line with general safeguarding advice as found in the school's safeguarding policy.

Mr Hall, Deputy Headteacher (Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes), monitors all aspects of Behaviour, Safety and Personal Development and reports regularly to the Headteacher, who in turn reports to the Governing Body. This practice has been deemed to be 'outstanding' by Ofsted for two consecutive inspections and is one of the reasons why Aston Fields Middle School deals with anti-bullying so effectively, according to Ofsted, and backed up by pupil and parent/carer voice.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

What is bullying?

Aston Fields Middle Schools' understanding of bullying is as follows:

“A form of unacceptable, repeated behaviour happening over time by an individual or group, involving an imbalance of power that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”.

BUT it is **not** bullying when two children/young people of approximately the same age and strength have the occasional fight or quarrel or when someone is being 'nasty' through an ill-thought word or action. Cyber bullying is bullying displayed through mobile/smart phones or the internet. Please refer to the E-Safety/Acceptable Use policy for more information.

This policy will be reviewed annually.