Springwell School

ANTI-BULLYING

Policy

Last review: February 2026

Next review: February 2028

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Commitment

Governors and Staff at Springwell School are committed to providing a safe and secure school environment for all our pupils and staff. We believe that effective teaching and learning occurs when pupils and staff feel safe and secure in their environment.

Aims

1) To promote a secure and happy environment, free from harm, threat, harassment, and any type of bullying behaviour.
2) To create an ethos which encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying behaviour.
3) To follow procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.
4) To inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations to foster a productive partnership, which helps maintain an environment free from bulling behaviour.
5) To support those affected by bullying behaviour and those involved in the behaviour.

Principles

We believe our ethos, quality relationships and positive atmosphere have a significant impact and as a result, perceived instances of bullying at Springwell are low, and we believe that pupils are generally very accepting and supportive of each other. Our pupils experience considerable difficulties with communication, social interaction, and empathy, which affect their ability to reflect on and self-manage behaviour. These differences mean that it is difficult for our pupils to make decisions to 'bully' others as they find it hard to appreciate the effects of their behaviours on others. We do recognise, however, that behaviour that could be seen as bullying behaviour does occur on occasions.

This policy is intended to reinforce our efforts to encourage positive attitudes between pupils, and to provide a framework for dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour that may occur. The policy addresses the school's beliefs and philosophy on Anti Bullying and should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding, Positive Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention policies.

Bullying can take many forms and is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated over a period of time. It is important to remember that a child can be hurt physically and emotionally: Bullying can be **physical**, e.g., hitting, kicking, taking belongings, **verbal**, e.g., name calling, insulting, making racist or homophobic remarks, **indirect**, e.g. excluding someone from a group, cyber bullying.

Many pupils at Springwell have a cognitive (learning) age that differs significantly from their chronological age, alongside complex communication and social-interaction needs. As a result, behaviours may sometimes appear similar to bullying but are, in fact, a communication of unmet need, an emotional response to a situation, or a social misunderstanding. These behaviours are rarely intentional or malicious. Staff will therefore consider the pupil's developmental level, communication profile and individual needs when assessing incidents. This ensures that behaviour which does not carry negative intent is not mislabelled as bullying, while still being addressed appropriately to support all pupils involved.

Dealing with Bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies such as circle time or other cross curricular teaching are used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.

Policies and procedures for dealing with behaviour, anti-bullying, including child-on-child abuse, in person and on social media, online safety and regular staff training supports our positive, caring ethos and allows pupils to work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

The policies and procedures within the Behaviour Policy will determine the response of the school to bullying incidents.

In addition to the above, children, parents and staff all need to be aware and feel at liberty to report any incidence, or suspected incidence of bullying, including child-on-child abuse.

All staff need to be aware that children can abuse other children and child-on-child abuse can happen both inside and outside of school. All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in school it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's). All staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and an unacceptable culture which normalises child-on-child abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Although it is not thought suitable to provide a set of rules by which all children should operate, as we expect an increasing level of appropriate behaviour as our children develop, staff must make it clear to all individual children that certain forms of behaviour are unacceptable, and others are desirable. This can be done through example, discussion, circle time and through the ethos of the school.
The person who has been bullied must be made to feel safe, be shown the incident is treated seriously and the matter should not be dealt with in a way that might exacerbate problems for the victim. The procedures listed below should be followed by all Staff.

Procedures

Staff are expected to:

1) Take incidents of bullying behaviour seriously and investigate thoroughly.
2) Take appropriate action on incidents of bullying behaviour, including child-on-child abuse and/or refer the matter to a member of the SLT for further action.
3) Retain appropriate records for monitoring purposes.
4) Increase pupils' awareness of the expectation of positive behaviours at all times, with reference to the Five Pupils' Behaviour Rules.

Engaging Parents / Carers

It is essential to involve the parents /carers when bullying takes place, where the emphasis should be on joint problem solving to minimise the changes of reoccurrence, irrespective of whether we are dealing with the parents of the bully, or the person bullied. A member of the Leadership / SLT Team will speak to parents involved and arrange any such meeting. Partnership with parents/carers can be successfully used to share the problem and help to deal with it, this must be handled sensitively so as not to embarrass the bullied child.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Incidents of bullying will be investigated and recorded on CPOMS. This data will be analysed termly and actions to prevent occurrence will be put in place.