



# Underley Garden

## Anti-Bullying Policy

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## Introduction

Underley Garden believes that every young person has the right to live each day in school and the children's home without fear. Bullying, threats, name-calling, racial or sexual harassment, interference with property and any other action designed to frighten, humiliate or embarrass are totally unacceptable. Bullying takes place to some extent in every school and care setting; it is unfortunately a part of our culture and can be seen in families, friendships and in the workplace. To acknowledge this is not to accept it. It is a way of affirming our responsibility to work together as a community to create an environment in which everyone feels accepted, valued and able to get on with the job of learning and growing.

For this reason we strive:

- To ensure that all members of the school community follow the agreed Code of Conduct
- To ensure that there is good order and that the school and children's home are well organised
- To ensure that adults who are responsible for supervising young people carry out their duties effectively
- To ensure that all members of our community treat one another with respect and value our Equal and Diversity Policy
- To promote learning about citizenship, rights and responsibility so that it is clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour which cannot and will not be tolerated
- To maintain an effective school council/key worker session cycle so that young people are able to address issues affecting their welfare

Bullying causes pain. At the very least it causes distress and at worst it ruins lives. Its legacy lives on into adult life. Young people and staff must never ignore or accept bullying in any form. The credibility of this policy depends upon everyone in our community speaking out and then taking agreed action **whenever** bullying arises.

## Code of Conduct

*At Underley Garden we all:*

- Do our best to value each other, our community and its surroundings.
- Take time to listen to each other.
- Aim to do our best.
- Ask for help when we need it.
- Keep ourselves and each other safe.
- Accept others differences and understand diverse needs and backgrounds
- Work together to make every day positive.

## Equality and Diversity Statement

At Underley Garden we are committed to providing services and an environment for learning and developing which reflect the breadth and diversity of society. Throughout our work and relationships with referring agencies, parents and young people, and between staff we aim at all times to ensure there is no discrimination relating to age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or special educational needs and disability. All children and young people have a right to a broad and balanced range of experiences, both in terms of the school curriculum and the activities within the children's home that reflect in a positive way the range of cultures and experiences of the whole community. Young people leaving Underley Garden should do so with an understanding and respect for all members of their community.

### What is bullying?

Bullying may be defined<sup>1</sup> as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which they may belong.

Bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to perceived or actual differences. This can lead to prejudice and discriminatory language or behaviour, including racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia.

**Prejudice-based bullying** is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice based on an individual's actual or perceived identity; it can be based on characteristics unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance.

Prejudice-based bullying includes the protected characteristics, but prejudice can and does extend beyond these points below and can lead to bullying for many other reasons. Within School, we will pay particular attention to:

**Additional support needs** can arise for any reason for any length of time. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors. A child or young person may be bullied because they have an additional support need and, crucially, being bullied can also lead to an additional support need.

**Body image and physical appearance** can be hugely important to children and young people, with bullying because of body image having the potential to negatively impact upon their wellbeing.

**Disablist bullying:** People who bully others may see children and young people with disabilities as being less able to defend themselves and/or tell an adult what has happened. The bullying behaviour is likely to be focused upon their specific disability or disabilities, whether they are in mainstream schooling or in specialist provision.

**Sexual orientation & homophobic bullying:** Bullying based on sexual orientation is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. It is also commonly referred to as 'homophobic bullying' but can also be expanded to recognise the specific experiences of bisexual young people using the term 'biphobic bullying'.

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<sup>1</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), Preventing and tackling bullying (2017)

Children and young people do not necessarily have to be gay, lesbian or bisexual themselves to experience 'homophobic bullying'. This type of bullying may be directed towards young people perceived to be LGB; those that do not conform to gender norms; and those who have gay friends or family. Although homophobic bullying is distinct from sexist and transphobic bullying, it is related to these forms of bullying through underlying sexist attitudes.

**Intersectionality:** It's important to understand the different and unequal social and economic outcomes for particular groups, based on interactions between race, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age and ethnicity. In the context of anti-bullying, we must consider people's experiences of belonging to one or more of these groups, people's prejudice towards them and how this can lead to inequality in attainment and wellbeing.

**Care Experienced children and young people:** are vulnerable to bullying behaviour for a number of reasons, such as regular changes in schools or where they are placed. Forming relationships with peers and adults can be made even more difficult due to early childhood adversity.

**Racial bullying:** Children and young people from minority ethnic groups often experience bullying based on perceived differences in dress, communication, appearance, beliefs and/or culture as well as their skin colour and accent.

The status of the ethnic group a child belongs to (or people assume they belong to) can often lead to a child or young person experiencing bullying behaviour. This can arise from a misguided and/or learned belief that they are less valued and 'deserve' to be treated differently, or with less respect.

**Religion and belief:** Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths can lead to religious intolerance.

Lack of awareness about the differences in practices of religions such as prayer times, dietary requirements, fasting and the wearing of religious clothing or articles of faith can result in misunderstandings and stereotyping, which may lead to bullying. People who have no religion or belief are also protected under the Equality Act.

**Sexism and gender:** Bullying in the form of derogatory language and the spreading of malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girls' and boys' behaviour. These terms can be of an explicit sexual nature and it is worth noting that many can involve the use of terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards a person's masculinity or femininity.

Sexism and gender stereotypes feed into homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Gender stereotyping, based on the notion of acceptable and unacceptable male and female behaviour, can leave children and young people who are not perceived to conform to these notions vulnerable to indirect and direct bullying.

**Gender identity and transphobic bullying:** The term 'transgender' is an umbrella-term for those whose 'gender identity' or expression differs in some way from the gender assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self as being male, female, or an identity between or outside the two.

Transgender people face significant societal prejudice, largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender or gender 'variant' children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying, such as transphobic and homophobic name calling or deliberately mis-gendering them.

An individual may also experience transphobic bullying as a result of a perception that a parent, relative or other significant figure is transgender.

**Socio-economic prejudice:** Bullying due to socio-economic status can take place in any community. Small differences in perceived family income, living arrangements, social circumstances or values can be used as a basis for bullying behaviours.

These behaviours, such as mocking speech patterns, accents, belongings, clothing, etc. can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant social economic group. Bullying of children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent.

Within School, we will pay particular attention to:

- Racial harassment and racist bullying;
- Bullying because of young people's religious beliefs;
- Sexual bullying;
- Bullying because of young people's sexual orientation (including the use of homophobic language);
- Bullying of young people regarding their individual special educational needs or disabilities.

Bullying behaviour can take many forms, it can be:

- Physical (e.g. Hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (e.g. Racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling)
- Emotional (e.g. Isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group).
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Cyber bullying via e-mail, text or on-line

Bullying involves the use of power in a relationship – it can be seen in many interactions between students, parents and staff. Only the victim can say if there being bullied and how severe the bullying is.

## **Cyber- Bullying**

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 gives teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. Separate advice on teachers' powers to search (including statutory guidance on dealing with electronic devices) is available

## **Our Approach**

We will:

- Establish and maintain a caring ethos so that bullying is less likely to occur,
- Encourage discussion about bullying so that it does not become a hidden activity

- Listen to students when they talk about or report bullying,
- Carefully observe students who do not use verbal means of communication to spot the signs of bullying
- Provide good adult role models i.e. Never misusing authority as power to humiliate or dominate.

## Prevention

Our best prospect of reducing or even eliminating bullying is through constantly expecting all members of the community to treat each other with respect and understanding in line with our Code of Conduct. As a staff we can do this best by example rather than preaching.

The role of staff in preventing bullying is important in three ways:

- 1 **Staff behaviour** sets the tone of the organisation's day-to-day life. Bullying is more likely to occur when staff adopt authoritarian or dominating styles. This gives young people the message that staff authority comes from her or his power rather than from legitimacy.
- 2 **Young people's self-esteem** should be supported. A strong sense of self-worth helps build strong relationships, which in turn both reduce the likelihood of bullying and, if it does occur, reduces its harmful impact.
- 3 **Spotting signs** that a young person might be the victim of bullying is important. There are many indicators of possible bullying; loss of or damage to possessions, physical injury, change in disposition, isolation from usual friends, tearfulness and deterioration of work. Verbal bullying should never be ignored.

Further prevention strategies employed by the organisation are as follows:

- Our code of conduct is published and regularly discussed
- We ensure young people's consultation and participation is formalised through school council/key worker meetings.
- Discussions takes place informally and during circle times on the nature of bullying and particular incidents
- The school curriculum includes examples of the misuse of power and status
- We highlight and value examples of kind behaviour both in school and in the wider world e.g. in the news, media, entertainment etc.
- Increased supervision takes place in parts of the school where bullying may be more likely

## Dealing with Incidents

Where prevention has failed and bullying has taken place we will deal with it carefully. We will not give way to anger however we may feel about what has happened and its effect on the victim.

*Our two aims are:*

- **To protect the victim's self-esteem and self-confidence and to keep them safe**

- **To modify the attitude and behaviour of the perpetrator(s).**

## **Procedures**

Every case is different. Professional judgment and experience help staff react in the best way. This means the actions below might be amended in the interests of individual students, but in essence what follows are our standard actions in response to bullying.

We:

- **Talk with the victim** – They must be given time and encouragement to talk, not just about the details of what happened, but also about feelings. They should feel supported, and an agreement made about meeting again. There are many young people on site who need additional support because of their disabilities to be able to share their views in different ways where they are non-verbal communicator. The additional effort will be made to hear their voice and use additional therapeutic advice where needed.
- **Talk with the perpetrator** – although details will be needed, it is important not to get bogged down in detail when it is feelings which are at the heart of the issue. The student needs to be encouraged to consider and understand how the victim feels. It might be appropriate to talk about her or his personal relationships with others in general. In any case the perpetrator will be required to come to an agreement about how to behave in the future towards the victim and others.
- **Consider setting up a victim/bully meeting.** This is only useful in some cases. It can help the victim recover from the incident and give the bully a better insight into the hurt they have caused. It can also help create a new relationship. It is wrong, however, to have a meeting if the victim is not ready for it. Pressure should not be put on the victim if they are nervous or worried about meeting with the bully face-to-face.
- **Inform parents/carers.**
- **Arrange follow-up meetings** with both the victim and the bully will be arranged, to confirm that the problem has been solved. Where it has not, further work will be done.
- **Involve other agencies** where on-going support is needed either by the bully or the victim or when continued work is called for over a period of time e.g. the young person's social worker, the organisations Independent Visitor, the Health and Therapy team.
- **Ensure Documentation is thorough.** In all cases, a concern sheet should be completed and given to a manager. It should make clear who the perpetrator is. This will then be actioned and also logged with outcomes and actions in the Bullying book.

## **Consequences**

- As our aims are the resolution of the situation, support for the victim, and the prevention of recurrence, the option of punishment must be carefully weighed.

- Bullying is a hurtful anti-social behaviour undertaken by those who get excitement, status or material gain from it. In that sense it is done by those who have a sense of inadequacy, even if only temporarily. They probably have no socially acceptable way of gaining those things. Punishing a bully is likely to increase their alienation and anxiety and may not help them adopt more acceptable forms of behaviour. The perpetrator needs the opportunity to acknowledge what they have done, to understand the distress caused, and to feel that their ability to change has been recognised.
- Where the bully is genuinely remorseful, and shows signs of having gained insight, an apology to the victim together with a promise about future behaviour will suffice.
- Where a sanction is thought necessary and effective it will be set; the schools discipline policy clearly sets out the sanctions available.
- The possibility of temporary exclusion remains when attempts at resolution have been thoroughly explored without success. The principal motive for exclusion will be the protection of the school community.

## Key Messages

### What can you do if you are being bullied?

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong
- Be proud of who you are.
- Be assertive. Say "No" Walk confidently away. Fighting back will make things worse.
- Tell an adult you trust straight away. **You will get immediate support.**
- All staff will take you seriously and will aim to deal with bullies in a way which will address the bullying and will not make things worse for you.
- The staff will be able to help you verbalise and express your feelings, where necessary we can get our skilled speech and language team to help you.

### If you know someone is being bullied

- Take Action
- Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own. Encourage the victim to tell an adult.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult **IMMEDIATELY**.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

### Help and support will be given as is appropriate to both the victim and the bully.

#### We support the **victim**:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with a trusted adult
- By informing their parents/carers
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it
- By taking appropriate steps to prevent further bullying

We offer the **bully** support and challenge in the following ways:

- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- By informing the bullies' parents/carers.
- By continuing to work with the bullies to change their behaviour patterns and to challenge prejudiced attitudes as far as possible
- By using restorative justice techniques to resolve the conflict where possible.

### **Performance Standards**

- All staff and young people will have an understanding of what bullying is
- All staff and young people will know what the bullying policy states and should follow procedures when incidents are reported.
- All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated and monitored.
- Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school
- If bullying does occur, all young people should be able to TELL and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively

### **Bullying By Staff**

- If a member of staff commits “deliberately hurtful behaviour to young people repeated over time” i.e. Bullying. This will be treated as an allegation of professional abuse and will be reported to the LADO and investigated using the child protection/allegation of professional abuse procedures
- All staff are encouraged to report such behaviour to Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- ‘Bullying in the Workplace’ is the subject of a separate Policy Document.

### **Bullying outside School Premises**

At Underley Garden we accept that teachers have the power to discipline young people for misbehaving outside the school premises, on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises.

Where bullying occurs outside school and is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The Head of service, Registered Manager or Head of School will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in the local authority, of the action taken against a young person. We will also notify the police if behaviour could be deemed as criminal or if young people’s behaviour poses a serious threat to a member of the public.

In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying the teacher can only discipline the young person on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member.