Anti-Bullying Policy

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Issue Number	006	Author	James Madine
School	Snow Hill School	Approver	Jo Sharpe
Headteacher	Sarah Gould	Regional Executive Headteacher/ Regional Director	Andrew McCreedy / David Joy

1. Introduction

Keys Group recognises the serious impact bullying can have on pupils, particularly those with complex needs, emotional and behavioural difficulties, or those who have experienced exclusion from mainstream education. Every pupil has the right to learn and thrive in a safe, supportive environment free from bullying. Our schools are committed to challenging all forms of bullying and creating a culture of respect, empathy, and inclusion.

2. Aim and Scope

This policy aims to:-

- Prevent, de-escalate, and stop bullying behaviours.

- Support and safeguard victims of bullying.

- Address bullying behaviours with appropriate, restorative, and educational responses.

- Enable consistent recording, monitoring, and evaluation of bullying incidents across Keys Group.

- Ensure all staff, pupils, and stakeholders understand their roles in preventing and responding to bullying.

3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the intentional and repetitive misuse of power by an individual or group to hurt, threaten, or intimidate others. It can include, but isn't limited to the following:-

- Physical: hitting, kicking, pushing.

- Verbal: name-calling, insults, threats.

- Emotional: exclusion, humiliation, spreading rumours.

- Cyberbullying: online abuse via social media, messaging, or other digital platforms.

- Prejudice-based: related to race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected characteristics.

- Child-on-child abuse: including sexual violence, harassment, sexting, and other harmful behaviours.

4. Context in Special Schools

Many pupils in Keys Group schools have experienced trauma, exclusion, or are otherwise vulnerable. Bullying can exacerbate their vulnerabilities. Staff are trained to identify subtle signs of bullying and to intervene promptly and sensitively, using trauma-informed and restorative approaches.

5. Signs of Bullying

Staff should be alert to signs such as:-

- Withdrawal or anxiety.

- Changes in behaviour or mood.

- Physical signs like unexplained injuries.

- Decline in attendance or academic performance.

- Self-harm or talk of suicide.

- Aggression or bullying others.

6. Prevention Strategies

- Foster a school culture of respect, inclusion, and positive relationships.

- Encourage pupils and staff to speak out about bullying.

- Use PSHE, therapeutic interventions, and group work to build empathy and social skills.

- Identify and supervise high-risk times and areas.

- Provide training for staff on trauma-informed and restorative practises.

- Engage parents, carers, and external agencies as partners.

7. Responding to Bullying

- Take all reports seriously and act swiftly.

- Support the victim with reassurance and practical help.

- Address the bully's behaviour through restorative conversations and interventions where necessary.

- Record all incidents on CPOMS.

- Monitor for recurrence and follow up with all parties.

- Involve senior leaders and external agencies if bullying persists or escalates.

- The school will provide safe and accessible channels for pupils to report bullying anonymously, such as digital reporting tools or pupil forums, ensuring their perspectives contribute to policy development and school culture.

8. Support

Support will be proportionate and aim to change behaviour, including:

- Restorative meetings.

- Loss of privileges.

- Increased supervision.

- Parental involvement.

- Fixed-term exclusions as a last resort.

- Multi-agency support and safeguarding referrals when needed.

9. Bullying Outside School Premises

Bullying occurring off-site, including online, will be treated with the same seriousness as if the event took place in school. Schools will investigate and take appropriate action, liaising with parents and authorities as necessary.

10. Bullying as a Safeguarding Concern

All bullying incidents with safeguarding implications will be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), recorded in safeguarding logs, and risk assessments will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

11. Responsibilities

- All Staff: Vigilance, intervention, and reporting.

- DSL: Oversight and safeguarding action.

- Senior Leaders: Policy implementation, monitoring, and training.

- Pupils: Encouraged to speak out and support peers.

12. Training

All staff will receive annual training on bullying prevention, trauma-informed approaches, and safeguarding, supplemented by refresher sessions and updates in response to emerging issues such as cyberbullying and child-on-child abuse.

13. Equality and Inclusion

This policy promotes equality and respects diversity in race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and faith. Discrimination or bullying based on protected characteristics will be robustly challenged.

14. Monitoring and Evaluation

Senior leaders will regularly analyse bullying incident data recorded on CPOMS, focusing on trends across pupil groups such as pupils with SEND, vulnerable pupils. This analysis will inform targeted preventative strategies and ongoing policy refinement.

Appendix A: Local Contact Details Template

Each school should complete this appendix with their specific contact information for safeguarding and key personnel to ensure clarity and accessibility.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- Name: Aaron Walklate

- Contact Number: 01782 284329

- Email Address: aaron.walklate@keyseducation.ac.uk

Senior Leadership Team Members:

- Sarah Gould (Headteacher) Sarah.gould@keyseducation.ac.uk

- Gareth Evans (Pastoral Manager) gareth.evans@keyseducation.ac.uk

Local Authority Safeguarding Team:

- Name/Department: Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership

- Contact Number: 01782 235100

- Online Portal: https://childrensportallcs.stoke.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/marfprof

Police

- 101
- Online reporting https://www.staffordshire.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us-beta/contact-us/forms/tell-us-something-seen-heard/

Other Relevant Contacts:

- Anti Bullying Alliance https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

- NSPCC 0808 800 5000 https://www.nspcc.org.uk/

- Child Line 0800 1111 https://www.childline.org.uk/

Appendix B: Bullying Incident Reporting Form

This is an example form should be used by staff to document any bullying incident clearly and promptly. It shows how the report should be structured within CPOMS.

1. Date and Time of Incident:
[Insert Date and Time]

2. Location of Incident:
[Insert Location]

3. Pupils Involved:

- Victim(s): [Insert Name(s) or Identifier(s)]

- Perpetrator(s): [Insert Name(s) or Identifier(s)]

- Witnesses (if any): [Insert Name(s) or Identifier(s)]

4. Description of Incident:
[Provide a detailed factual account of what happened, including any verbal or physical actions]

5. Immediate Actions Taken:
[Describe what was done immediately following the incident, e.g., separating pupils, first aid, reassurance]

6. Follow-up Actions Planned:
[Outline next steps such as restorative meetings, parental contact, monitoring]

7. Staff Member Reporting:
[Name and Role]

8. Date of Report:
[Insert Date]

9. Additional Notes:
[Any other relevant information]

Appendix C: Restorative Meeting Template

This template guides staff in conducting restorative conversations to address bullying incidents constructively.

Date of Meeting:
[Insert Date]

Participants:

- Victim(s): [Insert Name(s)]

- Perpetrator(s): [Insert Name(s)]

- Facilitator(s): [Insert Name(s) and Role(s)]

1. Incident Summary:
[Briefly describe the incident from all parties' perspectives]

2. Feelings and Impact Discussion:

- How did the incident make you feel?

- What impact did it have on you?

- What do you think the other person(s) felt?

3. Responsibility and Understanding:

- What do you think went wrong?

- What could have been done differently?

4. Agreement on Future Behaviour:

- What will you do to make things better?

- How will you behave in the future to prevent this happening again?

5. Support and Monitoring Arrangements:

- What support do you need?

- How will we check progress and follow up?

6. Signatures:

- Victim(s)

- Perpetrator(s)

- Facilitator(s)

This letter template helps schools communicate sensitively and clearly with parents or carers regarding bullying incidents.

[School Letterhead]

Date: [Insert Date]

Dear [Parent/Carer],

I am writing to inform you about an incident involving your child that took place on [insert date] at [insert location]. The incident involved [briefly describe nature of incident without naming other pupils].

Please be assured that we take all bullying incidents very seriously and have taken immediate steps to support your child and address the behaviour. These steps include [outline actions taken, e.g., restorative meetings, supervision, sanctions].

We are committed to ensuring that your child feels safe and supported at school. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and keep you informed of any developments.

If you have any concerns or would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact [Designated Safeguarding Lead or relevant staff member] at [contact details].

Thank you for your support in working together to maintain a safe and respectful school environment.

Yours sincerely,
[Name]
[Role]
[School Name]