Anti-Bullying Policy

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Committee approved by	Foxford Local Governing Body
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Date	Notes

Rationale

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Foxford, whether it is in the school or during off-site activities. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. ***Anyone*** who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

All members of staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and what the school's procedures are for responding to bullying.

As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that we do not tolerate bullying and that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

1. What Is Bullying?

1.1 At Foxford we define bullying as actions or words that are deliberately hurtful, repeated often over a period of time and difficult for victims to defend themselves against – there is a power imbalance between the two sides. We use STOP in two ways 1) to distinguish between student conflict and bulling – Several Times On Purpose and 2) to encourage talking to another person who can help them, Start Telling Other people. We see that there are four main types of bullying:

- **Physical** – hitting, kicking, taking belongings, aggression
- **Verbal** – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks including those of a sexual nature
- **Indirect** – spreading nasty stories about somebody, social exclusion, sending malicious emails or text messages on mobile phones including photographs and images
- **Cyber** – sending malicious emails or text messages on mobile phones, inappropriate and persistent messaging and images through social networking sites
  (Anti Bullying Alliance/Stonewall 2013).

1.2 Bullying can also be:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- **Interference** with possessions
- **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments, peer on peer abuse
- **Homophobic** - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- **Transphobic** – because of, or focusing on the issue of gender
- **Special Educational Needs** – because of learning or physical disabilities

(All aspects of bullying are dealt with in line with guidelines from *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*)

2. Why is it important to respond to bullying?

2.1 Bullying hurts. No one deserves to suffer from bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students and staff who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving

2.2 We all have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying

3. Signs and Symptoms

A student may indicate by signs, words or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. To those who know the student this may simply be a feeling that 'things aren't quite right'. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student

- Does not want to walk to and from school
- Insists that they are driven to and from school
- Changes their normal routine
- Begins to truant for no apparent reason
- Becomes withdrawn or displays a sudden lack of confidence
- Is reticent to speak to other peers or teachers
- Attempts or threatens to commit suicide
- Runs away from home
- Is upset at night and has displayed a disruptive sleep pattern linked with increased nightmares.
- Is continuously complaining of feeling unwell in the morning and at school
- Displays a downturn in their academic standards
- Possessions and clothes are torn or damaged or go missing
- Asks for money or steals money (to pay bully)
- Loses dinner money on a regular basis
- Has a sudden increase in bruises or cuts which the student finds difficult or is unwilling to explain.
- Comes home hungry (money or lunch has been stolen)
- Stops eating
- Suddenly displays unusual aggressive and disruptive behaviour
- Starts to bully other peers or family siblings
- Is reticent or unwilling to talk about what is going wrong
- Shows a sudden drop off in their use of the mobile phone or internet chat rooms

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

4. Bullying outside school premises

- Staff will not investigate bullying incidents outside of school, however we will always support our students.
- Parents will be informed of an incident reported into school, if appropriate.
- The school will consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police should the nature of the incident be criminal or pose a serious threat to a member of the community.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 The Headteacher

The Headteacher has a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students.

The Headteacher will:

- ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them
- determine the strategies and procedures
- discuss development of the strategies with the Leadership Team
- ensure appropriate training is available
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and students

5.2 The Anti-bullying staff team will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both those being bullied and the bullies
- keep the Leadership Team informed of incidents
- arrange relevant staff training
- determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems
- and make a regular half termly report

5.3 Year Leaders will:

- be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice
- know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported

5.4 Tutors, teachers and other staff will:

- be responsible for liaising with Year Leaders over all incidents involving students
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution

Anti-bullying Ambassadors:
Our trained anti-bullying ambassadors are available every breaktime in 2L7 for students to report any bullying concerns. The ambassadors follow our anti-bullying processes and report the concern to the relevant year leader where it is investigated.

5.5 What Foxford will do to prevent bullying

We will ensure that everyone understands what bullying is and how to deal with it through:

- Communication of this policy to parents, students, staff and governors
- Lessons and assemblies
- Induction programme for new students
- Regular reminders about courteous and respectful behaviour in normal lessons and everyday activities within the school
- Publication of advice through the Anti-Bullying Charter and computer desktop displays.
- All students will commit to supporting the Anti-Bullying Charter.

All incidents of bullying will be seen as important and will be dealt with in a sensitive, consistent and urgent matter. Sanctions and counselling will be adopted. Students will be encouraged to feel able to report ALL incidents of bullying and to support each other when witnessing incidents. Friends of victims will be encouraged to report bullying if they are aware of it, even if the victims ask them not to. In all cases the victims will be given support to reassure them.

Some incidents may be relatively minor e.g. hiding a bag or a coat or using nicknames etc and may be dealt with by reprimand, a warning and a clear statement that such behaviour is unacceptable at Foxford. However, minor cases will be recorded and passed to the appropriate Year Leader. Repetition or serious cases of abuse or bullying will result in parents being notified and/or interviewed and in more severe cases sanctions being used with the bully e.g. fixed-term exclusion.

See section 9 for further details of how staff will respond to incidents of bullying.

6. Curriculum Support for the Anti-Bullying Policy

6.1 Lessons, assemblies and events for all students

- An extensive programme of induction is provided to encourage a confident and secure transition from Year 6 to Year 7.
- Vulnerable students have additional transition opportunities to help them settle in Year 7.
- Bullying is covered through tutor time and assemblies.
- During 'Anti Bullying Week' each year, a variety of workshops and discussion groups are developed that focus on the theme identified by the Anti Bullying Alliance for that year, e.g. Celebrating Difference, Cyber Bullying, We are better without Bullying, Stop and Think Words Can Hurt.
- Internet Safety Week celebrated each year through tutor programme and assemblies
- Workshop delivered to parents highlighting internet bullying/safety using CEOP resources.
- Staff receive Child Protection Training every year
- The material produced is reviewed by the 'Staying Safe Group' to develop future ideas.
- Every year new 'Staying Safe' BEN cards handed to each member of the school community, to ensure they are fully aware of reporting mechanisms and the charter. This includes the Anti Bullying Alliance slogan for each year.

Additionally, we work closely with the Police, the Young Offenders Team, Access the EWO, School Nurse, Inclusion Team and Social Services.

The PSHCE, Citizenship and Group Work programmes reflect a personal, national and international approach to issues relating to bullying.

The same procedures are followed in Key Stage 5 as in other Key Stages.

7. Anti-Bullying Procedures: Parents

7.1 If parents suspect their child is being bullied, they should contact the Year Leader. Parents should be prepared to talk about the signs and symptoms and any suspicions they have regarding those carrying out the bullying.

7.2 Parents must leave the initial investigation to the school. Any attempt to resolve the issue themselves will inevitably make the matter worse.

7.3 Parents should encourage their child to talk to their form tutor or another member of staff in the first instance.

8. Anti-Bullying Procedures: Students

8.1 If a student thinks they are being bullied they must tell an adult, parent, form tutor, another member of staff or an anti-bullying ambassador and be prepared to explain what form the bullying is taking and how it affects them.

8.2 Students who witness bullying or strongly suspect bullying must tell an adult, parent, any member of staff or an anti-bullying ambassador.

9. Anti-Bullying Procedures: Staff

In cases of reported or suspected bullying staff will:

- Make it clear to students that bullying is unacceptable.
- Teach students how to co-operate in controlling bullying e.g. posters, newsletters etc.
- Respond immediately if a student reports an incident of bullying by either dealing with it or referring it to the student's Year Leader
- Interview the victim(s) and friends to get a written account.
- Interview the bully and friends to get a written account.
- Pass on the details to the Year Leader.
- Try to make sure that the bullying is prevented by being vigilant on duty before and after school, at break and lunch time and during lesson changeovers.

10. Anti-Bullying Procedures: Year Leaders and Leadership Team

- Add the incident to CPOMS if appropriate.
- Record all bullying incidents in the bullying log for each year, with actions and outcomes.
- All homophobic and racist incidents will be recorded with Year Leaders and a specified member of the Leadership Team.
- Carry out interviews with the victim and bully if not already done by member of staff.
- Discuss the incident with the victim and the bully together to resolve the situation if possible.
- Inform parents of the victim and the bully of the incident and the actions taken.
- Interview the parents of the victim and bully if necessary.
- Exclude the bully if appropriate.
- Refer the bully to the Governors.
- Involve the Police if appropriate.
- Deploy strategies for improving the self-esteem of and offering care for the victim e.g. inter-agency work (Education Welfare Service), resolution meetings, rewards, listen and value what the victim says.
- Deploy strategies for changing the behaviour of the bully e.g. inter-agency work, resolution meetings, behaviour support plans etc.
- Follow the normal procedures of the behaviour referral system unless there is a need for 'fast- track' action to help the victim or the bully.

11. Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff
- Reassuring the student
- Offering continuous support with a designated member of staff
- Restoring self-esteem and self-confidence
- Referral to a Peer Mentor if available and appropriate
- Referral to a counsellor
- Offering continuous support and advice to parents
- Being informed about the outcome of the investigation in to their concerns.

12. Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change
- Informing parents to help change the attitude of the student
- Referral to a counsellor.

Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school. However, the school recognises that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies.

13. Sanctions

Students who have bullied will be punished appropriately according to their behaviour, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy. For persistent offenders or incidents considered as gross acts of aggression, a student may be permanently excluded and or reported to the police.

14. Complaints

If a parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the nature or swiftness of a response made by the school following a reported incident of bullying, he/she may wish to make a complaint. The complaints procedure for a case of bullying follows the guidance of the Trust's Complaints Policy. The underlying principle of the policy is that any concerns raised should be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures. If however the informal procedures are unsuccessful and the complainant wishes to take the matter further, formal measures will have to be taken.

15. Equal Opportunities

In implementing this policy all members of staff must take into account the school's Equal Opportunities policy. Staff must ensure that no student involved in any incident of bullying, is disadvantaged on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

16. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Governors work with staff and students to review our Anti-Bullying Policy, improve mechanisms and support all new initiatives including 'Coventry City's Young Peoples' Charter

We will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.