



Anti-Bullying Policy

Original - September 2022

Revision – September 2023

Statement of Intent

The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils are able to learn in a caring, supportive, safe and friendly environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our provision. Pupils who are bullying, need to learn different ways of behaving. As an educational provision, Tree of Life Educational and Holistic Services has a responsibility to prevent all forms of bullying in order to safeguard everyone and promote individual welfare. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell, and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated fairly and with respect.

Definition of Bullying

The Department of Education defines bullying as “behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that is intended to hurt or harm another individual or group, either physically or emotionally.” Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. People are bullied for many reasons, or no reason at all. Bullying relates to “difference” – real or imagined.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting.
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic – because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality.
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber – all areas of internet and other technological misuse such as email, text, mobile phone, video, camera, chatroom threats.

Related to appearance, ability, health, disability, circumstances or social class.

Specific bullying relationships may include:

- Pupil on pupil
- Pupil on staff
- Staff / adult on pupil
- Staff on staff

Policy Objectives

- Directors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is, what the policy is and what they should do if bullying arises.
- All staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with the Tree of Life policy.
- As an educational provision, we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Pupils must be encouraged to report bullying.
- Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available to them.
- Tree of Life will actively promote and raise anti-bullying awareness through PSHE, PPR, directed activities, special events, anti-bullying week, staff training and whole provision initiatives as approved by relevant external agencies.
- **Bullying will not be tolerated at Tree of Life**

Signs and Symptoms

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour or attitude. Adults should be aware of these signs and should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened or unwilling to come to the provision
- Changes their usual routine
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- Comes home with clothes torn or equipment damaged
- Has possessions which "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing (to pay bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises or other injuries
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

Whilst many of these signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, bullying should be considered a possibility and must be investigated by staff.

Procedures and Prevention

All reports of bullying will be addressed, and the priority will be to support those being bullied, ensuring the immediate safety and security of the pupil, and to stop the bullying. A clear account of the incident will be recorded on a serious incident report and discussed with a member of staff appropriate to the incident. Staff should assess the seriousness of the bullying and determine the appropriate action that should be taken. Staff will keep the behaviour under review and with discussion with teams and senior leaders, restorative approaches will be undertaken with all parties involved in order to achieve a resolution (see Behaviour management policy section on restorative justice). Parents of all parties will be kept informed either by phone or daily reports as appropriate. We expect that parents and carers will understand and be engaged in everything that is being done to make sure their child enjoys and is safe at Tree of Life and that they will support us in helping us to meet our aims. We expect parents and carers to contact the provision if they know or suspect that their child is being bullied, and work in partnership with the provision to bring an end to the bullying. Support, guidance and information will be offered to all parties through our staff and 1-1 interventions, and if necessary external agencies such as ChildLine and ParentLine plus. We will work to help and support those responsible for the bullying to understand the impact of their actions and to change their behaviour. We will work with our pupils to ensure that they recognise that being a “bystander” is not acceptable, and to help them understand how their silence supports bullying and makes them in part responsible for what happens to the victim of bullying. Displays around the building will discourage bullying and emphasise support networks. Where appropriate, natural consequences will be used as necessary and in consultation with all parties concerned.

The following steps can be taken to follow up behaviour:

- Meeting with a key member of staff, including use of mind maps and stop and think strategies
- Making an act of restoration to the victim
- Referral to an appropriate support agency
- Official warnings to cease offending
- Removal from class/ community payback (jobs within the provision)
- Use of a “student court” to bring parties together
- Parental involvement
- Changes to timetable
- Fixed-term exclusion
- Referral to anti-social behaviour unit/ or police
- Permanent exclusion

Within the curriculum, Tree of Life will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through all sessions as appropriate but especially through PSHE. Pupils at Tree of Life may exhibit bullying, aggressive and controlling behaviour. This is linked to their behaviour, emotional and social needs as defined by their autism diagnosis. All staff will work within the guidelines and procedures as laid down in the behaviour and safeguarding policies.

While we do not tolerate/ignore bullying, we have to realise that pupils who exhibit this behaviour may do so for a variety of reasons which may be beyond their control. It is essential that we endeavour to understand the bully and help them to identify the reasons for their behaviour and provide support for them to improve their relationships with other people.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Tree of Life will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. Without the support of our pupils we will not be able to prevent bullying. That is why our pupils who will be consulted through discussion, questionnaires and meetings will participate in the development, monitoring and review of anti-bullying policy and strategies. Parents will also be asked for their views through consultations and questionnaires on a regular basis. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the provision by all staff. All members of staff will:

- Provide pupils with a good role model
- Provide pupils with a framework of behaviour including class rules which support the whole school behaviour policy
- Emphasise and behave in a respectful and caring manner to students and colleagues, to set a good tone and help create a positive atmosphere.

The prime responsibility for all members of the Tree of Life community is to report incidents of bullying and concerns they may have that someone is being bullied. Laura Frain and Sian Hughes will take the lead of Bullying.

Help Organisations

- National Bullying Helpline-www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk -0845 22 55 787
- Bullying Uk -www.bullyinguk -0808 800 2222
- Kidscape – www.kidscape.org.uk -020 7730 3300
- Childline – www.childline.org.uk -0800 1111