

includEd Learning

Independent Specialist Education Provider



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, IncludEd Learning Learning has due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and to foster good relations across all protected characteristics. IncludEd Learning Learning will take into account equality considerations when policies are being developed, adopted and implemented.

IncludEd Learning Learning serves the needs of a very large and diverse range of children, pupils and their families at times when they are extremely vulnerable. Our core purpose as a school is to uphold the child's right to Education and our policies and procedures are necessary to keep staff and children safe. We acknowledge that our pupils are often living with a range of very complex needs including mental ill health and therefore we keep the needs of the pupil at the heart of all decisions. We will, therefore, work within the parameters of all statutory policies whilst seeking to understand and support the child's long term education and health needs.

All children have rights and we encourage our children to support the rights of others (UNCRC 1989). In our school we work together to promote the rights of everyone in our school. We strive to ensure that all behaviour in school from adults and children will demonstrate our approach to rights and being respectful to each other. This policy reflects our school mission statement, ethos and cultural fit.

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1. Introduction

At IncludEd Learning Learning we take bullying seriously. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and every incident of bullying is investigated and dealt with. If bullying or harassment does occur, all students should be able to inform an adult in school and know with confidence that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. To eradicate bullying in our school community we must educate everyone on what bullying is and focus on building strong and meaningful relationships. At IncludEd Learning we believe it is important to educate everyone on the impact of their behaviour on others.

Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on groups or individuals. It can be a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for a young person's mental health. It often has an impact on childhood and a lasting effect on people's lives well into adulthood.

2. Aims

This policy aims to produce a consistent response, by the school, to any bullying incidents that may take place at any of our settings. We aim to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied in any of our settings.

3. Definition of bullying

Bullying is a deliberate misuse of power that is repeated over a period of time.
It can involve an individual or a group and be aimed towards one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or because a young person is adopted or has caring responsibilities.

Bullying is not

The actions identified below can cause great distress. However, they do not fit the definition of bullying and they are not examples of bullying unless someone is deliberately and repeatedly doing them. Bullying is not any of the following:

- single episodes of social rejection or dislike
- single episode acts of nastiness or spite
- random acts of aggression or intimidation
- mutual arguments, disagreements or fights

Our definition of bullying does not include conflict and/or friendship problems between young people or one-off incidents. These problems will still be taken seriously and dealt with immediately to prevent them developing into bullying behaviour.

4. Safeguarding young people

Bullying should always be considered a safeguarding issue and dealt with by the school in an appropriate manner.

As a school we may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Full details can be found in Part 1 of [Keeping children safe in education 2023 - Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff](#). Where this is the case, IncludEd Learning's Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

The same safeguarding considerations should be applied to bullying incidents that occur outside of school hours or on the journey to and from school. IncludEd Learning has a key part to play in coordinating a supportive response and involving the relevant agencies to ensure the child is safe and the perpetrators appropriately sanctioned.

5. Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed we will seek advice from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, any person who sends an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.

6. Types of Bullying

There are many different types of bullying. 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
- LGBTQ+ - because of or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Including; Gay, Trans or Bi-phobic - bullying based on prejudice or negative attitudes, views, or beliefs about LGBTQ+ or trans people
- Gender - bullying because of their gender or gender identity
- Faith - because of their religion
- Social class – because of their background or social class
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing because of appearance etc.
- Cyber - all areas of internet use, such as e-mail and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging, including aggravated sexting & calls, misuse of associated technology

7. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying, or online bullying, can be defined as the use of technologies by an individual or by a group of people to deliberately and repeatedly upset someone else. Cyber bullying is increasingly prevalent. Awareness-raising and promoting an understanding about cyberbullying are essential to enable ongoing discussion and to ensure members of Manchester Hospital School community are not unknowingly facilitating cyberbullying because of a lack of understanding. This is achieved through the school's online safety lessons in ICT and PSHE. Our young people will be taught how to recognise cyberbullying and how to take the correct action.

8. Recognising the Signs of Bullying

It is recognised that all schools are likely to have a problem with bullying at some time. At IncludEd Learning we have a proactive approach to identifying and acting upon potential signs of bullying. These signs may include when a young person:

- becomes shy, withdrawn or anxious
- lacks concentration, or shows a deterioration in his or her work
- starts to attend school erratically
- has spurious illnesses

- feels ill in the morning
- is unwilling to go to school after previously enjoying being part of the school community
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- is bullying/ harassing other children or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

N.B. These signs and behaviours are not limited to the above and they could also indicate other issues that a young person may be experiencing.

9. Bullying Outside of School

School staff members have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances.

This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on.

The DSL will liaise with the Head to consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police.

If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed. While school staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

10. Anti-Bullying in the Curriculum

IncludEd Learning Learning will raise awareness of the impact of bullying by teaching our young people about staying safe through its curriculum. Our students will also be involved in reviewing this policy and designing anti bullying posters to explain the steps for reporting bullying at IncludEd Learning Learning.

11. Anti-Bullying Procedures

In this section IncludEd Learning have set out the Anti-bullying procedures for parents/carers, students and staff. We will ensure that all staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and the mechanisms in place to deal with it.

Parents and carers

The school will work closely with parents and carers in dealing with bullying. Bullying in school is everyone's problem. All staff, students and parents should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it to make the school a happier place for everyone.

Parents/carers are often the first ones to spot any signs of bullying. If parents/carers suspect their child is being bullied, they should contact the site Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Parents/carers should be prepared to talk about the signs and symptoms and any suspicions they have regarding those carrying out the bullying/harassment to the DSL.

Summary of advice for parents/carers when dealing with bullying incidents;

1. contact the school and make an appointment to speak to the site DSL to report your concerns
2. allow staff to investigate
3. encourage your child to speak to a member of staff
4. work with school to resolve the situation

Students

If a student thinks they are being bullied they must tell an adult, parent or a member of staff. Students who witness bullying or experience an incident which they feel may be bullying or harassment, must tell an adult, parent, or a member of the school staff.

Students will be asked questions such as:

- What has happened?
- How often does this happen?
- Who was involved?
- Where has it happened?
- Who saw what happened?
- Have you reported it previously, if so who to?
- Have they done anything about it?

Summary of advice for students when dealing with bullying incidents;

1. Tell an adult or someone you trust
2. Keep a record of what is happening
3. Don't retaliate
4. Be proud of who you are

N.B. we recognise that not all students will be able to follow this guidance

All Staff

When we receive a report of bullying from a student, we will;

1. Investigate as quickly as possible to establish the facts by asking the student questions such as ;
 - What has happened?
 - How often does this happen?
 - Who was involved?
 - Where has it happened?
 - Who saw what happened?
 - What have they done about it already?
 - Have they done anything about it?
2. reassure the student that reporting the bullying incident was the right thing to do.
3. make it clear to the student that they are not to blame for what has happened.
4. explain that the student should report any further incidents to a teacher or another adult in school immediately.
5. make a note of what the student says and record it on CPOMS and inform the DSL .

DSL

The DSL will:

- discuss the matter with all students involved
- use a restorative approach to bring them together and insist on the perpetrator seeing the other person's point of view (if appropriate). The site DSL may ask other members of staff to support this process.
- ensure that if a sanction is used, it will correlate to the seriousness of the incident and the 'bully' will be told why it is being used
- contact the pupils' parents/carers
- contact any external agencies for support, if necessary
- update the Head in person or via CPOMS of any actions taken

12. Recording Incidents

All incidents of bullying and discussions with the students involved will be recorded on CPOMS, along with the actions taken. This record will be monitored by the Head/DSL. It is important that staff log bullying incidents by selecting the correct bullying categories on CPOMS. Staff will always refer to our definition of bullying when logging an incident as bullying. Noreen Khan has overall responsibility for monitoring bullying incidents. The Advisory Panel will be kept informed by the Head on a termly basis on any bullying incidents recorded, see appendix B.

13. Support for students who have been bullied

Students who have been bullied will be supported by staff:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with an appropriate member of staff of their choice
- reassuring the student
- offering continuous support with a designated member of staff
- restoring self-esteem and self-confidence via reflection sessions
- referral to a Peer Mentor if appropriate
- referral to a counsellor
- offering continuous support and advice to parents
- being informed about the outcome of the investigation into their concerns
- including external agencies such as Children's Services where appropriate (e.g. where there are linked Child Protection concerns)

14. Support for students who have bullied

Students who have bullied will be supported 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
- involving other agencies, including Police and Children's Services, to support a change in behaviour (if necessary)
- regular reflection sessions (if necessary)
- attend a mediation (restorative justice) meeting with the affected student to resolve issues and prevent recurrence where this is deemed appropriate and does not place undue stress on the victim
- explain that the student should report any further incidents to a teacher or another adult in school immediately

Sanctions may be applied where bullying is identified. The level of response will be determined by the success of the restorative process and at the discretion of the member of staff involved. Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by IncludEd Learning Learning.

15. Sanctions

For students who have demonstrated bullying behaviour, the school's Behaviour Policy will be followed. Bullying incidents will always be discussed with parents/carers so that they are aware. Using the restorative practices, a plan will be implemented to identify the steps that need to be taken to change the behaviour in the future and support the student in being able to do this.

16. Dealing with Serious Bullying

If the preventative measures and peer support strategies do not succeed, serious bullying will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy. The bully may:

- be removed from the group and placed in a different class or registration group
- attend a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and parent/carer to resolve the issue
- receive support from our on-site support services

In cases, where the bullying involves serious actual or threatened violence against another student, the placement may be terminated. At IncludEd Learning we will work closely with our referrers to determine the next step.

17. Monitoring and Review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school as a working document.

This policy gives guidance to staff on anti-bullying. This Policy links with a number of other policies including:

- Complaints Policy
- Positive Behaviour and Communication Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Reasonable Force and Safe Handling Policy
- Attendance Policy

→ Appendix. - Procedures Flow Chart

Bullying incident is reported to staff/witnessed by staff



Head of Centre is alerted and all staff discuss the incident, report on CPOMS



If the incident is deemed a 'one off' issue it is still recorded by the Head of Centre and the incident is discussed in the team briefing at the end of the day



If the incident is deemed as bullying, all students are spoken to individually and statements are taken. The views of all students are asked for and support is offered through literature or advice if the pupil feels the need of support discreetly. All information is downloaded and written on CPOMS and logs are kept by the Head of Centre.



The Head of Centre will discuss with the relevant staff about contacting parents/carers to inform them and gain their opinion and offering support to them and hold meetings with them. In incidents which are deemed as a safeguarding issue, the Head of Centre will take a lead and follow the school policies linked to the anti-bullying policy.



Interventions, information, outside agencies are offered to all the students involved and parents/carers. This is bespoke to the students to ensure that not only does the bullying stop but to address all factors involved and to help stop future issues.



Students are monitored after an incident through team briefings and if necessary have update meetings with the Head of Centre. Parents/Carers will also receive updates through staff.