Easington C of E Primary School Anti Bullying Policy

Date Policy Adopted:

Date Reviewed and approved: **December 2021**

Next Review Date: **December 2023**

Signed:

Chair of the Board of Directors

Contents

1.0   Objectives of this Policy

The Melrose Learning Trust Anti-Bullying Policy outlines what our schools will do to prevent and tackle bullying. We take any incident of bullying very seriously and record all incidents. This policy will be disseminated to the school communities.

Our school communities:
- Discuss, monitor and review our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis.
- Are aware of the potentially serious actions that can follow bullying. These include psychological damage as well, in extreme cases leading to suicide
- Support staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately
- Ensure that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that pupils feel safe to learn; and that pupils abide by the anti- bullying policy
- Report back to parents/guardians regarding their concerns on bullying and deal promptly with complaints. Parents/ guardians/carers in turn work with the schools to uphold the anti-bullying policy
- Seek to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilises support from other relevant organisations when appropriate.

2.0   Aims

We are committed to providing caring, friendly and safe environments in our schools for all of our pupils so they can learn in a positive and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our schools. We recognise that bullying could lead to suicide and all incidents are treated very seriously. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to report it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. All members of the school communities should understand:

- the definition of bullying and that it will not be tolerated in our schools;
- the policy on bullying and know how to follow it when bullying is reported;
- that support will be given when bullying is reported;
- that through monitoring, reviewing and training, the Trust aims to develop a positive atmosphere where pupils feel confident to tell if they are being bullied and that bullies can change.

3.0   Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust/school policies:
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Primary Relationships and Health Education Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Exclusion Policy

4.0   Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

Bullying is generally characterised by:
- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.
- Pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils.
- Pupils with SEND.

5.0   Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur. Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic and biphobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Socioeconomic bullying: Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

6.0   Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board is responsible for:
- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Appointing a safeguarding link director who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.

The headteacher is responsible for:
- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a record of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members, as necessary.

All staff are responsible for:
- Monitoring pupils in their care by being observant and asking pupils what is happening to them.
- Liaising with staff, especially Head and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Knowing the policy and dealing with incidents in accordance with procedure.
- Taking part in anti-bullying measures and contributing to strategy and solutions.
- Reporting all incidents.
- Involving pupils in creating positive strategies through RSHE, school council and class routines.

Parents are responsible for:
- Informing school if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Pupils are responsible for:
- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyberbullying.

7.0   Signs of bullying

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Repeated or persistent absence from school
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:
- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated.
- They have been the victim of abuse.
- Their academic performance has started to fall and they are showing signs of stress

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's class teacher, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

8.0 Staff principles

The Trust will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.

Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Staff will always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless the pupil has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

9.0 Peer-on-peer abuse

The Trust has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

To prevent peer-on-peer abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, schools will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons.

All staff will be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers. Staff will take all instances of peer-on-peer abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims, will never tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up", and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as "boys being boys", as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours. Staff will also be aware that peer-on-peer abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing- or initiation-type violence.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to children's social care services (CSCS), where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

The Trust's Peer-on-peer Abuse Policy outlines the school's stance on addressing peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed. More information on the Trust's approach to preventing and managing instances of peer-on-peer abuse can be found within this policy and the Safeguarding Policy.

10.0 Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Cyberbullying can include the following:
- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The Trust has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The Trust views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

All members of staff will ensure they are aware of the signs of cyberbullying, in order to identify pupils who may be experiencing issues and intervene effectively.

Many of the signs of cyberbullying will be similar to those found in the 'Signs of bullying' section of this policy; however, staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is being cyberbullied:
- Avoiding use of the computer
- Being on their phone routinely
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages

Staff will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a pupil is cyberbullying others:
- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer or mobile phone
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone
- Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- **Possible extensive scale and scope** – pupils may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online
- **The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying** – pupils may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times
- **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and pupils may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity
- **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to pupils crossing boundaries without realising
- **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – pupils may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator

Schools will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with this policy.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, schools have the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

11.0   Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying

We will:
- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying including through the curriculum, through displays, through peer support and through whole-school activities.
- Train all staff including lunchtime staff, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff to identify bullying and follow policy and procedures on bullying.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.

- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools.
- Publicise the details of helplines and websites.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied.
- Work with pupils who have been bullying in order to address the problems they have.

12.0   Procedures

We have a clear procedure so pupils know who to tell and teachers know how to record incidents so that patterns can be observed.

- Report bullying incidents to staff.
- In cases of serious bullying, staff will record the incident.
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.

- In serious cases, parents will be informed and will be asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behavior.
- Staff who deal with pupils who have been bullied must always offer reassurance.
- Pupils who have been bullied will be given support determined by the Head in consultation with the pupil.
- Parents of pupils who are being bullied and parents of the bully may be involved in designing and providing the solution.
- Support will be offered to the pupil being bullied.
- We will endeavour to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully (bullies) in line with the positive procedures identified with the strategies.
- Any of the school's formal sanctions punishments can be used as appropriate.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

13.0   Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may also take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- Both the victim and perpetrator may be offered support from the school's mental health and wellbeing lead.
- After the incident /incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

14.0   Bullying outside of school

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school, and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Safeguarding Policy and the Peer-on-peer Abuse Policy.

The headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.

The headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

15.0   Record keeping

The Headteacher will ensure that robust records are kept with regard to all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions. Records of incidents will be logged on the school's MIS system, ScholarPack or CPOMs.

16.0   Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as well as if incidents occur that suggest the need for review. The school will continue to use guidance from DfE and the Anti-Bullying Alliance to inform its action planning to prevent and tackle bullying.

17.0   Approval by the Trust Board

This policy has been formally approved and adopted by the Trust Board.

Signed:

(Chair of Trust Board)