Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Folder: Education and Care – May 2023

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Bullying in any form is unacceptable to the whole school community and will not be tolerated. This policy sets out how we will achieve this practically, in line with the legislative framework for schools.

Implementation: It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure that staff members understand and act in accordance with this policy and any subsequent revisions. It is appropriate that all members of the school are aware of bullying, and demonstrate awareness that it will not be tolerated in any form.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force April 2011. The Public Sector Equality Duty is a duty on public authorities to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. The Duty has three aims.

It requires public bodies (including schools) to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Act also makes it unlawful for a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or potential student in relation to admissions, education, or access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a student or subjecting them to any other detriment.

'Rights, Respect, Equality; Challenging Bullying in Schools" (Welsh Government, November 2019 rights-respect-equality-statutory-guidance-for-governing-bodies-of-maintained-schools.pdf) is the statutory guidance for maintained schools in Wales. Whilst Kinsale is not a maintained school, we follow this guidance to provide comprehensive guidance and support for staff and students.

3.0 KINSALE'S VISIONS AND VALUES

Objectives
In order to fulfil our anti-bullying vision, our school:

1. Ensures that the whole community including parents, learners and staff understand what bullying is.
2. Reinforces the anti-bullying message with the whole staff community through regular general and specific training, staff meetings and information communication.
3. Equips learners with strategies, which enable them to respond to bullying behaviour, at a developmentally appropriate level.
4. Reinforces the anti-bullying ethos with learners, specifically through Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE), Registration/Circle time, and in general through the curriculum, using projects, stories, literature, historical events, current affairs, themed weeks and daily interactions between staff and learners.
5. Uses the school website to share the school anti-bullying policy
6. Collates, listens to and records details of learner opinions on incidents of prejudice, discrimination, harassment and bullying, in order to improve school policy and procedures.
7. Ensures that parents, staff and learners are aware of the procedures to follow if they are the target of bullying or if they feel that they might be behaving in bullying ways.
8. Ensures that parents, staff and learners understand the signs of bullying.
9. Provides support to those who are the targets of bullying and those who are perpetrating bullying behaviour.
10. Provides opportunities for reflection and restoration of relationships, where appropriate, facilitated by school staff
11. Ensures that where developmentally appropriate, learners understand the school's behaviour policy
12. Ensures that where developmentally appropriate, learners understand the school's sanctions for behaviour that is harmful to others.
13. Ensures that no learner has to move to a different school as a result of on-going bullying.

To actively raise awareness of bullying and oppose it in all its forms, 'Good Behaviour' must be evident from all staff, learners and visitors. This is achieved through: -

a) Consistent models of good behaviour from staff demonstrating; acceptance of peers, learners and visitors, and listening to their points of view; courteousness; sharing and turn taking.

b) Celebrating all achievements however small, taking into account that achievements are not only academic but can be an act of kindness or good behaviour.

c) Staff demonstrating mutual support and understanding.

d) Intolerance of taunts or negative behaviours relating to race, disability, religious beliefs, sex and gender, sexuality or age.

e) Clearly defined rules relating to the schools aims in relation to behaviour, rewards for positive behaviour and appropriate consequences for negative behaviours. (See Policy for Positive Behaviour)

4.0 WHAT IS BULLYING?

There is no legal definition of bullying in Wales, however, bullying can be defined as:

"Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts others either physically or emotionally" (Rights, Respect and Equality, Welsh Government, 2019)

Underpinning this definition are behaviours, which result in individuals or groups feeling unsafe. Bullying differs from an argument, a fight or a friendship fallout in that:
1) It is usually repetitive and persistent
2) It is deliberate and intentional
3) It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it
4) It causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness and lack of confidence in those who are being targeted.

There are a number of distinctive elements associated with bullying. These include, but are not limited to:
- *intention to harm* – bullying is deliberate with the intention to cause harm. Those who bully others are often skilled at knowing exactly how to humiliate or hurt their target, picking on key aspects of their appearance, personality or identity that produces the effect wanted. They seek out the area in which they have power over their target
- *harmful outcome* – someone or a group is hurt physically or emotionally. They can be isolated, humiliated or made fearful. Their sense of self-worth is reduced
- *direct or indirect acts* – bullying can involve direct aggression such as hitting, as well as indirect acts such as spreading rumours, revealing private information about someone or sharing intimate images with people for whom the information/images were not intended
- *repetition* – bullying usually involves repeated acts of negative behaviour or acts of aggression. An isolated aggressive act, such as a fight, is not usually considered bullying. Yet any incident can be the start of a pattern of bullying behaviour which develops subsequently. That is why incident records are so valuable
- *unequal power* – bullying involves the abuse of power by one person or a group who are (perceived as) more powerful, often due to their age, physical strength, popularity or psychological resilience.

5.0 FORMS OF BULLYING

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- **physical** – kicking, tripping someone up or shoving them, injuring someone, damaging their belongings or gestures of intimidation

- **verbal** – taunts and name-calling, insults, threats, humiliation or intimidation

- **emotional** – behaviour intended to isolate, hurt or humiliate someone

- **indirect** – sly or underhand actions carried out behind the target's back or rumour-spreading

- **cyber-bullying** – using any form of technological means, mobile phones, social networks, gaming, chat rooms, forums or apps to bully via text, messaging, images or video. . It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying because of the invasion of home and personal space, the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages, the size of the audience, perceived anonymity and the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target

- **relational aggression** – bullying that tries to harm the target's relationships or social status: drawing their friends away, exploiting a person's special educational needs/additional learning needs (SEN/ALN) or long-term illness, targeting their family's social status, isolating or humiliating someone or deliberately getting someone into trouble

- **sexual** – unwanted touching, threats, suggestions, comments and jokes or innuendo. This can also include sextortion, so called 'revenge porn' and any misuse of intimate, explicit images of the learner targeted

- **prejudice-related** – bullying of a learner or a group of learners because of prejudice. This could be linked to stereotypes or presumptions about identity. Prejudice-related bullying includes the protected characteristics. Prejudice can and does also extend beyond the protected characteristics and can lead to bullying for a variety of other reasons such as social status and background

- **Racist** - The person/child is targeted for being a member of group within society. Racist bullying can consist of verbal abuse e.g. name calling, racist comments, jokes, offensive mimicry and physical attacks.

- **Disability** - People with a variety of disabilities can find themselves bullied because of the nature of their disability. Bullying within this category can present itself as mimicry, name calling and inappropriate joking. It is important that staff give clear messages that such behaviour will not be tolerated

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Bullying and learners with Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC)
As a school we need to differentiate between learners' behaviours that result from, or are associated with, ASC and those that can be described as bullying. Such behaviours pertaining to individual learners will be detailed in their Positive Behaviour Support Plan (PBSP). In order to be classified as bullying the behaviour should have the following characteristics; directed, intentional, wilful and be aimed at causing hurt or putting the person/child under stress.

What is not bullying?

Some behaviour, though unacceptable, is not considered bullying. The Welsh Government expects these instances to be dealt with in accordance with the school's Positive Behaviour policy to prevent an incident potentially escalating to become bullying.

The following examples are cases which would not normally be considered bullying:
- **friendship fallouts** – a friendship feud may however deteriorate into bullying behaviour that is enabled by the fact that former friends have an intimate knowledge of the fears and insecurities of one another. Children and young people who are targeted by former friends feel the betrayal deeply and are frequently isolated from their former friendship group
- **a one-off fight** – Kinsale will address incidents of a one-off fight according to the school's Positive Behaviour policy, unless it is part of a pattern of behaviour that indicates intentional targeting of another individual
- **an argument or disagreement** – between two children or young people is not generally regarded as bullying. Nevertheless they may require assistance to learn to respect others' views
- **a one-off physical assault** – in the event of a physical assault between students, it will be stopped and addressed immediately. Police involvement in cases where physical assault has happened may also be appropriate
- **insults and banter** – children and young people will often protest that an incident was a joke or banter. If two friends of equal power are in the habit of bantering with one another it is not deemed to be bullying. If one learner uses banter to humiliate or threaten another who is powerless to stop it and made fearful by the act, the border between banter and bullying is likely to be crossed

6.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ACTUAL OR ALLEGED BULLYING

General Principles for Managing Incidents of Bullying

a) Always act on suspected bullying, as ignoring could lead to unnecessary distress and harm.

b) Be objective when dealing with any evidence, don't make premature assumptions.

c) Report suspected or actual cases of bullying to the DSP or an appropriate line manager immediately, using a "Cause for Concern" form (Appendix 1). Incidents of suspected or actual bullying must also be recorded on Access on the day of the incident.

d) Listen carefully to all accounts – try to get as full a picture as possible before making any judgement. However, delays can cause distress and can give an impression that such behaviour is acceptable. Accounts from a number of learners saying the same thing does not assure accuracy.

e) Adopt a problem solving approach, taking objective evidence from learners and working towards a resolution.

f) Monitor and review the situation ensuring that the instance of bullying has not reoccurred.

7.0 REPORTING BULLYING

a) Suspected or actual bullying must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Person using a 'Cause for Concern' form, and also an electronic log completed on Access. This report must be made on the day of the incident. In the absence of the DSP, staff must report any suspected or actual bullying to their line manager (Care Manager, Team Leader, Senior Teacher, or teacher). Strategies for dealing informally or formally with the bully must be identified and put into practice.

b) Parents are requested to contact the Headteacher directly to report any bullying they are made aware of by their child. This contact can be made via email or phone number (contact details at the end of the policy)

c) If there are very serious concerns or the strategies implemented are not successful, staff must make contact with the Regional Director (contact details at the end of the policy). A formal meeting will take place to identify actions required.

d) If students or parents/carers feel that their concerns are not being taken seriously by the school, they must make contact with the Regional Director (contact details at the end of the policy) to raise concerns further.

e) The Regional Director will respond to concerns within 5 working days. A formal meeting will take place to discuss the concerns and identify further actions

Any discussions with staff, learners or parents must be recorded and kept on file

8.0 APPROACHES TO BULLYING

Curriculum Approaches

We take a proactive approach with cyber bullying (see e-safety policy) ensuring pupils do not have unsupervised access to the internet – and no access at all to social networking sites - whilst in school.

Some residential students have limited access to social media sites within the residential homes (dependent on their developmental understanding), which is monitored by the care staff. For day students, parents are provided with resources on cyber-bullying, and are asked to raise any issues of cyber-bullying with the Headteacher so that it can be addressed appropriately.

Through ICT lessons, learners are taught how to use the internet safely and alerted to some of the issues around cyber bullying, where appropriate to the learners' developmental and cognitive needs.
Issues around bullying are highlighted and taught through a variety of planned opportunities in the school year, incorporating them into the PSHE and SMSC offer. Students are offered opportunities to work alongside their peers and develop positive relationships, at an appropriate developmental level.

Issues that will be addressed include: -

- Identifying what bullying is and the existence of the anti-bullying policy.
- Identifying the rights of a victim and what to do if bullying takes place.
- Teaching about forming and maintaining relationships.
- Why people become bullies.
- How bullying affects others.
- How to prevent bullying

Where a case of bullying has been identified, appropriate strategies will be put in place to support both the bully and the victim. These strategies will depend on the specific nature of the incident, but may include:-

- Mediation between the bully and the victim
- Individualised work to support the understanding of the bully regarding their behaviour
- Restorative relationship work to build positive relationships
- In the event of bullying relating to a protected characteristic, individualised work will be completed with the bully to support their understanding of individual differences.

In recognition of the communication and developmental needs of our students at Kinsale, the above strategies will be delivered at an appropriate developmental level, and may include the use of visual support systems or social stories to support understanding. Staff will be sensitive to the needs of both the bully and the victim, and recognise that difficulties in social communication and interaction with students with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Conditions can lead to difficulties in understanding the viewpoint of others, and therefore the strategies may need to be repeated over a period of time to ensure understanding.

9.0 SIGNS OF BULLYING

Bullying can cause serious psychological damage. A learner who is experiencing bullying may display some of the following signs:
• Becomes frightened of going to school, frightened to attend specific lessons or going to specific areas of the school
• Makes changes to their usual routine
• Becomes more quiet, withdrawn or anxious than previously
• Begins stammering
• Threatens to run away or runs away
• Self-harms
• Threatens suicide
• Begins to perform poorly at school
• Frequently has missing or damaged possessions
• Is always asking for extra money or never has money
• Has unexplained injuries
• Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
• Begins to bully siblings or peers
• Stops eating or attending meals
• Is afraid to use the internet or a mobile phone

• Becomes nervous when a cyber-message is received
• Appears more tired than usual (due to sleep disturbance, including bed wetting);
• Appears anxious and suffers from low self-esteem;
• Is reluctant to go out into the playground/yard and
• Is reluctant to use toilet facilities
 • Is reluctant to discuss the reasons for any of the above

For our students who are non-verbal, staff must act as the 'eyes and ears' to ensure that bullying does not take place, and must be vigilant to any changes in behaviour. Any concerns must be reported following the reporting procedures outlined in this policy.

9.KEY STRATEGIES FOR COUNTERACTING BULLYING

The Welsh Government Statutory Guidance "Rights, respect, equality" (November 2019) outlines key strategies for counteracting bullying. A copy of this document can be obtained on the internet via - https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/rights-respect-equality-statutory-guidance-for-governing-bodies-of-maintained-schools.pdf

The document includes information about the definitions of bullying, and effective strategies to address bullying in schools.

Kinsale implements this guidance through:-
- a whole-school approach to anti-bullying
- working together with parents, students and partner agencies (including social services) to promote anti-bullying
- managing incidents of bullying effectively through rigorous recording, reporting and action
- co-ordinating and managing training for staff
- providing a curriculum which meets the needs of our learners, and supports the development of their health and wellbeing
- creating an environment which promotes health and wellbeing (through indoor and outdoor space to relax, appropriate toilet facilities, healthy food and drink)
- establishing positive relationships, strong and responsive care and guidance for all our students

10.PARENTS AND CARERS GUIDE TO BULLYING BEHAVIOURS

Whenever there is a case of bullying the parents/carer of both the target and the perpetrator will be informed either in writing or by personal contact.
If your child is being bullied:
Parents along with peers will probably be the first to hear of a bullying incident. Parents should contact the Headteacher if they are worried. It is essential to stay calm, supportive and find out the facts of the situation; bullying can be complex to understand as it is possible that the parties involved will have varying perceptions of the events under investigation.
Reassurance will be needed in order to persuade your child that they have done the right thing by telling you.
You may find it helpful to have the following checklist at your side to ensure that you provide helpful information.
 • Who was involved?
 • Where did it take place, when and how often?
 • Why did it take place?
 • What form did the bullying take?

When you inform the school of these details, the Headteacher will explain how the school will proceed. Be reassured that the school will respond sensitively to the needs of all the learners involved. All information will be considered and investigated thoroughly.
You may be able to help. Ask what you can do to support the school's actions to support your child. It is helpful to make a note of the actions the school intends to take and any strategies the school suggests will be helpful for you to implement to support your child. Stay in touch with the school and inform the school of how things are going. Contact the school as soon as possible if further incidents occur.

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Ensure you keep records of all incidents your child shares. (Who?, Where?, When?, Why?, What form of bullying behaviour?). This helps to track events should the bullying behaviour continue.

If your child is involved in the bullying:
It is very upsetting when your child is involved in bullying behaviour. Do not panic or blame yourself. It is important to work with the school to modify your child's patterns of behaviour. Acknowledge that these things do happen and the school has mechanisms in place to respond to this issue. It is helpful to recognise some of the reasons why learners behave in this way from time to time.
Children sometimes bully others because:
 • They are not aware of how hurtful it is;
• They are copying the behaviour of peers, older siblings or people they admire;
• They have a temporary difficulty integrating within their peer group;
• They are bullying others because of encouragement from friends;
• They are going through a difficult time personally and need help;
• They have not yet learnt satisfactory ways for making firm relationships.

To stop your child from being involved in bullying behaviour:
• Talk with your child and help them to understand that what they are doing is unacceptable as it makes other learners unhappy;
• Discourage other members of the family from using aggressive behaviour in order to get what they want;
• Suggest ways of joining in activities with other learners without being hurtful or unkind;
• Liaise with the school;
• Make time to have regular chats about how things are going at school;
• Check that your child has identified an adult at school to whom they can go if they have a problem or a worry of any kind. They need to have a good relationship with this person.

Please note that the school will need to take action if bullying behaviour occurs. The matter will be responded to sensitively, but it needs to be effective for all those involved. Sanctions will link with those outlined in Kinsale's Positive Behaviour Policy.

11. PERSISTENT BULLYING

Where bullying continues after measures and strategies have been applied, or it is felt that tougher measures are needed; the teacher, together with their line manager must consider the following.

- Removal from the group
- Application of appropriate sanctions identified in the Policy for Positive Behaviour, including withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges; removal from any outside activities that are not essential to the curriculum.
- Use of external support including the school Police Community Support Officer and allocated Social Workers

12. STUDENT SUPPORT

It is imperative that the victim is supported throughout any instance of bullying, this must consist of: -

- Active listening
- Advice
- Assertive training
- Having a named person for support

Students can expect to be treated in an empathetic way, with support from key education staff to ensure that their education is not impacted by their experiences.
Students will be listened to and supported in a non-judgemental manner, and will receive regular check-ins with their named person (as agreed at the stage of identifying the named member of staff).

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Students who have experienced and reported bullying will be supported to continue to engage with their education and will not be excluded or penalised for reporting their experiences.

13. MONITORING

Monitoring, after any incident of bullying, must be a systematic set of routines to establish that the problem has been conquered and that possibility of reoccurrence is minimised. To ensure this the following actions must be followed;

a) Identify a key member of staff to oversee monitoring of progress.
b) Revisit the incident after a period of 2 weeks to ensure there hasn't been a reoccurrence.
c) Follow up again within half term of the original incident.
d) Ensure that both the victim and the perpetrator of the bullying are aware that monitoring and review will be conducted, thus reducing reoccurrence.
e) Ensure that documentation relating to individual incidents of bullying is kept in confidential pupil/student files until a time that is appropriate to the individual case. For example, if the bullying is an isolated case, with no reoccurrence for the same or other victim, it is acceptable to remove from the learner's file prior to transition to any receiving service. However, should persistence or further incidents occur it would be appropriate to disclose the instances to any organisation assessing the learner for a future placement, allowing for full and fair judgements to be made.

Regular training must be undertaken with existing staff to reinforce expectations and process and outline new documentation and/or strategies. New staff must receive training related to the anti-bullying policy as part of their induction to the school.

14.EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the policy to combat bullying must be evaluated on an annual basis. This evaluation must inform updates and amendments of the policy.

Consultation with staff, learners, their families and the parent company – Outcomes First Group - must be carried out to fully consider any incident, its management, the outcomes and progression for the future.

By raising awareness, everyone involved in the immediate and wider communities of the school will understand and share knowledge relating to expectations and the school's intolerance of bullying. This will, in turn, increase learners understanding and make them more likely to feel comfortable to report incidents.

15.CONTACT DETAILS

Philippa Whipp– Headteacher
Email; philippa.whipp@optionsautism.co.uk
Phone: 01745 562500

Leanne Molyneux – Head of Service
Email: leanne.molyneux@acorneducationandcare.co.uk
Phone: 07725 516799

Chris Groom – Regional Director
Email; Chris.groom@ofgl.co.uk
Phone: 07963 301612

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Appendix 1 – Cause for Concern form

	Log No.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN/COMPLAINT TRACKING FORM	

Name of the individual that the concern is about:
Nature of the allegation (include a brief summary of the concern, who raised the concern and to whom)

Date and time passed to Registered Manager:	Date:	Time:
Date and time passed to Headteacher:	Date:	Time:

Form completed by:	Date:	Time:

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We are part of the Outcomes First Group Family,by working together we will build incredible futures by empowering vulnerable children, young people and adults in the UK to be happy and make their way in the world

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