

Graveney School Anti-bullying Policy

Adopted by the Governing Body

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Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch or are aware of it happening, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society, but no one person or group, whether adult or child, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed can we feel able to benefit from the opportunities available at school.

WHY IS AN ANTI-BULLYING POLICY NECESSARY?

Graveney School is committed to Equal Opportunities. We believe that all our pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Our Equal Opportunities Policy celebrates our diversity and makes clear that sexist, racist or homophobic or other prejudicial behaviour will not be tolerated.

Graveney has a clear Behaviour Policy where the promotion of good discipline and mutual respect are emphasised. It is made clear that bullying is in total breach of our Behaviour Policy – it is wrong and will not be tolerated.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over a period of time that intentionally hurts or harms another person. Bullying leads to fear, humiliation, feelings of powerlessness, isolation from others and the undermining of self esteem.

Bullying can take many forms, and sometimes depends on people's perceptions. It generally fits into two categories; emotional and physical harm.

Examples include:

PHYSICAL

- Being physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, pushed, jostled, etc.
- Having property damaged or stolen. Physical threats maybe used by the bully or bullies in order that the victim hands over property to the bully/bullies.
- Intimidation through looks, stares, standing too close, blocking someone's way.

EMOTIONAL

- Verbal abuse – this can be in the form of name-calling, it may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, sexuality, appearance, physical/social disability or personality etc.
- It can be teasing, mocking, making offensive or rude comments, gossiping, and spreading hurtful rumours.
- Intimidation – the victim may be made to feel frightened or uncomfortable by verbal threats.
- Exclusion – the victim can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities with those he/she believes to be friends.

All these actions can be done

- Face-to-face.
- Via third parties.
- By other means such as text messages, Facebook, emails, web sites.

Sometimes bullying can be fairly low level (e.g. gossiping about someone, laughing at someone, teasing) but it is still bullying if it is persistent and where the motive or intention to be deliberately hurtful is present.

It is not just bullies and victims who are involved in these actions. Other pupils can collude voluntarily or involuntarily by failing to support the victim or tell an adult.

We will investigate all reported incidents thoroughly including talking to the alleged victim, the alleged bully and any witnesses in confidence.

If any degree of bullying is identified we will help, support and counsel both the victim and the bully.

We support the VICTIM in the following ways:

- By offering them the immediate opportunity to talk about the experience.
- By informing the victim's parents/guardians.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it – both within and outside school if appropriate e.g. arranging for him/her to be escorted to and from school if necessary.
- By using one or more of the punishments described below to prevent more bullying.