

Oaklands School Anti Bullying Policy: May 2023

Person Responsible: Head Teacher
Reviewed: May 2023
Next Review Date: May 2026

This policy is in accordance with the school aims and all other policies at Oaklands School, and in the borough of Hounslow. With additional reference to The Staff Code of Conduct, policies on equal opportunities, The Grievance policy, The Disciplinary policy, Behaviour policy, Policy for unacceptable behaviour on school premises, Personal social and health education and citizenship.

Definition of Bullying

1. Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten, undermine or frighten someone. The key element of bullying is that there is an element of “intent” in the behaviour, which is what distinguishes it from behaviours, usually referred to as “challenging”
2. www.gov.uk notes that

While there is no legal definition of bullying it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- Repeated
- Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- Often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation
- It takes many forms and can include: physical assault, teasing, making threats, name calling, cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Some forms of bullying are illegal including violence, assault, theft, harassment, intimidation including threats, abusive phone calls or other messages.

In the school environment bullying might involve pupils, staff or families.

Oaklands Pupils

Oaklands pupils all have special educational needs which always include severe learning difficulties. Our pupils find it far more difficult than other young people to regulate their emotions, regulate their behaviour, understand the nature of appropriate behaviour, safe behaviour and relationships with others.

In managing incidence of perceived bullying among pupils it is important to understand whether a young person intended to cause another person harm through their behaviour. Bullying is not the same as challenging behaviour. Inherent in Bullying is both intention and repetition. At Oaklands all incidents are reported, recorded and analysed to ensure that any pattern of negative behaviour towards others is not missed or misinterpreted.

Where students indicate, or staff feel, that a student or staff member is being bullied they should report this to their line manager. Line managers will report this to the Senior leadership team who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

Staff

Oaklands has a code of conduct which all staff must sign to indicate they have understood the behaviour required as employees of the school. Staff are expected to treat each other with mutual professional respect showing neither discrimination nor favour.

The school will not tolerate the harassment, bullying or victimisation of employees nor will it tolerate discrimination against staff. We deal with any professional disagreements or differences of opinion calmly, politely and with discretion using proper school processes.

Staff who are accused of bullying by another member of staff will be subject to the procedures outlined in the School Grievance policy. Staff could also be subject to the procedures outlined in the Disciplinary policy.

Other adults visiting the school

At Oaklands we work closely with families and with a range of visiting professionals. The same high standard of behaviour and communication is expected of our whole school community. Staff as well as pupils have the right to expect to be treated with respect in their workplace. The actions that might be taken if there are incidents of unreasonable behaviour are laid out in the unacceptable behaviour policy.

Students

Incidents of bullying among pupils is exceptionally rare, however were it to occur a clear process would be followed.

- Identifying the problem

Students being bullied at school may not always be prepared to tell those in authority. Disclosures of bullying should always be taken seriously. While others may not feel that certain actions or words constitute bullying if the recipient

feels they are being bullied that is sufficient evidence. In the case of most students with learning difficulties, other students or staff may be best placed to identify that an individual is being bullied.

Signs that a person (staff or student) is being bullied could include.

- Unwillingness to come to school
 - Withdrawn or isolated behaviour
 - Complaining about missing possessions
 - Refusal to talk about the problem
 - Becoming easily distressed
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- Investigations

Where these factors are associated with a student with special needs, a student from a minority racial or cultural background or where there are indications of sexual harassment these signs could confirm that bullying is occurring. Investigation should be undertaken checking with colleagues and maintaining rigorous vigilance. Staff will be able to use their knowledge to identify changes in behaviour, which might indicate bullying.

- Actions

If it is felt that a pupil may be bullying another person then an individual programme will be designed to support their understanding that their behaviour is harmful. Appropriate approaches might include social stories, visual instructions, education around feelings and effects of behaviour on others.

A risk assessment will be needed to ensure that further incidents are avoided.

Proactive steps to avoid bullying

A Whole school responsibility

Oaklands pupils learn best through direct experience. Good staff modelling is a part of the ethos of Oaklands School and an effective means of teaching young people about how to behave in school and the community. Personal Social, Health Education and Citizenship curriculum is additionally an important part of ensuring Oakland pupils are aware of bullying and safeguarded.



Signed by Chair of Committee:

Print Name:

Date: