



The Big Step

Anti Bullying Policy

Version: 1.0

The Anti bullying policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly in light of any new significant development.

Reviewed yearly by:	
Manager of 'The Big Step'	Dsn Leverton
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Chair of Governors:	
Date:	
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1. Introduction

'The Big Step' is very aware of how bullying can threaten students' physical and emotional safety at school and can negatively impact their ability to learn. At 'The Big Step' we believe that the best way to address bullying is to stop it before it starts. 'The Big Step' feel it is important for everyone in the community, school and feeder schools to work together to send a unified message against bullying. Anti Bullying is at the forefront of 'The Big Step's' thinking and awareness about this is made known to the schools we work with, parents and any new students.

'The Big Step' continually assess existing school prevention and intervention policies and procedures around student behavior, including substance use and violence. 'The Big Step' will conduct assessments within school to determine how often bullying occurs, where it happens, how students and adults intervene, and whether the current prevention efforts are working. This will help us moving forward with regards to preventing any bullying take place. 'The Big Step' is a small learning environment with high staffing numbers which can at times lead to a false environment - as bullying and negative behavior is easier to manage or control - therefore staff have to be aware of all the individual issues as to be proactive to help stop bullying take place and educate so that it doesn't restart when the student returns to their feeder school. A code of conduct with school-wide rules will be made clear to students before they start 'The Big Step' and there is a clear bullying reporting system. These establish a climate in which bullying is not acceptable.

2. Definition of bullying

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist language
- Homophobic Focussing on the issue of sexuality or perceived sexuality
- Verbal Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse Threats or other abusive communication by text messaging, offensive comments on social networks such as Facebook and Twitter & phone calls which threaten or intimidate. Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be bullied. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy

and nervous, aggressive, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

3. Signs and Behaviours

A young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that s/he is experiencing bullying. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

4. Statutory duty of schools

Senior Staff at 'The Big Step' have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils.

5. Bullying Strategies

Whole school approach:

At 'The Big Step' we take a whole school approach in tackling and preventing bullying. 'The Big Step' work alongside our students, parents/carers, staff and feeder schools to provide a solid foundation for our students to be confident in tackling, reporting and preventing

bullying. As a school we approach this in multiple ways:

- PSHE lessons (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education)
- Assemblies
- Adult modelling of positive relationships and communication
- Developing a restorative ethos and culture that supports the development of social and emotional skills.
- Class and parent meetings
- 1 - 1 meetings
- Provide information on anti-bullying to our students e.g leaflets
- Anti-bullying week will be promoted within our school to promote zero tolerance to bullying
- Promote the use of appropriate language and ensure unacceptable racist, homophobic or sexist language is challenged at all times
- Having a safe school environment
- Evaluations from students

Classroom approach:

Staff are encouraged to implement any bullying prevention strategies and programs into their lessons. This is particularly evident in tutorials and PSHE lessons. In classes, staff use curriculum work and group work to debate and work through preventative strategies, which will encourage a safe and secure environment.

1-1 approach:

All students at 'The Big Step' are assigned a key worker. Key worker sessions happen weekly or more often if ne'The Big Step'ary and allow students to talk in confidence about any concerns or worries they may be having. Key worker sessions are essential and allow students to build safe and secure relationships with workers, encouraging disclosures of bullying. Key worker sessions are also used when a bully has been identified and allows 1-1 work to be done in an individualised and personal manner, helping the students to find alternative ways for their behaviour.

Lunch and break time approach:

Due to the setting at 'The Big Step', students are to remain inside the building throughout the day. This somewhat creates a false environment as staff are supervising areas at all times, giving little to no room for bullying to occur. Staff are able to deal with the smaller issues effectively which then doesn't allow for greater issues to escalate. Due to the small environment staff are able to witness some behaviours towards bullying and discuss in detail the impact their behaviour has on other students, we are able to swiftly put in measures that prevent recurrences of negative behaviour.

The buddy approach:

At 'The Big Step' students join us sporadically throughout the year. 'The Big Step' recognise that this can be daunting and scary for our pupils and although building

friendships can be spontaneous between some students, 'The Big Step' encourage a "buddy approach" which allows all new students to have a go to person who is a peer. This stops students being and feeling isolated and becoming a potential target for bullies. This also encourages healthy relationships between students and staff giving the newer student an opportunity to approach staff through their buddy if they are too nervous to do so.

Peer monitoring:

At 'The Big Step' we use the established relationships between peers to encourage a safe and secure environment. Peers are actively encouraged to challenge negative and bullying behaviours and are encouraged to report such behaviours to staff. At 'The Big Step' we have found it effective to empower students to challenge behaviours in a safe and calm way, supported by staff allowing students to learn from one another and encourage more positive behaviours. In addition to this students are able to learn from their peers experiences and help each other find alternative ways of behaving.

6. Implementation

All 'The Big Step' staff have a responsibility to model positive and supportive behaviour in their dealings with pupils, and with one another, so that pupils have the confidence to pass on information. This ethos is stressed in our induction activities and regularly revisited in assembly and through personal development sessions. Pupils are reminded of their part in sustaining the qualities of community life that allow pupils to learn without fear of bullying.

'The Big Step' staff are aware that it is the quality of relationships within a school community that allow issues to be resolved effectively. Consistency and continuity are very important, as is the support of parents and the wider community in upholding the values of the school.

The school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by a member of staff
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to senior staff
- An appropriate member of staff will interview those concerned and will record the incident
- Parents/carers will be kept informed
- Sanctions will be used as appropriate
- Referral may be made to partner agencies should this be ne'The Big Step'ary

Pupils:

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an opportunity to discuss the experience with a their key worker

- offering ongoing support
- in some cases making a referral to an external agency

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrongdoing and need to change
- informing parents or carers to help change the bullying behaviour of the pupil
- monitoring the pupil's progress and future behaviour
- in some cases making a referral to an external agency

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- mainstream school informed
- letter home and record on pupil's file with mainstream schools permission
- official warnings to cease offending
- detention/isolation
- behaviour report
- supervision of pupils in, or exclusion from, certain areas of school premises
- internal exclusion with mainstream schools permission
- fixed-term external exclusion with mainstream schools permission
- permanent exclusion with mainstream schools permission

As well as using its own sanctions, the school will cooperate fully should a case of bullying be referred to the police.