

Date Valley School

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Anti – Bullying Policy

AIMS:

At Date Valley School, we are committed to ensuring that our children can learn in a safe and caring environment, without fear of being bullied. Our aim is to help all our children to develop their Islamic personality in a way that makes bullying intolerable to each of them. As a school we follow a zero-tolerance policy as any form of bullying hurts a child and prevents them from being able to benefit fully from opportunities available at school.

The school follows a **ZERO-TOLARANCE Anti-Bullying Policy:**

The school will work with staff, children, parents and carers to maintain a school community where bullying is not tolerated by implementing the following:

- Discuss, monitor and review our anti-bullying policy every three years
- Support staff to identify and tackle bullying appropriately by providing effective staff training
- Ensure that children are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively
- Report back quickly to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying
- Seek to learn from external anti-bullying practice and utilize the support of external agencies when appropriate. (See attachments for children, staff and parents)
- Ensure dialogue with children is promoted, encouraging children to talk about bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. (*Preventing and tackling bullying. DfE July 2017*)

We understand that all children have disagreements with each other and friends fall out for a time. This is not usually bullying.

Different types of bullying are:

- **PHYSICAL** – hurting and being aggressive towards someone
- **VERBAL** – name calling, jeering, teasing and being abusive towards someone; Racist remarks; spreading rumours
- **EXCLUSION** – Being excluded from discussions / activities by those they believe to be their friends
- **DAMAGING / THEFT** – Having property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used to get a child to hand over property to the bully
- **INTIMIDATION** – This can include gesturing, miming, tone, physical proximity and aggression
- **CYBER-BULLYING** – The use of technology, social media, mobile phones and the internet to deliberately upset, intimidate or harass another person. (see Appendix 1)

Signs and Symptoms:

Children who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens self-harm
- cries herself to sleep at night or has nightmares/ bedwetting
- regularly feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go missing
- has unexplained cuts and bruises
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- is frightened of walking to or from school
- changes her usual routine
- Unusual absences or truanting from school

Any of these changes occurring do not have to mean that a child is being bullied, but both staff and parents must be aware of these or other changes in behaviour and look out for signs of bullying towards that child.

Children must be encouraged to report bullying in schools. Date Valley promotes an environment where children feel they can trust and tell adults if they are being bullied or know about any bullying.

Teaching and ancillary staff must be observant and talk to children and be alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

All children must be constantly reminded of how we must behave as Muslims, and how Allah is All-Seeing and All-Hearing so He is always watching us, how we are answerable for all of our actions and how we must always strive to please Allah.

All staff must be aware of how to remind the child of the above and how to help a child build the correct personality as defined in Islam.

Roles within Bullying:

Different roles within bullying have been identified as:

- Those relying on social power, dominating others, often with group support (ring leader)
- Others joining in and therefore afraid of ring leader (associates)
- The awareness of a silent majority that bullying is taking place, but feeling unable to do anything about it (bystanders)
- Those who try to stop bullying (defenders)

Implementation by the school:

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- Every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the headteacher
- The headteacher will interview all concerned and will record the incident. All records will be kept in the Anti-Bullying Log
- Class teachers will be kept informed
- Parents will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned

Implementation with the children:

Children who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a class teacher or member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the child
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Children who have been part of the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the child became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change
- Reminding the child of our duty towards our Muslim brothers and sisters and how we must protect and help them not hurt them
- Informing parents/carers to work together to help change the attitude of the child

The school defines bullying as initially a 'level 2' offence and disciplinary action will be followed at this level as defined by the Behaviour and Discipline Policy. Any bullying that involves a level of violence or any other action that is deemed equally unacceptable will immediately be dealt with as a 'level 3' offence.

Before more serious sanctions are applied the school and all staff involved must do their best to work together with the parents to help the child to understand the unacceptability of their actions and to help them to change their behaviour.

Prevention:

At school, the staff will be aware about issues between children which might provoke conflict and will develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. Staff themselves will be able to determine what will work best for their children, depending on the issues they need to address.

The school will strive to raise awareness of the problem, to remind the children of the definition of bullying and how they can help to make sure it is not occurring at any time. Raising awareness will be done by:

- Using school assemblies to discuss bullying, incidents of bullying and to remind the children of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, as defined by Islam
- By including time during PHSE / Halaqa sessions for children to express any problems or concerns they may have, some of which will be related to forms of bullying or perceived bullying
- Using sessions for developing the child's Islamic personality, to talk about undesirable behaviour and reasons why some of which will be related to bullying
- Through sessions and stories that constantly refer to the character of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and give examples of oppression and the way to deal with it (this oppression being a more severe form of 'bullying')
- By having a 'child friendly' format of the Bullying Policy that reminds the child of the steps to take if they are suffering. The aim being to make sure that no child must suffer in silence. This format will be visible to the child (Appendix 2)
- By making all staff aware of the signs of bullying and what they should be looking for

This policy has been read and approved for Date Valley School, by the Headteacher and the Chair of Date Valley School Trust.

Date: March 2018

Appendix 1:

Cyber-Bullying Guidance.

Cyber-Bullying is the use of modern communication technologies to embarrass, humiliate, threaten, or intimidate an individual in the attempt to gain power and control over them. Because of the anonymity that new communications technologies offer, anyone with access to the internet can be a target for cyber-bullying. Although it leaves no visible scars, cyber bullying of all types can be extremely destructive.

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, 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.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.

If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

Discussing online bullying with a child:

It's important to have regular conversations with children about the online world, including issues like cyber-bullying. This will help you to understand if they have ever experienced or witnessed online bullying for themselves, and give you an opportunity to support them and reassure them that you are always there to help.

Some questions which you could ask the children are:

- How can you be kind online?
- What would you do if someone was being unkind online?
- What do you think cyber-bullying is?
- How is it different to physical bullying?

If a child has experienced cyber-bullying:

- Let them talk: Give them the space to share what they want to in their way and listen. Try to avoid the temptation to interrupt because you know what's going on, prompt if necessary but let them do most of the talking
- Don't be shocked by what they tell you: If there's one sure way to put a child off seeking help, it's making them feel embarrassed or ashamed about why they're asking for help. Times change and some of the things children do today may make us cringe sometimes, but the inherent behaviour is the same as it was when we were their age
- Don't deny access to technology: Children are worried that their device may be taken away from them. It may be beneficial to reassure them that this won't happen if they speak up about something that has been worrying them online
- Encourage them not to retaliate: Although this can seem like the most tempting thing to do in a situation like this it's very important that you do not retaliate to the cyber-bullying. Most of the time the bully is looking for a reaction when they're teasing or calling someone nasty names.

The child may wish to reply and ask the person to stop sending messages however this is not necessary and action can be taken without replying

- Save the evidence: It's important to keep the cyber-bullying messages that a child has received, whether through taking screenshots or saving the messages on the device. Saving the messages allows you to have evidence when reporting the cyber-bullying
- Talk to the police: If you think that a child is in immediate danger don't hesitate to call the police. Equally, if there is a direct threat of violence or harm within any conversation then you may also wish to contact your local police for support

Duty of Care:

- Date Valley School has a duty to ensure that teachers have sufficient knowledge to deal with cyber bullying in school
- The curriculum teaches the children about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely
- All e-communications used on the school site or as part of school activities off-site are monitored
- Providing support for parents and children if cyber bullying occurs by:
 - Assessing the harm caused
 - Identifying those involved
- Member of staff should be familiar with their role and responsibilities in:
 - Teaching children safe internet etiquette
 - Monitoring electronic messages and images
 - Giving children key guidance on personal privacy rights
 - Acting if a child is being cyber-bullied or is bullying someone else

Code of Conduct:

Here are some points that could be included in the code of conduct that you discuss and agree with the children. Use these points to help you start the discussion, but aim to end up with a small number (up to five or so) of short statements that are suitable for the age of the children.

- If you feel you are being cyber-bullied do talk to someone you trust
- Never send bullying or threatening messages. Anything you write and send could be forwarded on
- Don't reply to cyber-bullying or threatening text messages or emails - this could make matters worse
- Don't give out your personal details online - if you're in a chat room, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you build up a picture about you
- Don't forward abusive texts or emails or images to anyone
- Do not open emails from sources you do not know
- Don't ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account
- Remember that sending abusive or threatening messages is against the law
- Respect others. Do not spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords
- Save cyber-bullying emails, text messages or images
- Serious cyber-bullying should be reported to the police - for example threats of a physical or sexual nature

Further resources:

- Bullying UK: www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying/what-is-cyberbullying/
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/keeping-children-safe/

Appendix 2:

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Anti-Bullying: child information sheet

IS IT BULLYING?

It is if you feel hurt because other children are:

- Calling you names
- Threatening you
- Pressuring you to give them some money or your things
- Hitting you
- Damaging your things
- Spreading rumours about you or your family
- Using text or emails to write or say hurtful things

Date Valley School does not tolerate bullying. This is what we do about bullying: -

- Make sure that the person being bullied is safe
- Work to stop the bullying happen again
- Provide support to the person being bullied

What should you do?

Talk to someone you trust and get them to help you take the right steps to stop the bullying.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED:

DURING the bullying

- Tell the bullies to stop
- Get away as soon as possible – join another child or group if you can
- Tell an adult as soon as possible

AFTER the bullying

- Tell someone what has happened – don't keep it a secret
- Tell your family – they can help you
- Tell your teacher – ask a friend to go with you if you are scared
- Keep on speaking up until someone listens
- Don't blame yourself – if you ask for help, the bullying is more likely to stop

ALWAYS TELL AN ADULT IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE SOMEONE BEING BULLIED:

- Don't smile or laugh as it will only encourage the bullies to carry on
- Tell the bullies to STOP – if you don't you are encouraging the bullying
- Encourage your friend who is being bullied to come and join in your game or activity
- Tell an adult what happened – they need to know straight away

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ARE YOU A BULLY?

Do you ever do any of these?

- Hurting and being aggressive towards someone
- Name calling, jeering, teasing and being abusive towards someone
- Using racist remarks and or spreading rumours
- Excluding other classmates from discussions / activities
- Damaging or stealing another person's property
- Using physical threats to get a child to hand over property to you
- Intimidating a child by making fun of them
- Using emails, mobile phones and the internet to deliberately upset, intimidate or harass another child

Each of these causes distress and it is wrong to hurt someone in this manner. If you want to discuss why you have behaved in this manner or are still behaving in this way, then speak to an adult that you trust and try to get help to stop.

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Information sheet for parents

Is it bullying?

It is if individuals or groups are:

- Calling your child names
- Threatening her / him
- Pressuring your child to give them some money or belongings
- Hitting your child
- Damaging your child's belongings
- Spreading rumours about your child and the family
- Using text, emails or internet to write or say hurtful things

What should you do if your child is being bullied?

Talk to school staff about the bullying. At Date Valley School your first contact point to report concerns about bullying is the class teacher. Please make an appointment through the school office to discuss concerns and issues.

- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened. Give dates, places and names of other children involved
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child
- Stay in touch with the school; let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue
- Remember the class teacher may know nothing about the bullying or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident

What will Date Valley School do?

Date Valley School does not tolerate bullying. This is what we do about bullying: -

- Make sure that the person being bullied is safe
- Work to stop the bullying happen again
- Provide support to the person being bullied
- Take actions to ensure that the person doing the bullying learns not to harm others

Families who feel that their concerns are not being addressed appropriately by the school might like to consider the following steps.

- Check the school's Anti-Bullying Policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed
- Make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Principal and keep a record of the meeting
- If this does not help, write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees outlining your concerns and what you would like to see happening

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Information sheet for staff and volunteers, including temporary and support staff

Is it bullying?

It is if individuals or groups are:

- Calling a child names
- Threatening her / him
- Pressuring a child to give them some money or their belongings
- Hitting a child
- Damaging a child's things
- Spreading rumours about a child or their family
- Using text, emails or internet to write or say hurtful things

Date Valley School does not tolerate bullying. This is what we do about bullying: -

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- Work to stop the bullying happen again
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What should I do if I see bullying take place?

- Make sure the child being bullied feels safe
- Challenge the bullying behaviour
- Report the incident to the class teacher if you are an assistant or a volunteer
- Report the incident to the Principal if you are a supply teacher