



COUNTERING BULLYING (INCLUDING CYBER BULLYING) POLICY

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Signed – Governor

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Print Name

Date: June 2014

Review: June 2015

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 1.1 Everyone at Falconer has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve their potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this from happening and obstructs equality of opportunity. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Falconer. It is everyone's responsibility to banish bullying and this policy contains guidelines for doing so. Our key aim is to prevent bullying by being proactive in our response to staff and pupil concerns.
- 1.2 Where bullying exists the victims must feel confident to activate Falconer's anti-bullying systems. We aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school. We are a TELLING school. This means that *anyone* who knows or suspects that bullying is happening, is encouraged to tell a member of staff.
- 1.3 The new technologies such as mobile phones and the Internet to intimidate others is an increasing national trend. Bullying by text, e-mail or phone call often leave no physical scars but can be highly intrusive and harmful. The school will enforce strictly its policies with regard to use of mobile phones and the internet and will continue to monitor all e-communications used on the school site.
- 1.4 This document outlines how we make this possible at Falconer.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported or suspected.
- All pupils and parents/carers should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

3. FALCONER PUPIL LEADERSHIP TEAM STATEMENT

Everyone at Falconer is entitled to respect and courtesy.

It is important that we recognise bullying in all its forms.

Putting physical or mental pressure on another pupil, no matter what the reason, is bullying and we must all work together to prevent it.

- We must not frighten others with threats or actions.
- We must not spread hurtful gossip about others.
- We must not be unkind and spiteful to others.
- We must treat people, and their property, with respect, at all times.
- We must do everything we can to stop bullying.

If you are being bullied tell someone who will listen and help. You can always talk to:

- A teacher or the Home Liaison Co-ordinator, *or if you prefer*
- To any friend or relative
- School Counsellor
- Anyone in position to help

If you witness bullying, don't ignore it. You will be doing the right thing for the bully, the victim and yourself.

Remember, a bully is a coward who relies on not being found out.

4. WHAT IS BULLYING?

While there is no single definition of bullying, the DFE identifies three points which most definitions share:

- The behaviour is intended to cause distress
- The behaviour is repeated
- There is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator/s of bullying and the target

‘Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

‘People doing nasty or unkind things to you on purpose, more than once, which it is difficult to stop.’

The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply “falling out”.

The Equality Act 2010 – to be read in conjunction with part 6.

A key provision is The Equality Act which came into force on 5th April 2011. The duty has three aims:

- 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.
- Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff or between staff, and can include:

- name-calling, taunting, mocking and making offensive comments
- offensive graffiti
- excluding people from groups
- gossiping and spreading hurtful or untrue rumours
- kicking, hitting, pushing
- taking belongings
- cyber bullying – including sending inappropriate, offensive or degrading text messages, emails or instant messages via the internet, setting up websites designed to embarrass or upset individuals or excluding them from social networking sites.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern where there is ‘reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm’.

Pupils may be bullied for a variety of reasons, including:

- ethnic background, religion or culture
- disability, special educational needs or a particular ability
- sexual orientation
- gender (including sexualised bullying)
- size, appearance or health conditions
- social or economic status (poverty, class)
- age/maturity

- home circumstances – certain groups such as pupils in public care, or young carers, or those with same sex parents/carers/ or whose parents/carers have mental health difficulties may be particularly vulnerable.

5. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A pupil may display signs or behaviour that he is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of travelling to or from school on school transport
- doesn't want to go to school on the school transport
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routines
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- 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 go 'missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving
- becomes aggressive, disruptive, unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

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

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the school community have a responsibility to challenge bullying if it occurs. All staff at the school are made aware of the procedures that they should follow if an incidence of bullying is brought to their attention. The first point of contact for parents/carers should be the pupil's Form Tutor/ home liaison team and then The Deputy Headteacher, who has ultimate responsibility for the Anti-bullying policy alongside the Head teacher.

7. ACTIONS TO PREVENT BULLYING

- 7.1 Prevention is better than cure so at Falconer we are vigilant for signs of bullying and always take seriously reports of bullying. We use the curriculum and other appropriate times to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies that combat bullying-type behaviour. We strive to organise our community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, for example, teacher supervision during open access. We use a variety of methods to help pupils prevent bullying. As and when appropriate these may include:

- Protective behaviours course
- School or class rules written by pupils
- Display materials around the school by a variety of means (posters, website etc)
- Behaviour contracts
- Bully-free status
- Writing stories and poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- Role play
- Regular discussions about bullying and why it matters
- Annual Bullying survey
- Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire
- Kirkland Rowell Pupil survey
- Life Long Learning curriculum
- Anti-bullying week

8. ACTIONS TO TACKLE BULLYING

8.1 All reported incidents of bullying are investigated and taken seriously. A record is kept of all incidents. If bullying includes racist or homophobic abuse, it is reported to the Assistant Head teacher.

8.2 The following illustrates the steps that may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying/hurtful behaviour is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who was witness to it or the person to whom the bullying was reported
- An account of the incident is recorded and given to the relevant investigating staff member
- This staff member interviews all concerned and will record the incident
- Form tutors/class teachers are kept informed and if bullying persists, the tutor/teacher will advise other members of staff as appropriate
- Parents/carers are kept informed
- Support systems and/or sanctions are used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.

8.3 The parents/carers of both bullies and victims are informed about incidents and the action taken, or to be taken, by the school. Parents/carers are asked to support the strategies which are proposed to tackle the problem. The bully will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions imposed for repeated incidents will be clearly explained. If appropriate, the pupils will undergo a process of reconciliation. Bullying sanctions are referred to in the Behaviour Policy and Rewards and Consequences system. Persistent bullies may be excluded from school. A monitoring tool is normally used to ensure repeated bullying does not take place. Parents/carers are reminded regularly through letters and newsletters to inform their children that they must tell someone if they being bullied.

If a parent is concerned about bullying they should contact the form tutor/home liaison team in the first instance. If a parent wishes to take the matter further they should contact the Assistant Head teacher or the Head teacher.

If parents/carers remain unhappy, having followed the school's standard procedures, the school may refer them to the Hertfordshire school complaints team or to relevant outside agencies. Further support for parents/carers can be found at Family Lives (www.familylives.org.uk) on 0808 800 2222.

8.4 Pupils are told they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult within the school, and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied, or if they see bullying taking place, it is their responsibility to report this to a member of staff. There is provision for school members to report incidents anonymously through the school's Feeling Safe e-mail address: feelingsafe@Falconer.herts.sch.uk. Pupils are encouraged to be "Standbys rather than Bystanders".

9. CYBERBULLYING – The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011

Where any form of cyber bullying (as previously defined) affects another pupil in the school or may bring the reputation of the school into disrepute, the school reserves the right to be involved whether the electronic material was produced within the school or outside. Further the school will review electronic material held or accessed by any pupil in the school including their e-mail account and their mobile phone if we suspect cyber bullying is occurring. Pupils must be aware that some forms and levels of cyber bullying are illegal and the school will inform the police where necessary.

10. EXTERNAL AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Where necessary we will call on outside resources to aid an investigation, or offer support to a victim and/or the bully. Such agencies include the police, Kidscape, Think U Know and CEOP (child exploitation on line). This will always be done in partnership with parents/carers.

11. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Falconer School reviews this policy annually and assesses its implementation and effectiveness. This policy is promoted and implemented throughout the school. The school also analyses the annual Bullying Survey, Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire and uses this data to inform future practice and policy.