



Cumbria
Academy
for Autism

Anti-bullying Policy

Ratified Date:	20 th May 2019
Signed:	
	Lynne Thornton, Chair of Governors
Review Date:	20 th May 2020

Introduction

Cumbria Academy for Autism (CAA) holds as a basic principle that it will encourage co-operation and positive interaction between all persons, staff, students and visitors within school and the wider community.

All children, young people and adults have the right to learn and work in an environment where they feel safe and that is free from harassment or bullying.

The areas of social interaction and mutual co-operation can be particular problems for the person with autism and situations need to be carefully structured and monitored to ensure that pupils and students in such situations benefit from them.

In less structured environments people with autism may display overly assertive behaviour. It is important for staff not to misrepresent or over interpret such actions. Frequently a person with autism will misconstrue or ignore social convention. It is the responsibility of all staff to minimise the risks of such behaviours and to allow each pupil to participate fully, learning skills, co-operation and empathy along the way.

Some pupils may display challenging behaviour which may manifest itself in verbal / physical aggression towards others. On occasions individual pupils may be targeted for unwanted attention and it is the direct responsibility of staff to teach pupils acceptable social rules. Where pupils continue to display challenging behaviours such as the above, a Positive Intervention programme needs to be devised and implemented in order to safeguard others.

It is similarly important that members of staff treat each other with mutual respect and are seen to be working in a co-operative manner, as role models modelling appropriate behaviour for our pupils.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

It is the right of every pupil at CAA to receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse. Antisocial behaviour towards any members of the school community is not acceptable. Pupils have a right to be educated in an atmosphere which is free from fear and is enshrined in the Human Rights Act (1998) and in the European Charter for Persons with Autism (1992 part 16).

Statutory Duty of Schools

Headteachers have a legal duty under The School Standards 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.

Some pupils within the autistic spectrum can often display challenging behaviours which may be directed not only towards themselves but also towards others including their peers. These aspects of behaviour, if directed indiscriminately, would not in themselves constitute bullying. However, when individual pupils become the sole target(s) for this unwanted attention and are unable to defend / protect themselves this could be perceived as bullying.

The area of social interaction is of particular difficulty for young people within the autism spectrum hence it is essential that any intervention takes into account the cognitive functioning, language ability and social / emotional understanding.

What is Bullying?

A definition of bullying: <https://www.bullying.co.uk/general-advice/what-is-bullying/>

There is no legal definition of bullying. But it is usually defined as repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically and is often aimed at certain people because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation or any other aspect such as appearance or disability.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyber bullying

Bullying can happen anywhere: at school, travelling to and from school, in sporting teams, between neighbours or in the workplace.

Bullying can cause distress and the following signs should be identified and recognised:-

- Withdrawal
- Social isolation
- Repeated / feigned illness

- Self induced vomiting
- Refusal to eat
- Stammering
- Insomnia, uneven sleeping patterns
- Desire to remain in the company of adults
- Depression (leading to threats of or actual attempts at suicide)
- Deterioration of work
- Lack of interest, concentration

The above indicators could and often are facets of autistic behaviour, however they could be indicative of bullying if proven so.

Proactive strategies must be created in order to protect the individual, to enable the individual to develop coping strategies, to minimise the risk of further occurrences of these incidents and ensure the safety of the individual.

Similarly, if the pupil who may be targeting others demonstrates no empathy and is lacking in Theory of Mind, the consequences of actions may not wholly register as bullying.

Anti-bullying advice:

Bullying affects lots of young people and happens in many schools but it's the way it's dealt with which makes the difference between life being tolerable or a misery for many.

Purpose

1. To ensure that there are set procedures within CAA should incidents of anti-social behaviour occur.
2. To ensure that all staff hold all pupils with unconditional positive regard.
3. To ensure that a calm, positive atmosphere pervades each class and the school as a whole.
4. To ensure that pupils are encouraged to behave appropriately at all times.
5. To ensure that pupils are taught appropriate social skills and develop an understanding of the acceptable rules of society.
6. To ensure that all school staff are aware of the different forms of behaviour that could be construed as bullying.

Guidelines

All staff must be fully aware of and trained in the most appropriate means of recording incidents or reporting Causes for Concern.

Staff must be vigilant at all times but especially during the less structured times of break and lunch.

Staff must be made aware of CAA School's Anti-Bullying Statement and Policy Documents.

Where deemed to be appropriate, a Positive Intervention Plan may be needed in order to address the perceived antisocial behaviour being displayed by an individual pupil.

Parents will be informed of any incidences of alleged bullying and of any actions to be taken.

School Responsibilities

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:-

1. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached / witnessed an incident.
2. A clear account of the alleged Incident will be recorded in the appropriate book and/or Cause for Concern form.
3. The member of staff who witnessed / reported the alleged bullying should consult with colleagues, class teacher, teacher responsible for behaviour support or any member of the Senior Management Team in order to ensure that a) a response is given, b) action is taken and c) a satisfactory answer is achieved.
4. Pupils who may have been bullied will be offered support and given the opportunity to discuss events with a member of staff. Pupils will be taught how to improve their social skills and improve their self-image.
5. Those pupils who have allegedly bullied will have the inappropriateness of their behaviour drawn to their attention and suitable strategies / approaches developed in order to improve their social communication skills, social interaction and personal self-worth.
6. Issues of bullying will be raised in class teaching in PSHCE (Citizenship), Student Council, displays, assemblies. Pupil access in school to the Internet and e-mail will be carefully monitored in line with the e-safety policy.
7. Where pupils are educated off-site it will be the direct responsibility of staff who are supervising pupils to ensure their safety and wellbeing at all times. If bullying was to occur in another school setting, it would be the direct responsibility of the member of staff from CAA to report this to the host school and to senior staff / class staff at CAA.

Prevention

We will use methods for helping children to prevent bullying. Our celebration of uniqueness within the school is more likely to result in individual students not liking each other which could if prevented turn into bullying. The school will be mindfulness and vigilant of this. As and when appropriate we will teach and promote values that stem the onset of bullying, these may include:

- Promoting Empathy towards others and Tolerance, key British Values
- British Values taught and modelled in all lessons and a culture of tolerance
- Adhering to a set of school rules
- Learning about bullying in SMSC e.g. reading stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying, roleplays and watching videos and plays
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters.
- SEAL and SULP lessons

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Childline 0800 1111

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline 0845 1 205 204

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 020 8772 9900

Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk

Bullybusters 0800 169 6928

Anti-bullying alliance <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

This policy should be read in conjunction with CAA's:-

- Safeguarding Policy
- Positive Intervention Policy
- E-Safety Policy