**Anti-Bullying Policy**

September 2023

**Statement of Intent**

At Liskeard Hillfort Primary School we are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. At Liskeard Hillfort Primary School, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed, it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy.

**Aims and Objectives of this Policy**

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy. This will happen in the following ways:

* The school will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
* The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989, The SEN and Disability Act 2001, The Government Green Paper ‘Every Child Matters’ 2003 (outcome 2),The Children Act 2004 and The Equality Act 2010.
* All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
* All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
* All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
* Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
* Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PSHE [Personal, Social and Health Education] lessons, circle time etc) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
* A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

**What Is Bullying?**

The school has adopted the following collaborative definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying is:

Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves (remember STOP – it happens Several Times on Purpose). Bullying results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim/s.

**Bullying can be:**

* Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation
* Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone
* Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone’s things
* Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
* Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
* Sexual harassment
* Homophobic/biphobic/transphobic because of/or focussing on the issue of sexuality
* Online/cyber setting up ‘hate websites’, sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones
* Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs.
* Other examples of prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying.

**Bullying is not:**

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose. Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children’s development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

**Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that they are being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

* is frightened of walking to or from school
* doesn’t want to go on the school/in the taxi
* begs to be driven to school
* changes their usual routine/route to school
* begins truanting
* becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
* starts stammering
* cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
* feels ill in the morning
* begins to underperform 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 (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
* becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
* starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
* 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 a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible..

**Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents**

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at Liskeard Hillfort Primary School. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

1. Report all bullying allegations and incidents to staff.
2. Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
3. Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
4. Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
5. The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
6. Staff will attempt to adopt a problem solving approach which will move children on from them having to justify their behaviour.
7. Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
8. Staff will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.
9. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied.
10. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
11. An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/her/their behaviour.
12. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff. (Bullying log.)
13. In serious cases parents will be informed and will be invited to come into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
14. After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

**Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying**

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

These include:

* Undertaking regular questionnaires, pupil conferencing and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy
* Producing a ‘child speak’ version of the policy for the children
* Making national anti-bullying week a high profile event each year
* Awareness raising through regular anti-bullying assemblies
* PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) scheme of work from EYFS to Year 6 used to support this policy
* Trained Year 6 ‘Stay Safe’ mentors
* Annual ‘Stay Safe’ sessions for Year 5 and 6
* Circle time on bullying issues
* Children being read stories about bullying
* Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
* Creation of an anti-bullying school notice board in the school library
* A confidential ‘Worry’ box (The ‘owls’) where children and can write and post their concerns and ideas (in each class)
* Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
* Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
* Organising regular anti-bullying training for all staff

September 2023

(Review date: September 2024)