Dorset Education Partnership

FERNDOWN UPPER SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
September 2025

Policy first adopted July 2005

To be reviewed 3-yearly

Reviewed January 2008

Reviewed June 2011

Reviewed June 2014

Reviewed May 2017

Reviewed October 2019

Reviewed October 2022

Reviewed September 2025

FUS ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Rationale:

We seek to create a climate within the school whereby bullying behaviours are not accepted by any member of the school community. There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- Repeated over time
- It is deliberate and persistent
- intended to hurt, control or adversely affect another person either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, e.g. because of race, religion, gender, disability, is adopted or has caring responsibilities or sexual orientation and transsexuality

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault / violence
- sarcasm
- innuendo
- rumour
- exclusion
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (e.g. email, social networks and instant messenger)
- or other hurtful devices

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 comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Transphobic – because of attitude or feelings against transgender or transsexual people.
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber – Ferndown Upper School recognises that cyber or virtual bullying can occur at all times of the day, with potentially a bigger audience and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. Cyber bulling includes all areas of internet, such as email, social networking sites & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.
- Prejudice based or discriminatory.

Some forms of bullying are illegal such as abusive or threatening texts or emails and these will generally be reported to the police.

Purposes:

1. All students should feel safe and secure at school.
2. All parents should feel confident that their children are in a safe environment and shall be protected from bullies.
3. All staff have the right to work in an atmosphere of cooperation and trust.
4. All members of the school community shall feel able to report incidents of bullying in the knowledge that it will be dealt with sensitively. The school will encourage a culture of "telling".
5. Nobody should be a passive bystander to bullying.

Broad Guidelines:

1. All reports and incidents of bullying should be acted on. To ignore is to condone.

2. People react differently. It is not always possible to tell if someone is hurt or upset. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or clinging to adults. They may show changes in their work patterns, may lack concentration or may even truant from school.

3. It is important that we create an atmosphere in school where students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action will be swift but sensitive to their concerns. Not telling protects the bully or bullies, and gives the message that they can continue, perhaps bullying others too.

4. This positive ethos and culture is created through:

Bullying is a topic that is frequently and openly discussed with all students and staff. This occurs at:

- A whole school level – through assemblies when children will be informed of the school's zero-tolerance policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place. This issue will be raised regularly when the whole school will be informed of the progress of the anti-bullying policy and any changes which may be introduced. This will be repeated when necessary.
- Posters encouraging students to tell, and posters displaying the Anti-bullying Charter, are on display around the school.
- At classroom level – during Tutor time, PSHE (and within subject projects if appropriate).
- An individual level – children who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who may have suffered from bullying in the past) may be offered additional support and guidance.
- Involvement in national campaigns e.g. Anti-bullying Day / Week

In addition to this students who have bullied others may be given advice and support and taught strategies to enable them to bring their unacceptable behaviour under control and to prevent further incidents.

In response to the changing national picture of cyber-bullying, Ferndown Upper School frequently evaluates and updates where appropriate its Mobile technology policy and Digital Technology policy.

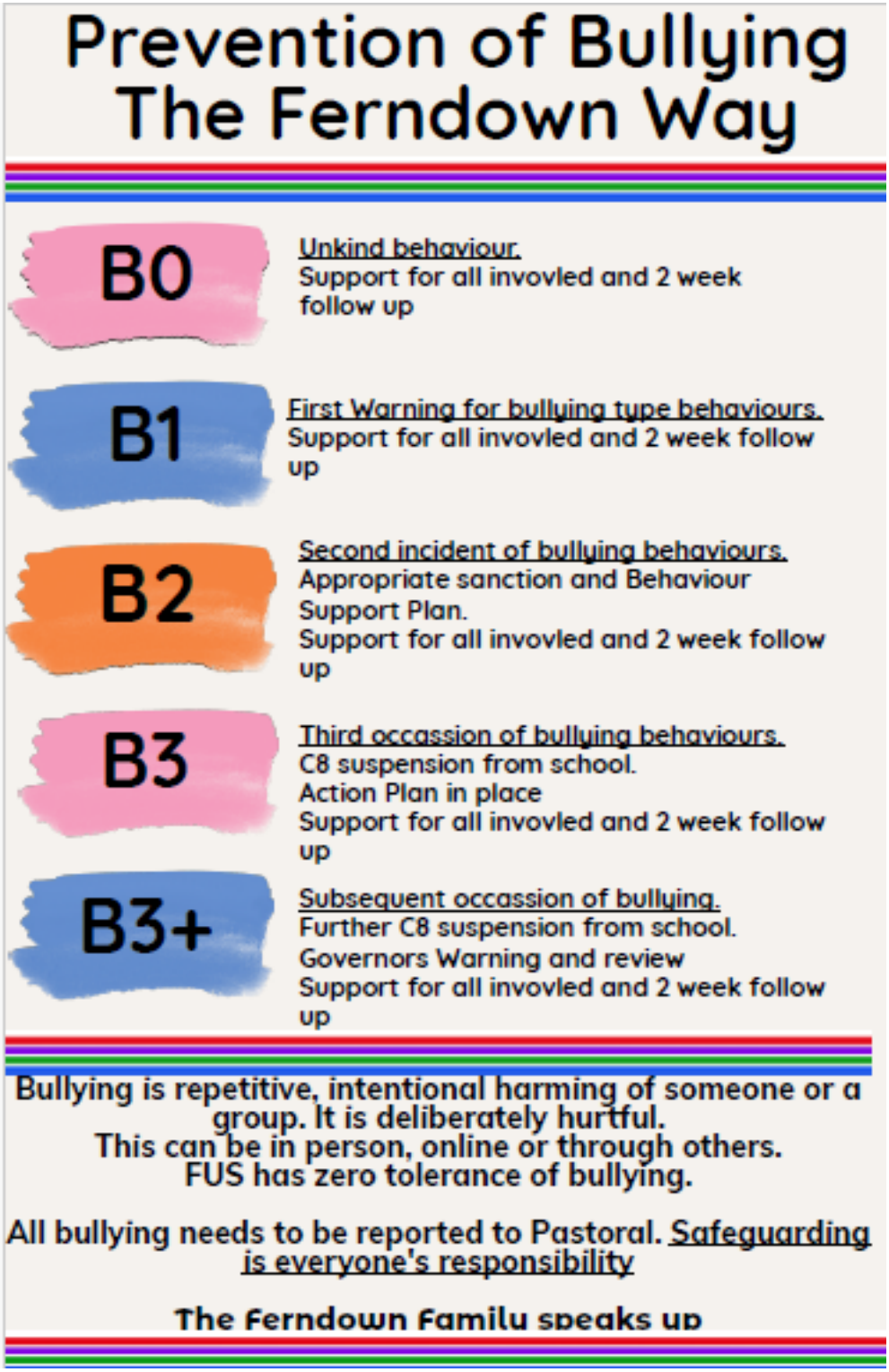
5. Parents will be encouraged to notify the Head of Year of any suspicions of bullying. Parents will be informed when we are told of bullying, and involved in subsequent discussions. There is an anonymous reporting option through the website on the Pastoral, Safeguarding and How to get help the Ferndown Way pages. There is also a page on accessing help around bullying on the How to get help the Ferndown Way page.

6. The school will investigate different ways of treating the topic of bullying, through assemblies, tutorial work, PSHE lessons, and other subjects of the taught curriculum. Curriculum work can enhance this policy in two ways:
    a.) By dealing with the topic of bullying, in a way which explores why it happens and which gives alternative ways of behaving, and dealing with difficulties.
    b.) By using teaching methods which encourage cooperative work and a variety of groupings so that students extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.

7. Staff are requested to be vigilant for early signs of bullying, to respond appropriately when approached by a student, to respond to incidents of bullying as for any misbehaviour, and to report incidents in line with school procedure. Students are encouraged to speak up by using phrases like "Safeguarding is everyone's responsilibity" and "Be the reason our school feels safe and calm".

8. Staff need to be particularly vigilant at breaks and lesson changes, around corridors and in the area of toilets, lockers or outside. These are times where victims are more vulnerable, and bullying is not easily seen. Incidents should be reported to the Head of Year.

9. Staff will use their judgement as to the immediate reaction to any bullying incident, using the sanctions available. The prevention of bullying report flow chart should be used (see Appendix 1). For minor incidents within the classroom, staff should also consider varying classroom strategies, e.g. modifying the learning environment, changing student groupings, target-setting with students. Major incidents must be referred to the Head of Year. All incidents should be recorded.



10. Where students have reported bullying or been involved in a bullying incident, they should write down the details on the school's Incident Report form.

11. Serious and/or persistent bullying will normally result in sanctions, including exclusion from school. The school may choose to involve the police. Any discipline will take account of any disabilities or special needs the students involved may have.

12. Staff have the right to issue sanctions for bullying that takes place outside of the school premises, e.g. travelling to and from school or on social media platforms.

Conclusions:

Bullying is always unacceptable. We wish to encourage an environment where independence is celebrated and individuals can flourish without fear. We work to build the self-esteem and self-confidence of students, so that they can be strong enough to cope with challenges.

We also encourage an ethos of "no put-downs"; denigration and abuse are not tolerated.

Every member of the school community has the right to be safe and happy in school, and to be protected when s/he is feeling vulnerable.

Tracking:

Bullying incidents will be recorded on the school's Bromcom software and an audit of sanctions will occur termly in order to produce a bullying log.

Appendix 1

Framework for dealing with incidents which are reported as bullying

	Report of potential bullying situation / concerns	
	Support for student(s) concerned	
	Sensitive investigation lead by Pastoral team - detailed incident sheets to be completed by all students involved / witnessed. Student may be isolated at this point to support investigation if appropriate.	*If it is potentially cyberbullying, please take screenshots of bullying activity and where appropriate remove mobile phone.*
	If appropriate, contact parents at this point.	
	Result of investigation (discussed with another member of staff to confirm it is) against the following criteria - is it bullying?	
Yes it is a bullying incident	Is it persistent (3 or more times)	No it is not a bullying incident (b1 code and note in home box that lets parents know details)
Inform safeguarding team if appropriate	Is it deliberate?	Pastoral team inform parents of outcome for all students involved.
Initial response - share outcome:	Is it intended to cause suffering?	Support in place for both students where appropriate
call to parents of all students involved		Sanction in line with school behaviour policy (likely to be C3)
Action plan to support bullied student (including making other staff aware if appropriate)		If this is the first incident of unkind behaviour for this student, record on BROMCOM as b1
Sanction for student involved in bullying in line with behaviour policy. Involve other agencies if appropriate and police if there is a criminal offence committed. Support for bullying behaviours.		If this is the second incident of unkind behaviour for this child, send bullying behaviour warning letter - see template in pastoral T Drive
Formal letter (exclusion letter C8) to parents of student bullying that evidences conversation had. Letter to be saved to linked docs.		Record behaviour on BROMCOM as b2
Record as bullying incident b3 using appropriate category on BROMCOM		Book in to see students and follow up with parents in 2 weeks to check on situation. Record review on BROMCOM.
Follow up (2 weeks later) please put a reminder in your diary to do this		
Call to parents of bullied student		Range of actions may be taken to support these behaviours: Mediation work (especially with friendship disputes); school based sanctions (detentions, isolation); referral to outside agencies; SEAL work; students asked to keep a bullying log; on-going bespoke support
Call to parents of student involved with bullying		
Record follow up on BROMCOM for both students as Io code.		
Range of actions (alongside those for non-bullying behaviours) may be taken. These include fixed term and permanent exclusion		