



Bullying Policy

Date Approved by Board	February 2024
Next Review Due	August 2024

1. Commitment:

The Governors and Staff at APTCOO are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for everyone. It is not an expectation that staff or anyone accessing provision are subjected to physical or verbal abuse, or harassment in any form. The Governors and Staff believe that effective teaching, learning and enjoyment occurs when individuals feel safe and happy and free from anxiety and stress that arises from violent, aggressive, or bullying behaviour.

The majority of children, young people and vulnerable adults who access provision at APTCOO have special educational needs and may present with additional disabilities, e.g., multiple learning difficulties, sensory, physical, medical need, A.S.D, challenging behaviour, or any combination of these. Our approach to anti-bullying therefore needs to take into consideration on the one hand, the impact of inappropriate behaviours on our physically and emotionally vulnerable individuals, while on the other, the influence of specific types of special needs on the behaviour of some children, young people or vulnerable adults.

While APTCOO recognises this dilemma it is also dedicated to combating both the rare cases of 'true bullying' that may occur and the possible, while unintentional, incidents that may make individuals feel threatened, unsafe, or afraid. APTCOO will act promptly and firmly to combat bullying and aspects of behaviours that may impact upon the emotional and well-being of all, whenever and wherever it occurs. Where appropriate, individuals will be made aware of how they can draw their concerns about bullying to the attention of staff in the confidence that these will be carefully investigated and, if substantiated, taken seriously and acted upon. All staff will be made aware of their responsibilities for ensuring the safety of more vulnerable individuals who, because of the impact of their special needs or additional language issues, are unable to communicate any issues that arise.

2. Objectives:

To inform all Governors, staff, volunteers, parents, children, young people and vulnerable adults of the following: -

- An understanding of the concept of bullying and its broader definition within APTCOO;
- APTCOO policy, procedures, and reporting guidelines relating to incidents and concerns relating to the wider concepts of 'bullying' at APTCOO;
- The importance of providing a safe and secure environment for everyone

3. What do we mean by "Bullying" at APTCOO?

APTCOO distinguishes between the inappropriate behaviours to others that arise through the impact of special educational needs and associated social or behavioural problems and those that occur through bullying. While not underestimating the impact of any inappropriate behaviour on the physical and emotional well-being of the recipient, the approach to the management of bullying will differ. (Please see our Behaviour for Learning Policy and Procedures).

Although this policy relates to the management of bullying within APTCOO, inappropriate behaviours that impact on the physical and emotional welfare of others is unacceptable whatever the cause or context and will be addressed immediately.

4. What is Bullying and Harassment?

Bullying and harassment may occur between individuals, between staff at all levels, from individuals to staff, or staff to individuals. In all cases it is profoundly hurtful, disruptive, and not conducive to effective learning. This policy deals with “child-to-child” incidents of bullying and harassment only.

Where individuals or parents allege harassment by staff, the Head teacher should investigate.

Bullying occurs where somebody knowingly commits an unwelcome act (either verbal or physical) towards an individual or group. Harassment is a form of bullying where the intention of the unwelcome act is to cause insult or injury for specific reasons connected to the recipient’s identity.

Definition: - Bullying has been defined in Government policy and accepted in law as: Deliberate, hurtful behaviour repeated over a period of time, and in circumstances where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying behaviour may present itself through:

- Violent physical attacks, i.e. kicking, biting, scratching, punching, hair pulling etc.
- Threats, teasing,
- Interfering with belongings,
- Prejudice due to sexual orientation and/or gender re-assignment,
- Racially offensive conduct,
- Cyber bullying,
- Ridicule,
- The invasion of privacy,
- Prejudice due to religion and/or belief,
- Vandalism and intimidation,
- Deliberate name calling,
- Excluding others from games and activities.

5. Signs and Symptoms:

An individual may indicate by signs or behaviour that he/she is being bullied or feels threatened.

Adults must be aware of these possible signs, and they should immediately inform the Head teacher or one of the designated safeguarding lead of their concerns:

- Changes in normal routines or behaviour,
- Shows by their behaviour they are frightened of others, i.e., defensive behaviour,
- Is unwilling to attend APTCOO,
- Clings to adults,
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence,
- Starts stammering,
- Develops poor sleeping patterns,
- Feels ill in the morning,

- Deterioration in schoolwork,
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises,
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable,
- Stops eating,
- Discloses to staff.

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

6. Specific Curriculum and Learning Issues associated with bullying and its management will form part of the PSHE curriculum schemes of work, these may involve:

- Developing appropriate interactional and social skills,
- Exploring feelings and emotions,
- Exploring the impact of a person's behaviour on others,
- Exploring the hurt bullying behaviour may have on others,
- Role play to explore such feelings,
- Being kind to others, sharing,
- Developing group skills,
- Developing strategies that address challenging bullying behaviour,
- Not allowing someone to be deliberately left out of a group,
- Telling a member of staff what is happening,
- Telling the bullying student that they disapprove of his or her actions,
- At all times staff will promote and model co-operative behaviour and anti-bullying values,
- Discussions and agreement of APTCOO, class and outdoor rules,
- Identifying and celebrating individual differences and talents and promoting mutual respect for all.

7. Other Awareness Raising Activities:

Many occasions during APTCOO can be used to raise awareness of bullying, its effects and how to handle being bullied. These include activity time, group discussions, R.S.E., PSHE, and drama.

8. Responsibilities of APTCOO and Each Individual Member of Staff:

Each individual member of APTCOO staff have a responsibility to: -

- Have a clear understanding of APTCOO policy in relation to bullying,
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all,
- Respond promptly, report and record issues of bullying,
- Promote through the curriculum the development of appropriate responses to inappropriate behaviour and an awareness of the impact of one's own behaviour on others,
- Provide/attend appropriate training opportunities.

9. Responsibilities of Parents/Carers:

- Report any concerns immediately to APTCOO,

- To be alert to and inform APTCOO about significant behaviour changes and signs of distress to their children,
- to work in partnership with APTCOO on encouraging positive behaviour, valuing differences, and promoting a sensitivity to others,
- Inform staff of changes in individual learner circumstances which may affect the ways in which individuals respond to APTCOO life.

10. Associated APTCOO Policies and Procedures:

The general principles and procedures presented in this policy are also supported through the following documents: -

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policies
- Whistle blowing Policy

11. Monitoring The effectiveness of this policy:

This will be renewed annually or whenever the need arises, and necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Governors.

1. APTCOO procedures for the Management of Bullying

All staff are responsible for implementing this policy and reporting any incidents of bullying immediately to the Head teacher.

The following procedures must be implemented by all members of staff: -

- Identify and consistently apply APTCOO rules, responsibilities and respond to bullying or inappropriate behaviour, to ensure a safe APTCOO environment for all.
- View bullying from the perception of the victim and not the bystander.
- All incidents of bullying will be challenged by staff and immediate action taken to secure the safety of the victim.
- Report any incidents or suspected incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour to the Head teacher and an investigation will take place.
- For individuals with specific special needs or language problems that make it difficult to raise their concerns or fears, staff must be vigilant to ensure their safety, and observe and explore any changes in their behaviour that may result from being bullied.
- For verbal individuals, staff must listen sympathetically to them – if a child thinks it is important, it is important.
- In the event of a complaint of bullying, APTCOO will carry out an investigation into the allegation.
- The parents of all individuals involved will be informed of the allegation.
- Records will be kept of all such investigations.
- Any parents who have made an allegation will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.
- If APTCOO concludes that bullying has taken place then the parents of all children involved will be contacted by APTCOO and a strategy will be agreed to ensure that the bullying is stopped.
- Accurate records of the incident and of any follow up action will be stored effectively in line with the Data Protection and GDOR policy.

