



Anti-Bullying Policy

The principles of the school's anti-bullying policy are taken from the **Mission Statement** and relate directly to our **Behaviour and Discipline Policy**.

1. What is our aim for the school?

We seek to develop an environment which is welcoming, which shows care and respect for everyone, and where everyone has a sense of belonging. We hope our ethos and our curriculum help us to realise this aim. We will assume that the potential for bullying to take place is permanently present and needs, therefore, to be addressed, guarded against and managed. Bullying of any description will not be tolerated.

2. What do we consider bullying behaviour to be?

Bullying may be defined as anything done on purpose to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. This could include any of the following:

- Teasing, name calling, pushing, fighting, hitting, kicking;
- Leaving people out deliberately to upset them;
- Victimising - constantly picking on or threatening a particular child;
- Intimidating - using threats to acquire another person's goods e.g. biscuits, sweets, money;
- Making another person do something they do not want to do e.g. stealing;
- Deliberately damaging another person's belongings e.g. school work, clothes;
- Discriminating against people e.g. physical appearance, different clothes, accent, gender, ethnic group or social class;

3. What should children do? How can parents help?

When bullying occurs it is very important that the school is informed at the earliest opportunity. If a child feels that she/he is being bullied she/he must notify a member of staff immediately. This would

presumably be the class teacher, but could also be the teacher on duty if the bullying occurs during playtime. If a child feels that she/he is being bullied during lunchtime, she/he must notify a Lunchtime Supervisor. If she/he feels nervous about approaching the teacher on duty or a Lunchtime Supervisor she/he may ask a friend to act on her/his behalf. It may be, of course, that parents find out about bullying before the school does, in which case they should notify the school straight away. We urge parents to encourage their children to report bullying immediately. The earlier we know about it, the better chance we have of stopping it, and resolving the causes of it. Reports of bullying will not be dismissed as 'telling tales'. We aim to move children away from the idea of 'grassing'. If a child is bullied she/he is entitled to complain. It is the child who bullies who is at fault and she/he alone is responsible for the consequences.

4. How will the school respond?

Initially reports of bullying will be dealt with by the class teacher. If a child notifies the teacher on duty (either personally or through a friend) that she/he is being bullied, it is the responsibility of the teacher on duty to notify the class teacher. At lunchtime, the lunchtime supervisors must notify the Head Teacher of any such reports of bullying. The Head Teacher will, in turn, notify the class teacher. The class teacher must keep a record of all incidents of bullying and inform the Head Teacher of the action she/he has taken. The Head Teacher will decide whether or not the class teacher alone is to continue with the case. If not, the Head Teacher will work in co-operation with the class teacher. Whether reports of bullying are dealt with by the class teacher or the Head Teacher, there are set guidelines which are to be adhered to for dealing with children who have, allegedly, been bullying. Accurate records will be kept of all incidents of bullying.

5. Guidelines for dealing with pupils who report that they have been bullied

In this situation the teacher involved should:

- Attend to what is said without displaying shock or disbelief; be patient; wait during any silences; prompt gently;
- Accept what is said (the allegation may be false); keep an open mind;

- Record the date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour, and the words used by the pupil (not his/her interpretations or assumptions);
- Reassure the pupil that she/he was right to report the bullying; avoid any promises of confidentiality (it may be necessary to refer to others, e.g. other staff, parents etc);
- Ask open questions, e.g. 'anything else to tell me?', avoid leading questions, e.g. 'what did she/he do next?' (this assumes she/he did);
- Avoid any personal criticism of the pupil who has allegedly bullied; refer only to their behaviour;
- Explain what she/he will do and who she/he will talk to next.

6. Guidelines for dealing with pupils who have been accused of bullying

In this situation the teacher involved should:

- Adopt a non-blame stance; remember there are two sides to every story; remember each case is different;
- Request information, e.g. ask 'what happened?';
- Isolate pupils, if a group of them are involved, at strategic points around the school to prevent any collusion on their part;
- Avoid the word 'bully'; refer always to 'bullying behaviour';
- Insist that the bullying behaviour stops immediately;
- Resolve the conflict, e.g. ask 'what can you do to improve things?'....'what do you suggest?'
- Secure some form of recompense and/or an apology;
- Explain what she/he will do and who she/he will talk to next

7. Action to be taken to stop bullying behaviour recurring

In dealing with cases of bullying we aim to:

- **STOP** the bullying behaviour;
- **RE-EDUCATE** those who bully, changing attitudes and behaviour for the future;
- **RECONCILE** the pupils involved, if possible.

Ideally the children involved will be friends, but we can neither demand nor expect this. In fact we may have to accept that they do not like each other. However, they will not be advised to avoid each other. That is too

much to expect, and creates its own tension. The objective of re-education is to restore the mutual respect which was absent when the bullying behaviour occurred, in other words 'to live and let live'. To this end, and provided the victim agrees, both side may be brought together.

Each case will be monitored to ensure that there is no recurrence of the bullying behaviour. This monitoring will be carried out either by the class teacher or, where appropriate, by the Head Teacher in co-operation with the class teacher.

This may take the form of review meetings which will be arranged with the children involved.

It must be emphasised that any sanctions taken against children who bully must be fair and just and must serve the above 'three aims' (i.e. 'stop', 're-educate', 'reconcile').

The following sanctions may be deemed appropriate, depending upon the seriousness of the case:

- Playtime/lunchtime detentions;
- Lunchtime exclusion(s) i.e. parents will be required to make alternative arrangements out of school;
- Exclusion from school for a fixed period. According to the law, children can be excluded from school for up to 15 days per term.
- Permanent exclusion.

These sanctions can only be imposed by the Head Teacher. The Governing Body would be consulted in the event of an exclusion (fixed or permanent, but not necessarily lunchtime).

8. Consulting with parents of children who are bullied

Each case of bullying is different and the seriousness of it may vary from case to case. However, the Head Teacher will contact parents immediately if the school's procedures indicate that their child is the victim of bullying of any description. What will follow in the way of further contact depends entirely on the nature and seriousness of the bullying in question.

If parents are asked to come into school they will be seen by the Head Teacher. Initially they will be seen and then subsequently, if appropriate, with their child.

The Head Teacher will pass on to the parents all the details that they know about the case. They will also explain the action they intend to take.

The school will contact the parents regularly to keep them up to date on the monitoring process. The school will also welcome any contact from the parents in this respect.

9. Consulting with parents of children who have bullied

The Head Teacher will contact parents immediately if the school's procedures indicate that their child has been responsible for bullying of any description. The degree of further contact and action taken depend entirely on the nature and seriousness of the bullying in question.

If parents are asked to come into school they will be seen by the Head Teacher. Initially they will be seen alone and then subsequently, if appropriate, with their child.

Our assumption is that the potential for bullying to take place is permanently present. It is an anti-social form of behaviour which many people are capable of. Children may lack the maturity to appreciate the damage that bullying can do. We urge parents not to feel stigmatised by the situation. We appreciate that it can be distressing for a parent to find that their child has been bullying, but ask that they work with us, not simply to punish their child, but to alter their child's behaviour for the better.

The Head Teacher will pass on to the parents all the details that they know about the case. They will also explain the action they intend to take. It is very important that the school is supported by the parents in its actions. Parents will be reminded that the school will not tolerate bullying.

We will ask parents if there is anything upsetting their child which may be triggering the bullying behaviour. This will help the school in the steps it takes to stop the bullying behaviour recurring.

We will ask parents not to take any steps which are inconsistent with those taken by the school. If children perceive such steps as unfair or unjust they may not co-operate and the bullying may continue.

In some circumstances parents may be invited into school to discuss the bullying with *Governors*.

If bullying behaviour continues we will continue to ask for the co-operation and support of the parents, but will also take whatever sanctions we feel are appropriate.

If we find that parents will not co-operate with the school, or support the school in its actions, in keeping with the school's behaviour policy, they will be required to remove their child from the school.

Signed: _____

Date: _____