

Anti-bullying policy

Statement on Bullying

Our school works with children and their parents/carers to prevent the distress caused by bullying. We actively seek to promote a positive atmosphere of collaboration, care and collective responsibility and to provide an environment in which all children can feel safe, secure and valued.

Our Definition of Bullying:

"Bullying is repeated actual or implied aggression, physical or verbal, intended to cause distress". It can be: -

- .. physical aggression.
- .. the use of put-down comments or insults.
- .. name-calling.
- .. damage to the person's property.
- .. deliberate exclusion from activities.
- .. the setting up of humiliating experiences.

The following points extend our definition: -

- A child is being bullied, or picked on, when another child or group of children repeatedly say nasty things to her/him.
- It is also bullying when a child is repeatedly hit, kicked, threatened or sent nasty notes by another child or group of children.
- It is bullying if a group of children deliberately do not talk to one particular child.
- It is also bullying when a child is teased repeatedly in a nasty way.

These incidents can happen frequently and it is difficult for the child being bullied to defend her/himself.

Children who are bullies have not yet learned a sufficient repertoire of appropriate behaviour.

None of this behaviour is acceptable.

All teaching and non-teaching staff in this school are committed to stopping any form of bullying.

It is **not** bullying if two children of equal power and strength have an occasional fight or quarrel.

We aim to ensure each child:

1. has good self-esteem.
2. shares joys and problems with others – peers and adults alike.
3. feels safe and secure (in all areas of the school).

4. knows that to say 'No' is OK when uncomfortable or unhappy about the behaviour or suggestions of others.

5. recognises inappropriate behaviour from others.

6. knows what to do if feeling anxious or bullied.

We aim to enable each child to transfer the skills learned in school to situations beyond school such that s/he is able to keep her/himself safe for life.

Strategies used in our school to achieve our aims.

1 a. The child and her/his efforts are valued- social skills work is aimed at developing self-esteem.

b. The methodology used in school develops the child's ability to make informed choice.

c. Being able to make the right choices is crucially important for the future development of the child as s/he grows into adulthood.

2 a. Sharing thoughts and feelings are encouraged in circle time, which is widely used throughout the school.

b. Using materials for social skills development, as outlined in our PSHCE curriculum.

c. Enabling the children to work and play co-operatively is encouraged in classroom activities and in the playground.

3 a. All areas of the school are regularly monitored for Health & Safety aspects.

b. When children move around the school and the grounds, areas of potential problems are monitored by staff (e.g. cloakrooms at lunchtime by midday staff).

c. The organisation for leaving the playground is regularly reviewed to enable the safe movement of large numbers of children around the school.

d. Children are regularly taught about acceptable and safe play that will not endanger themselves or others.

4 a. Through use of materials such as in The Personal & Social Education Programme (SEAL materials) and "Values" programme we actively encourage the children to be assertive and say 'No' when they feel it is the right thing to do. By responding in such a way the situation is usually diffused. All too often the bully is looking for an angry response and unfortunately the victim obliges.

b. By drawing up their own rules of behaviour, children are taught what is inappropriate.

5 a. When a child feels that s/he has been treated badly, unkindly or unfairly, s/he is taught to talk about it with an adult.

b. All staff – teaching, support, midday – will always listen to a child and never ignore him/her.

c. The children are encouraged to be kind and considerate by our whole school approach to learning and our community.

d. We discuss with the children the possible consequences of rough play, fighting and unkind words.

6 a. Because our children know that they will be listened to and helped, they are encouraged to be truthful in their reporting of incidents.

Dealing with a Persistent Bully

Our natural reaction to a bully is to get angry with her/him but this is likely to be self-defeating. Effective practices include appropriate uses of 'time-out', partial withdrawal of play privileges, counselling and building contracts in developing alternative behaviours.

One of the problems with bullies is their view of the world; they perceive and expect it to be more hostile. They over-focus on negative traits in others and, henceforth, blame the victim for their misfortune when they are caught.

We believe that one way to enhance the bully's 'world view' is to set up positive experiences in class time, e.g. helping other students and enjoying positive feedback from staff. Sometimes, a helpful way to overcome a problem is to get the bully and victim to work together on a common task. Circle Time can also be used with or without the offender and/or victim present to gain constructive peer support for both victim and bully.

We believe that the involvement of parents is essential so that they know what is happening and can support the school's policy and programme.

Summary of Actions

All complaints will be listened to carefully and investigated non-judgementally.

Children know they can approach any adult in the school.

By developing a supportive climate for victims, everyone knows that "Its all right to tell if you're being put down, harassed, abused or hurt for no reason. You will be listened to and taken seriously". Older children are encouraged to support younger children in playground situations.

A record of incidents will be kept by the senior midday supervisor, headteacher and class teachers. Children will be made aware that acts of bullying will be recorded.

Parents are contacted and a meeting arranged if and when appropriate.

Children who have shown bullying behaviour will be monitored.

Sanctions range from losing free time, to possible exclusion in cases of severe and persistent bullying.