

Sutton on the Forest

Church of England
Primary School



Anti Bullying Policy

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Introduction

The control and management of bullying is important for all schools, particularly in the light of recent high profile cases and court rulings which have emphasised schools responsibilities and duty of care in this issue.

The Department for Education and Employment recently published an information pack entitled "Don't Suffer in Silence" which, as well as providing guidance, makes clear its expectations in relation to schools response to the problem of bullying. This message is repeated in the joint DfEE/DoH publication "Working Together to Safeguard Children" which states "All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies". Furthermore the principle of children having a right to an education free from harassment and degradation is embodied in the Human Rights Act 1998.

This document sets out the school's policy in relation to the issue of bullying. It reflects a belief that bullying is not acceptable under any circumstances (zero tolerance) and that it is best prevented through the development of a school ethos based on mutual respect, fairness and equality. It also acknowledges that bullying behaviour is problematic for the victim and perpetrator alike and embodies support and management strategies that are pragmatic and non-oppressive.

Principles

All children have an absolute right to be educated in a safe and secure environment and to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade or abuse them.

There is **no justification whatsoever** for bullying behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form. Differences of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ability are absolutely repudiated as reasons for bullying.

Bullying behaviour is a problem for both the bully and the victim and should be addressed in positive and constructive ways which provide opportunities for growth and development for the bully and victim alike.

Effective management of bullying is a shared responsibility and strategies should involve school staff; parents/carers and other professionals involved with children who are the victims or perpetrators of bullying behaviour.

It is important to invest time and resources in the prevention and management of bullying and staff require advice, training and support to manage it with confidence.

Aims

To fulfil School's statutory responsibility to respect the rights of children and to safeguard and promote their welfare.

To clarify the School's responsibility for responding to incidents of bullying and to emphasise to staff, pupils and their parents and carers the School's zero tolerance attitude towards bullying behaviour.

To eliminate intimidating behaviour and promote a school ethos in which each pupil is safe and able to realise their full potential.

To address the problem of bullying and to bring it under control through the implementation of whole-school policy and procedures.

To reassure parents and carers that School takes their children's welfare seriously and that they are being educated in a safe and secure environment.

Objectives

To develop and implement an anti-bullying policy based on a consistently implemented whole school approach

To raise awareness among staff; parents/carers and pupils about the issue of bullying and the school's attitude towards it and to create an environment in which bullying is seen as inappropriate and unacceptable.

To be proactive in the prevention of bullying.

To make pupils, parents/carers and staff aware of what steps to take when an incident of bullying has occurred.

To demonstrate to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable and to reassure victims that action will be taken to keep them safe.

To clarify the extent of the problem and ensure that School allocates a proportionate amount of time and energy to bringing it under control.

To accurately record all incidents of bullying and to monitor the effectiveness of strategies for bringing it under control.

To address with bullies their problematic behaviour in a fair and firm, non-oppressive manner, and to provide them with support to enable them to change their behaviour.

Definition

Any interaction between an individual or group of people with a more powerful individual or group which is **perceived** or **intended** to cause hurt, pain, suffering, humiliation or degradation.

Bullying behaviour may be direct or indirect. Direct forms include physical violence and threats; verbal assaults and taunts; the destruction of property; extortion; unwanted sexual interest or contact. Examples of indirect

forms of bullying include ignoring and the withdrawal of friendship; excluding; malicious gossip and spreading rumour; abusive or oppressive graffiti.

School takes all forms of bullying seriously and is particularly concerned to take action in relation to any incidents which involve racist*, sexist, disablist or homophobic elements.

In such cases these issues will be specifically addressed with the bully (and his/her parents/carers where appropriate) in the course of post incident management.

* Incidents of bullying with racist content or motivation should be recorded in line with the "Guidelines and Procedures for Dealing with Racist Incidents".

Scope

This policy applies only to incidents of bullying which take place on school premises. The School is not **legally** responsible for bullying which takes place elsewhere.

However, the school has an enduring interest in the welfare and conduct of its pupils and will respond positively to any information it receives about bullying outside school thus:

- If it emerges that if a pupil is responsible for bullying other children outside school then this matter will be addressed and (if appropriate) the bully's parents informed.
- If a child is found to be the victim of bullying outside school then help and support will be offered and advice given on how to avoid further incidents in future. The victim's parents will be informed.
- If there are more general concerns about children's safety outside school then the local police will be contacted and their help sought in making the area around the school premises more secure. If concerns arise in relation to school transport then the issue will be raised with the transport companies and their help sought in dealing with the problem.
- If information is received that a child is being bullied by a sibling outside school this will initially be discussed with the parents. If concerns persist then the matter will be referred to the Community Services Department (following Child Protection Procedures).
- If children are being bullied by pupils of another school the Head of that school will be informed and invited to deal with the matter.

Prevention

All staff involved in the education and/or supervision of children will be made aware of the issue of bullying and the need to apply the schools policy of zero-tolerance consistently when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported. Staff will constantly reinforce the message to children that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

In addition the issue of bullying will be raised with pupils at a number of levels including:

- At 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.
- At classroom level - during form periods, tutorial groups, circle time, projects, PSHCE and Citizenship
- At individual level - children who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who have suffered from bullying in the past) will be offered additional support and guidance.

- Children who have bullied others will be given advice and support and taught strategies to enable them to bring their unacceptable behaviour under control and to prevent further incidents.
- School recognises that there are particular times when children may be more vulnerable to bullying - lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. Arrangements will be made to ensure that at such times there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents.
- Also, there are locations about the school in which incidents or bullying are more likely to occur and again arrangements will be made to ensure that these are properly supervised or pupils will be forbidden access to these areas.
- Children will be encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying which they experience or of which they may be aware. In these circumstances staff will respond positively, take the expression of concern seriously and ensure that the matter is fully investigated.
- Parents who believe their children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
- Similarly if parents believe their child is bullying others, this information should be shared with school so that the problem can be addressed and a plan agreed to prevent further incidents and the bullying child helped to change their behaviour.

All of these preventative strategies operate within a school ethos founded on equality, fairness and respect for others in which individual differences are celebrated and seen as a source of enrichment. In order to help children learn and develop appropriate responses to others, all staff at all times will treat each other (and children, parents and carers) with courtesy and respect and will model appropriate and acceptable behaviour. (Cross reference to Code of Conduct and Child Protection policy)

Parental involvement

School is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs.

School recognises the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish, using the home/school agreement, to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying - either as victim or a perpetrator.

If a child is involved in a single serious incident of bullying or there is evidence that the same child is involved repeatedly in less serious incidents (either as a victim or a perpetrator) school will inform parents and invite them to become involved in the management of the problem and the prevention of further incidents. Isolated and less serious incidents will be managed by school staff and parents informed.

Implementation

School is committed to creating a bully-free environment and will ensure that its zero-tolerance policy is applied rigorously. All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of children will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall with the school's definition of bullying and ensure that the victim receives what support is required; the bully is informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record is made of the incident in the " Incident Report File."

All children need to be aware that staff want to be informed of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when bullying is reported.

Incident management

School will take firm and decisive action to deal with any incident of bullying which is witnessed by or reported to any member of staff (see Incident Management Procedures).

Post incident responses for the victim

When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a child may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated.

School will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular child's individual needs and may include:

- immediate action to stop the incident and secure the child's safety
- positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- strategies to prevent further incidents
- sympathy and empathy
- counselling
- befriending
- assertiveness training
- extra supervision/monitoring
- creation of a support group
- peer mediation/peer mentoring
- informing/involving parents
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this does not increase the victim's vulnerability)
- arrangements to review progress

For the bully

School takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to behave in a more acceptable way. School does not believe that the use of punishment is helpful in managing this problem but is of the view that the positive use of sanctions can be useful in demonstrating to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable and in promoting change.

School will respond to incidents of bullying behaviour in a proportionate way - the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. The following options will be considered:

- immediate action to stop an incident of bullying in progress
- engagement with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of school rules and is unacceptable
- loss of lunch/breaktime privileges
- daily/ Head teacher's report
- removal from class/group
- withholding participation in sports or out of school activity (if not essential part of curriculum)
- parents informed
- counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this is safe for the victim)

- fixed periods of exclusion
- following procedures for permanent exclusion (in extreme cases which may involve violence)
- rewards/positive reinforcement for children in order to promote change and bring unacceptable behaviour under control

Monitoring and evaluating

Each incident of bullying falling within the school definition will be recorded. Any incidents with a racist, sexist, disabledist or homophobic element will be identified.

An annual report will be made to the Governing Body indicating the extent of the problem and any trends which may emerge. This information will be shared with parents/carers and pupils.

Senior staff and Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any ongoing concerns. These will be shared with staff, parents/carers and pupils.

Next Review July 2017