



Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy represents the agreed protocol for tackling all types of bullying involving pupils from Shepherd Primary School. This policy has been agreed by governors within the school and all teachers representing the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

School aims

Our school community (children, staff, parents and governors) aims to:

- Learn and grow together within a safe, caring and happy environment;
- Continually encourage achievement in all aspects of school life;
- Motivate all children with a broad and challenging curriculum;
- Treat everyone with honesty and respect;
- Ensure opportunities for all.

Introduction

It is a government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. In 2003, Ofsted published *Bullying: Effective Action in Secondary Schools*. This was followed by DfES guidance for schools under two headings: *Don't Suffer in Silence* and *Bullying – A Charter for Action*. This policy reflects this guidance and the principles enshrined in *'Every Child Matters'*.

Aims

This policy aims to: -

- Make sure that pupils, parents and staff understand what bullying is;
- Show commitment to overcome bullying through practising zero tolerance;
- Make staff aware of their role in intervention and prevention of bullying;
- Establish appropriate means of support for all parties involved should an incident of bullying occur;
- Ensure the school is taking positive action to prevent bullying from occurring through Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Emotional (PSHCE) lessons;
- Set the framework for empowering our children with knowledge of how to act if bullied now and in the future;
- Promote the understanding that bullying is usually caused by discontentment / unhappiness in the aggressor.

What constitutes Bullying?

DfES guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful and which are **repeated over time**, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves, or feel intimidated due to a power imbalance between the parties (CSF 3950 *Bullying- Advice for Parents and Carers*). Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (e.g. being ignored or not spoken to).

Bullying can be:

- Verbal teasing, name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any other use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, offensive language, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or homophobic comments
- Cyber bullying comments or pictures, used through the internet- social networking sites, meant to upset another individual. 1 in 3 children are or have been subject to cyber-bullying

The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply “falling out”.

Why it is important to respond to bullying

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Bullying can lead to lower levels of confidence and self-esteem and contribute to lack of achievement. It can also cause depression and in extreme cases even suicide. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Using PSHCE as a framework for preventing bullying

It is important that children at Shepherd Primary School are taught about what bullying is and how to respond to bullying as part of our PSHCE curriculum. Through the use of regular circle time and role-play, pupils can develop an understanding of how it feels to be bullied and the value of their own contribution in stopping it from happening. They will also be aware of how their actions affect other people and the possible outcomes, promoting a sense of self-awareness and responsibility. Teaching staff are also encouraged to respond to issues through impromptu circle time to help resolve conflict at the first opportunity.

Reporting and dealing with bullying

Bullying may be reported by a child, a carer, a staff member or parents. In some cases a child may admit to a member of staff that they have bullied another child. All reported incidents of bullying must be investigated and taken seriously by staff members.

When bullying is reported, the incident must be recorded on a ‘Suspected Bullying Incident Report Form’. This will be the responsibility of the staff member concerned. The Headteacher and in her absence the Deputy Head will be immediately informed and given the ‘Suspected Bullying Incident Report Form’. Older children may also be asked to write a report themselves. The wishes of the child on how to proceed will be, where appropriate, taken into account.

If, after investigation, the incident is judged to be a bullying incident, then the Headteacher and/or Deputy Head will enter the incident into the school’s ‘Bullying Log’. The Headteacher and/or Deputy will take time to discuss the issues with the victim of bullying and suggest strategies on how best to deal with the situation. Equally they will take time to discuss the issues with the bully and carry out relevant sanctions (see Behaviour Policy).

It will be made clear to the children that bullying will not be tolerated. If the incident is not too serious, a problem solving approach may help. Each child must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying reoccurring. Where possible the pupils will be reconciled. The Headteacher, Deputy and other appropriate members of staff will monitor the situation afterwards very closely. The Headteacher and Deputy will keep track of all incidents of bullying and any incidents filed in the ‘Bullying Log’ will be discussed at each Senior Leadership Team meeting.

If the incident is more serious, parents will be informed and asked to come to a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss the problem. Where appropriate, professional advice, such as from social services, will be sought. Where necessary, the police will be consulted. In some cases exclusion from school will be considered. Records of bullying will be kept for the duration of the child's stay at the school to ensure bullying does not reoccur. Repeated incidents of bullying will be treated with extreme seriousness.

If bullying includes racist abuse, it should also be logged in the Racial Incident file that is kept in the School Office and the Headteacher should be informed.

Support for the victim of bullying

Being a victim of bullying can make a child's life very miserable. It is imperative that support is given to a child that has been bullied. The class teacher, TAs, MSAs and other children can play a valuable role in giving support and in some cases a child may wish to have regular meetings with 'Quiet Room' staff. The main aim is to settle the child back into a normal routine as soon as possible.

The role of governors

The Governing Body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The Governing Body will not condone any bullying at all in our school and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The Governing Body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying in the 'Bullying Log', and to report to the Governors annually and upon request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the Chair of Governors to look into the matter. The Governing Body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the Governing Body notifies the Headteacher, and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the Governing Body.

The role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the Governing Body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy annually.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff, including TAs and MSAs, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying and procedures with regard to behaviour management. All members of staff are expected to comply with the Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The role of parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher or the Headteacher immediately. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

The role of pupils

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.

Each year we take part in Anti-Bullying Week (during the month of November) where bullying issues are discussed, through a set of structured, age-appropriate and fun sessions. This week culminates in a special annual ultimate mission e.g. 'Blue Friday' assembly, where children are encouraged to reflect on the importance of an anti-bullying school culture.

Prevention and Intervention

Whilst a certain level of childish banter is to be expected at any primary school, hostile teasing should be taken seriously as it is often the beginning of a longer term problem leading to feelings of superiority in the aggressor and loss of confidence in the victim. It is essential that staff are aware of changes in relationships within their teaching groups. There is a duty to provide time to discuss concerns held by individuals and to listen and offer constructive advice. The children involved should be encouraged to talk about their issues with a member of staff either together or separately. All efforts must be made to reconcile the children at this point so that the problem does not escalate. It must be made clear at this stage that any negative responses from either child after this process will be treated extremely seriously. Any event that is causing genuine distress in a child must be reported. Staff must respond to such events.

The children at Shepherd Primary School should feel able to confide in members of staff about bullying in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously and that their wishes on how to proceed with this matter will be considered.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins truanting, becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions go "missing", asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings

- Stops eating and is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Runs away
- Threatens or even attempts suicide

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

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if required by staff and governors, taking into account feedback from children and parents.