

COWORTH-FLEXLANDS SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been written with reference to the DCSF document Safe to Learn and should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection, Behaviour Management and Exclusion policies.

At Coworth-Flexlands School we have a clearly stated policy that bullying in any form is unacceptable behaviour. As a school we actively promote good behaviour and take steps to ensure that every person should feel a valued and worthwhile member of our community.

The school does not tolerate bullying of any kind. Any reported incident is taken seriously and investigated. Both parties are given the opportunity to speak their minds freely and may be brought together in the presence of a member of staff to talk through the problem if this is appropriate. Emphasis is placed on understanding the root of the problem and the parents of both parties will be informed. The single most important thing a school can do to prevent bullying is to have a clear policy to which pupils, staff, parents and Governors are committed.

AIMS

- To promote a safe, secure, happy and supportive environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour
- To take positive action to prevent bullying from occurring through a clear school policy and a process of education
- To show commitment to overcoming bullying by practising zero tolerance
- To inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership which helps maintain a bully-free environment
- To make staff aware that bullying can be extremely serious leading potentially to physiological and /or psychological damage
- To educate pupils, parents and staff in what constitutes bullying behaviour
- To make staff aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes which will be required to achieve the above aims

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is the use of aggressive behaviour by an individual or group towards another individual or group which intentionally causes hurt to the recipient either physically or emotionally. The hurt is *unprovoked* and it is a *repeated* action.

Children with special educational needs or communication difficulties may need additional help or special considerations, so the SENCO should be consulted prior to any action being taken.

Types of bullying may include bullying related to race, religion, sexual orientation or culture; special educational needs or disabilities; appearance or health conditions; home conditions, including child carers; and refers to a range of hurtful behaviours, both physical and psychological. Bullying may be of staff or pupils and may take place by pupils, parents or other staff.

Bullying may be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, damage to property
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

- Religious – religious taunts
- Cultural – unkind reference made to differences, mocking
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments or inappropriate language
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber – using communications technology, text, telephone, email, social networking sites
- Disability – exclusion, tormenting, name calling
- Misuse of associated technology, including unapproved ‘evidence’ gathering
- Gestural – looks, body language
- Passive – being a bystander
- Bullying may be face-to-face or indirect

Bullying is different from other unacceptable forms of aggression in that it involves the dominance of one child by another, or a group of others. It can involve a person, or group of people, behaving in a way which might meet needs for excitement, status, material gain or group process and does not recognise or meet the needs and rights of those who are harmed by the behaviour. It does not apply to one-off incidents; one of the defining features of bullying is its persistence and involves misery-making over a period of time.

Although this policy directly refers to children, it is recognised that bullying make also include adults. It is intended that the wording “child/children” may be interchangeable with “adult”.

Bullied children must always be reassured that it is not their fault. Children who are being bullied should understand the lines of communication enabling them **to tell an adult** about incidents of bullying and by helping them to discuss their feelings. If children find it difficult to tell, they can be encouraged to write or draw, use a worry box, leave a note in the Office or with a teaching assistant/playground supervisor. Children will also be made aware of other sources of support, such as Helplines and Think-U-Know and how to report inappropriate on-line material.

Children need to be reassured that the matter is being dealt with sensitively, treated seriously and is always unacceptable

Anti-Bullying Strategies

The aims of prevention strategies are to

- Educate the children involved
- Prevent, de-escalate and stop bullying
- React in a consistent, proportionate and reasonable way to all reported incidents and follow this with a fair investigation
- Safeguard any pupil that has experienced bullying and put support measures in place
- Impress on the perpetrator the unacceptability of their actions
- Apply disciplinary sanctions to ensure that the perpetrator learns from the experience and is deterred from continuing the unacceptable behaviour
- Making amends if appropriate
- Invoke a multi-agency approach if a safe-guarding issue is uncovered or a pupil with learning difficulties or disabilities requires additional support
- Signal to other pupils/adults that the behaviour is unacceptable

Preventative strategies include:

- The Form teacher has overall pastoral care for the pupils in her form class and should be kept informed of bullying/pastoral issues through use of Parent Record Forms, the Class Incident Book, Children of Concern meetings, Staff meetings and direct contact
- The school uses the curriculum, including PSHE, SEAL, RE, Citizenship, Circle Time, Assemblies and class discussions to promote the anti-bullying message
- The school leadership and staff promote an honest, open ethos

- There are regular opportunities within the school year to raise awareness amongst pupils and staff
- Staff are kept aware of pastoral, behaviour and anti-bullying policies on a regular basis and training is undertaken as necessary
- Staff, pupils and parents are engaged in the process of developing the anti-bullying policy
- Pupils are made aware on a regular basis of how to get help
- Pupils are made aware of the various roles they may take in preventing or acceding to bullying, including that of bystander
- The school environment is kept safe, clean and pleasant and school site issues are addressed
- Staff model positive relationships
- Accusations of bullying are recorded separately by type so patterns may be identified
- Checks are made to ensure that there is no resurgence/repetition of unacceptable behaviour

INDICATIONS OF BULLYING

These may include: the recipient or another person confiding in a member of staff, notes in the worry box, sudden change in demeanour/personality/academic achievement, belongings going missing, break-up of long-standing friendships, unexplained 'illness' such as tummy-ache, parental concerns. The Form teacher is expected to take an active role in investigating any of the above.

ACTIONS UNDER THE POLICY

1. The school will ensure that all children are aware that bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
2. All children should also be made aware that they should tell someone they trust, preferably an adult. This could be a friend; a teacher, any staff member or the Head.
3. All incidents to be investigated by the Head, Deputy Head or Form teacher in conjunction with support staff, playground staff and/or other adults involved.
 - All incidents are recorded in Class Incident Book.
 - Incident Books are scrutinised weekly
 - All suspected incidents of bullying should be dealt with separately using the guidelines below, and the head should be informed.

When Incidents happen

Meticulous records should be kept at each stage.

Stage 1 – Getting the facts straight

When incidents are witnessed by staff, the perpetrator(s) should be removed from the scene to ensure the victim's protection.

If it seems that there could have been more than one perpetrator, each should be interviewed individually to get the facts straight. Witnesses/bystanders should also be interviewed, and then the victim.

The interviewer should take notes and send a copy to the Form Teacher and Head/Deputy Head (sample questions are available as an appendix to this policy).

Stage 2 – Plan of Action

The Form Teacher, in consultation with the Head/Deputy Head, will decide whether this is a case of bullying, in which case they will agree on a Plan of Action.

Stage 3 – Contacting the Parents

The Head/Deputy Head/Form Teacher will contact the parents of both victim and perpetrator as quickly as possible, telling them of the action taken.

Stage 4 – Keeping a Record

All contacts with the Parents should be recorded on the Record of Parents' Meetings/Telephone Calls Form with the intention of home and school working together to change undesirable behaviour.

Stage 5 – Following up the Initial Interview

See the perpetrators and victim again. Consider whether to see them separately or together. If the problem still remains, it is important to review and amend the Action Plan, have further parent meetings or impose further sanctions until you are sure the bullying has stopped and seems unlikely to start again.

Sanctions

Disciplinary penalties are intended to impress on the perpetrator that what she has done is unacceptable and is intended to act as a deterrent and clear signal to others.

Bullying by a member of staff will be dealt with by the staff disciplinary procedures.

Bullying by a parent will be dealt with by the Head or Chair of Governors

A pupil who has been acting in a bullying way will be given the opportunity to apologise and, where possible, make restitution. Sanctions may be imposed in line with the school Behaviour Management Policy

Cyber-bullying

The school will differentiate between In-school incidents and Out-of-school incidents
Measures to prevent cyber-bullying include:

In-School:

- ICT policy makes clear what are acceptable e-communications for girls while under school supervision (to include Internet, email, Mobile phone, electronic games etc) and for staff on school premises.
- Infringements of the above to be treated as disciplinary events (staff or pupil infringements) unless considered a Safeguarding matter.

Out-of-School, involving pupils or staff whose behaviour is impacting on another pupil or member of staff:

- Factual evidence must be provided
- We make clear that we will adopt a multi-agency approach i.e. if what we are presented with is a Safeguarding issue we will inform the Surrey Safeguarding Board, if a criminal matter the police etc
- All sets of parents will be involved, except if SSB advise against this
- The school's involvement (*when the incident takes place out of school*) will remain educational (i.e. we will reiterate the PSHE teaching re personal safety, relationships, bullying etc) and not disciplinary unless impacting on the smooth running of the school or relationships between the children in school
- We will not get involved when the issue does not involve current staff or pupils at the school, with the exception of reporting Safeguarding matters

General notes

Class teacher should:

- BE AVAILABLE. Make sure the child/children know you are ready to listen.
- Take the problem seriously
- Investigate every incident as outlined above. This should be done as soon as possible to ensure accuracy
- Hold a follow-up meeting with the victim and instigator's family to report progress
- Inform all members of staff at Staff Meetings about the incident and action taken
- Keep written records of the details of the incident, interviews and action taken
- Arrange to check on how things are going in a week
- Continue to educate through PHSE/Circle time and monitor

If necessary, the Head will communicate details to the Chairman of the Board of Governors who will take further action if necessary.

STAFF TRAINING

The school will:

- Raise awareness of staff of bullying through training, taking action to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely
- Include Child Protection issues and bullying issues at every Staff Meeting. Class and playground incident books will be discussed if entries have been made
- Teachers on duty in the playground should be made aware of the areas that can be out of sight and that therefore need careful monitoring during playtime

ACTIONS FOR CHILDREN

The School will:

- Hold regular Assemblies dealing with the topic of bullying including all types of bullying.
- The school will hold workshops or training for the children and also for the parents with regard to cyber bullying
- The school will hold bi-annual workshops for the children through agencies such as Kidscape in how to recognise bullying and the strategies for learning to deal with bullies
- The school will arrange through the ICT Governor for training to be given to both parents and children on cyber bullying
- Include discussions and role play during Circle Time, drama lessons and PHSE lessons
- Include stories and books where appropriate which deal with all types of bullying

MONITORING AND REVIEW

- The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Head and Deputy Head
- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Governors
- This policy will be posted on the school website and available for the parents from the school office
- This policy is an integral part of the Behaviour Management Policy

Appendices:

- 1. Bullying Incident Form**
- 2. Record of Parents Contacted and Follow up**
- 3. Child having problems – Questionnaire**
- 4. Child Allegedly Bullying – Questionnaire**

Bullying Incident Form

Pupil who feels bullied:.....Form.....

Pupils accused of doing the bullying:

Names and Forms

Time frame.....

Factual accounts of the incidents (each person involved to be interviewed separately)

Plan of Action

Appendix 2 to Anti-Bullying Policy

RECORD OF PARENTS CONTACTED

Name.....Telephone..... Date.....
Contacted by.....

Name.....Telephone..... Date.....
Contacted by.....

Name.....Telephone..... Date.....
Contacted by.....

Name.....Telephone..... Date.....
Contacted by.....

Name.....Telephone..... Date.....
Contacted by.....

Use extra pages as necessary

Follow-up

Appendix 3 to Anti-Bullying Policy

CHILD HAVING PROBLEMS - QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: **Class:** **Date:**

Present:

Introduction: tells me that you have been unhappy recently.

1. What has made you feel like this?

2. What happened?

3. Who was there?

4. Where did it happen?

5. When did it happen?

6. Who did you tell?

7. What happened next?

8. What would you like to happen now?

Follow-up on next page

Actions:

Dates:

Appendix 4 to Anti-Bullying Policy

CHILD ALLEGEDLY BULLYING - QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: **Class:** **Date:**

Present:

Introduction: tells me that you have been having problems together recently.

1. Do you think you are having any problems?

Note the issues that this child raises, without any accusations.

2. Tell me what happened when.....

Ask about the specific incidents raised by the child feeling bullied. Be gentle because we need to know the truth and a threatened child will lie.

3. Discuss how both parties felt.

4. Ask if they can think of a better outcome in each situation

Be aware that the accused child may actually be feeling that they are the victim and their behaviour was, in truth, a reaction to provocation.

5. What would you like to happen now?

Follow-up on next page:

Follow up

Adult to facilitate an agreed way forward, with clearly stated sanctions if either party fails to comply. Both/all children to meet together to agree the expected behaviour and what will happen if it does not take place.

Meeting with the children:**Date:****Children present:****Adults present:****Agreed:****Notes/Follow-up:**