

St Mary's CEVA
Primary School, Hadleigh



Anti-Bullying Policy

1 Introduction

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*. 'Safe to Learn' guidance from the DCSF was published in 2007. This policy reflects this guidance.

DfES guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful, and which happen on a **regular** basis. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (for example, being ignored or not spoken to). Bullying can be physically or emotionally harmful.

The following three conditions are used to define incidences of harmful interpersonal behaviour as bullying behaviour. Behaviour is bullying behaviour if:

- it is repetitive, wilful or persistent;
- it is intentionally harmful, carried out by an individual or group; and,
- there is an imbalance of power leaving the person who is bullied feeling defenceless.

There is a distinction between bullying, which is often repeated behaviour over a period of time, and individual acts of unkindness.

This policy relates to all forms of bullying, including prejudice-related bullying (e.g. bullying relating to race, religion and culture, homophobic bullying, bullying related to special educational needs and disabilities, sexist and sexual bullying).

Cyberbullying, which means the use of electronic equipment such as computers and mobile phones, involves new and increasingly complex forms and types of bullying such as impersonation and exclusion from social networking.

2 Aims and objectives

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

We recognise that bullying can take many forms, including cyber-bullying. The school will raise awareness about, and take steps to prevent different forms of bullying. For example, the school will publish this policy and distribute materials relating to bullying periodically, such as leaflets about cyber-bullying.

3 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, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies. The number of prejudice-related bullying incidents are reported to governors every term and this data is sent to the Local Authority annually.

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 will respond 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 her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

4 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 on request.

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. For example, if an incident occurs, the headteacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.

The headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

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 Headteacher ensures that the school's Christian ethos and values support and inform whole-school Worship, encouraging positive behaviour and reinforcing respect for others.

5 The role of the teacher and support staff

All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.

Teachers keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the school. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate it themselves or refer it to the headteacher. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied, then, after consultation with the headteacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.

In the staff room there is a 'behaviour incident file' in which staff record all incidents of bullying that occur both in and out of class. We also record incidents that occur near the school, or on the children's way between school and home. Any adult who witnesses an act of bullying should record it in the 'behaviour incident file'. (See Appendix 1 for types of bullying and ways of dealing with it.)

When any bullying takes place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim and the bully. Time is spent talking to the child who has bullied: explaining why his/her action was wrong, and that child is encouraged to change his/her behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the headteacher and the special needs coordinator. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the headteacher may contact external support agencies, such as St Christopher's PRU and 4YP.

All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

Children learn about positive social interaction and the impact of bullying in PSHE lessons. The school's Christian ethos and school values inform these lessons and class Worship sessions, which often focus on treating others with respect.

Children who would benefit from emotional support or improving their social skills are invited to a 'nurture group', which meets at lunchtimes. The aim of this group is to develop greater self-esteem and the confidence to interact positively with others.

6 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 immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed in the school Prospectus.

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

7 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.

Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in the annual pupil questionnaire.

Our School Council has developed its own anti-bullying code.

8 Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the headteacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. **They do this by examining the school's 'behaviour incident file', where incidents of bullying are recorded**, and by discussion with the headteacher. Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Date: November 2011

Review Date: Autumn 2012

(Appendix follows on next pages)

Appendix 1

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Of course, if children present these symptoms, it does not necessarily follow that they are being bullied at school. However, adults should be aware of these possible signs and that it may merit investigation if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school.
- Doesn't want to go on the school/public bus.
- Begs to be driven to school.
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Begins to do poorly in school work.
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money and 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
- Is frightened to say what is wrong.
- Gives improbable excuses if any of the above.
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.

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

Types of bullying:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal – name calling, making insulting or racist remarks.
- Indirect/emotional – spreading nasty stories or not letting certain children join in games and activities.

Tips for the prevention of bullying:

- Keep a diary of your concerns if you think a child may be the victim of bullying. Children can be asked to keep their own diary or 'worry book' if they appear unhappy at school.
- Give children plenty of well-supervised opportunities to keep them busy and out of trouble. For example, Play Leaders organise games for younger children and staff are active, interacting with children at morning break and lunch time to ensure they are relating to one another positively.
- Make sure that children have a place where they can feel safe and protected, such as the small playground at lunchtime (accompanied by Play Leaders).
- Remind children of the school's values and rules regularly. Involve children in formulating class rules.
- In Worship and the curriculum, teachers are expected to have discussions about bullying and why it matters. Raise awareness of this policy and bullying issues. In particular, it is important to develop children's empathy and understanding of victims and bullies. Use a variety of methods to get the message across to children, including role play, reading stories, poetry, designing posters and writing stories.
- Teach children how to stay calm in difficult situations and practise being assertive. Role play and social storytelling are good strategies for this.
- Invite victims or bullies to social skills / nurture groups.
- Use older children (mentors) or peers as part of a buddy system – so there is always someone a victim can turn to.
- Form a 'circle of friends' – a small group who will support a victim and make him / her feel accepted.

Principles for dealing with bullying

- We will not ignore bullying.
- Staff should not make premature assumptions.
- Establish the facts and what happened in a calm manner.
- If versions conflict, ask for more information from witnesses.
- Avoid confrontation.
- Speak quietly.
- All accounts of the incidents should be listened to fairly.

- We will make every effort to adopt a problem-solving approach that encourages pupils to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves.
- Consider whether parents need to be informed.
- Consider how to help a bully (or bullies) to change his / her behaviour.
- We will follow up to check bullying has not resumed.

Websites

- [Childline](#) - is a free, confidential 24 hour counselling service for children and young people in trouble or danger. They offer advice and support to children, young people and adults on a range of topics including child abuse and bullying.
- [Be Someone to Tell](#) - is a website for parents who are concerned about bullying in their child's life, both outside and within school. They can help you to support your child build healthy friendships and be safe at every stage of their life.
- [Kidscape](#) - helps to prevent bullying and child abuse. They provide information, advice and resources on how to keep children safe from harm.
- [Direct Gov - Bullying](#) - gives information, support and advice to parents and carers on what to do if their child is being bullied.
- [Bullying UK](#) - is an award-winning charity which is dedicated to providing detailed help and advice for the victims of bullying and their parents and carers.