

OVERFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction: What is Bullying

Bullying is action taken by one or more children which involves hurting, threatening or frightening another child on a regular sustained basis. This form of aggression can be either physical or emotional.

The following are all classed as a form of bullying in our school. This is quite a comprehensive list but there may be other forms of bullying which we have not mentioned:

- Name calling and making derogatory remarks about the appearance, personal hygiene, home, family, ability or disability of another child.
- Passing on gossip about another child which may cause distress.
- Persisting in doing or saying something which causes distress or provokes a child into retaliating in an aggressive manner.
- Deliberately setting out to isolate another child.
- Persistently physically hurting another child.
- Persistently hiding belongings belonging to another child in order to cause distress.
- Deliberately lie or make up situations in order to escape their responsibilities or shift the blame onto another.
- Finding ways in which to continually hurt another child in secret or by getting other children to carry out their bullying behaviour for them.
- Preventing a child from working by making derogatory remarks aimed at causing distress.
- Laughing, sniggering, pulling faces or making remarks about the work of another child.
- Using their size, strength, position of popularity in the class to coerce other children into doing what they want them to do.
- Using modern technologies such as Facebook, MSN, email, mobile phones to make remarks, comments or gossip about another person which may cause distress.

Aims and objectives of policy

To promote a secure, safe and happy environment for all our pupils where children can learn without anxiety and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.

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.

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.

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 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 policy, and to ensure that all staff 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 at Overfields Primary 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 time to discuss why this behaviour was wrong. The headteacher also promotes positive behaviour through curriculum areas including PSHCE and the schools annual participation in anti-bullying week. The Head teacher ensures, through curriculum provision, that pupils are given age-related safety awareness lessons. The Local Authority Safeguarding officer supports school with this.

The headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime supervisors, receive effective 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 community, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

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.

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 over a period of time, then, after consultation with the headteacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.

The headteacher keeps all incident records which staff complete when there has been an incident of bullying or related problem. The headteacher follows up each incident either by speaking to the class teacher, talking to the children or a telephone call to parents.

When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim, and suitable sanctions for the offender. (Linked directly to school behaviour policy) Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their actions were wrong and how they should change their behaviour in the future. Staff do not bully the bully as this will only confirm for them that intimidating behaviour is acceptable.

Bullying may occur at break or lunchtime or outside of the classroom where pupils meet. In these cases it may be the teacher or member of staff present at the time who deal initially with the incident. It may be followed up further by the class teacher or the children or the headteacher if appropriate.

Staff inform the headteacher as soon as they suspect or see persistent bullying taking place. The headteacher will then either telephone or invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. when initial discussions have proved ineffective, the headteacher may contact external support agencies such as the Behaviour Support Service.

All members of staff routinely attend staff meetings or training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management. All staff employ a range of measures to encourage / reward non-bullying behaviour.

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 with many examples coming from Circle Time and SEAL lessons, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying type behaviours.

The role of parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child is bullying others, 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 complaint procedures, 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 Overfields Primary School. Parents should be encouraged to not support retaliation by their child for any act of aggression or bullying against them. It is not school policy to tolerate retaliation as it rarely solves the problem and often aggravates it.

Families are asked to sign a Home-school agreement which promotes positive behaviour. Parents are made aware of the school behaviour policy through publication in the school prospectus and are asked to support the school with sanctions used.

The role of pupils

Pupils are encouraged to tell a member of the school staff, their parents or their friends 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. Much of this discussion occurs through the work of the School Council. Overfields School Council has developed its own anti-bullying surveys and children are encouraged to let our School Council know about any problems. Pupils are encouraged and reminded to follow the safety advice given in lessons.

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 this policy.

The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this through discussion with the headteacher. Governors analyse information provided through school questionnaires and data provided by other agencies, for patterns of people, places or groups. They look in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.