



**BULLYING AND HARASSMENT
POLICY**

REVIEWED SEPTEMBER 2012

School Statement:

The school adopts the LA's Anti-Bullying Statement.

“All young people have the right to learn and work in an environment where they feel safe and that is free from harassment and bullying. The LA will support positive action against bullying”.

All children have the right to expect that they will not be bullied at school and that the school will provide a safe, caring and protective environment in which they can learn.

Definition

The Nottingham “Positive Action Against bullying – Guidance for Schools” offers the following definition

“Bullying is unacceptable. It is a form of persistent, intentional behaviour through which an individual, or group of individuals, feel threatened, abused or undermined by another individual, or group of individuals. Bullying can be physical, verbal or indirect behaviour”.

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- Being called names
- Being teased or taunted
- Being pushed or pulled about
- Being hit or attacked
- Having bags or other possessions taken and thrown around
- Having rumours spread
- Being ignored and left out
- Being forced to hand over money or possessions
- Being attacked or undermined because of religion, ethnicity, skin colour, language, sexuality, disability, gender, class

All bullying is aggression, either physical, verbal or psychological, although not all aggression is necessarily bullying. Bullying in the form of emotional or psychological aggression is less visible to teachers, but very painful to the victims. Any behaviour which is the illegitimate use of power in order to hurt others is bullying behaviour. Bullying is frequently defined as persistent aggression. It is assumed that it is the repetition of aggressive behaviour that defines it as bullying. This should not be accepted. If only a single incident occurs, it is still important that action is taken to stop it. The sooner the action is taken, the easier it is to resolve the difficulty and the less likelihood of the bullying behaviour being repeated.

We, as staff and governors, acknowledge that there is the possibility that adult members of the school community could be victims of bullying.

Agreed Practice

All discovered bullying will be acted upon. Therefore, every person in school has a responsibility to take action and ALL people in school need to know just what our school response to bullying is i.e. teachers, governors, TAs, trainees, mid-day supervisors.

The school response involves how we respond to a) individual incidents of bullying and b) providing an anti bullying environment in school.

Anti Bullying Environment

1. Make sure all children understand and are aware of what we mean by bullying. We need the children's view of what they consider to be bullying behaviour as well as ours. Children need to be taught the causes and effects of bullying and to know how they can help to prevent it.
2. As a staff we need to be aware of the places and times bullying is most likely to occur:- toilets, playtime, leaving school and take preventative measures that will minimise the opportunity for bullying to occur.
3. We need to provide the environment within the classroom where it is OK to tell. We must positively encourage this. Children have to be taught not to accept bullying behaviour and that there are no innocent bystanders in a bullying incident. Not to act is to condone. We need to remind children that bullying behaviour is breaking the school rules. Children are actively encouraged in this school to talk openly to staff and TAs. However, the use of the D.A.R.E response box is a prime example of how children can write an anonymous note about concerns such as bullying to the D.A.R.E officer or teacher.
4. Use of PSHE and Drama sessions to promote anti bullying behaviour. Anti-bullying awareness is taught explicitly as part of the whole school teaching of the SEAL programme. We actively participate in the anti-bullying week during the Autumn term to further highlight the issues.
5. Playground buddies are trained to work positively with their peers to mediate and talk through minor issues arising at playtimes.
6. Cyber-bullying. Pupils are made aware of potential dangers associated with some internet sites and mobile phones and a 'Safety Code' is displayed in each classroom. 'Stay Safe' and 'Think U Know' are sites used aimed at raising awareness across the school.

7. Parents are informed of the school's bullying and harassment policy and advice sent out periodically e.g. internet safety and cyber-bullying.

As a staff we recognise that children need to see that bullying behaviour is always challenged in school. If pupils observe bullying behaviour going unchallenged they may feel that it's a good way of getting what they want. A child who is bullied will feel let down if no action is taken.

Response to individual bullying incident

1. All discovered bullying must be acted upon as soon as possible and seen to be acted upon.
2. Respond to the victim immediately. Tell them they're OK. Offer concrete advice and support. It may be useful to ask them to write down the facts of what happened and their feelings about it (dictating if necessary)
3. Make it plain to the bully that you disapprove of the bullying behaviour.
4. Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view – read out the victim's statement or if a group is involved hold an open forum to talk about what has happened, people's feelings and how it can be resolved.
5. Do not bully the bully
6. Explain clearly the punishment and why it is being given
7. All bullying needs to be reported to the Head/Assistant Heads and the incidents need to be logged. Parents need to be informed of the child's behaviour and to be invited to discuss this with the Head/class teacher. Strategies need to be put in place to prevent further incidents occurring.

Prevention

The DCSF provides useful advice in "Don't Suffer in Silence" (2000). It is suggested that "bullying should be discussed as part of the curriculum" and offers a resource list for books, videos and other material. Key strategies are also identified for work outside the curriculum. Experience shows that the best practice in schools usually involves a combination of more than one strategy. "A single strategy is unlikely to provide a complete solution, on its own, to the problem".

The following strategies have been used in school:-

Cooperative group work

Integrated into normal classroom practice, this can improve tolerance, trust, peer group integration and listening skills.

Circle time

Time set aside weekly for teachers and pupils to sit in a circle and take part in enjoyable activities and discussion. In a positive atmosphere, circle time enhances relationships, communication and self-esteem in a safe space.

Circle of Friends

These initiate relationships around a vulnerable or troubled pupil. Case studies show that this is a flexible and creative method of forming positive peer support networks. Training is essential for staff and pupils.

Small Group Work provides additional support for vulnerable or troubled children, building on work done inside the classroom, in SEAL lessons, aimed to provide a safe and supportive environment in which pupils feel able to share their feelings.

Befriending (Buddies)

Volunteer pupils are assigned to peers (usually younger) to “befriend” or “be with”. For example a group of pupils can be trained to specifically befriend a particular pupil. Training is essential for “Buddies”.

As with all ills, prevention is better than a cure. There are a number of steps that can be taken which should help to reduce incidences of bullying.

Supervision

- Supervision is the responsibility of all members of staff and everyone should be aware of the possible symptoms of bullying and should feel that they have the authority to deal with it.
- Make sure the playground, corridors, toilets and other hidden corners are regularly visited by members of staff and/or senior pupils.
- Take an active interest in what happens outside the classroom. Victims and onlookers may drop hints about incidents to see if the teacher will pick up on them rather than the onus being put on them to disclose.
- Ensure that all pupils have someone to whom they can talk in confidence. Children may feel nervous about approaching a teacher and may feel more comfortable talking to a fellow pupil.

In the Classroom

- Eliminate use of the phrase “telling tales”. (Use “That’s not important just now” and “Responsible reporting”).
- Create a positive ethos in the classroom and the clear understanding that all children are equally valued. Interaction between staff and pupils and between children should be positive and affirmative.

- We need the children to know that bullying in any form will not be tolerated and that everyone is expected to ensure that it does not happen and has the responsibility to report incidents and that this is not telling tales. It should also be emphasised that there are no innocent bystanders. It should be recognised that children who did not act against the bullies by reporting them were “for” them.
- In class the children comply with agreed rules for behaviour. When the children break these rules they can be seen to be breaking their own rules rather than a set of rules that have been imposed on them from above.
- If necessary break up the group dynamics by assigning places, keeping bullies back at the end of the school day etc. Most bully groups have a leader. Turn peer pressure against the bully and break up the group.
- Bullying almost always arises out of a lack of empathy and/or low self-esteem. We need to continually develop strategies to raise self-esteem and tackle racism. This is done continuously across the curriculum (e.g. as part of our SEAL work; Positive Behaviour Policy etc.).

Teach children to be assertive

- Limit ways in which children’s differences are emphasised. This will involve tackling everyday racist and sexist language.

Recording Bullying Incidents

The Bullying Incident Report Form (B.I.R.F) is found on P25 of the LA “Positive Action Against Bullying Guidance for schools” and is recommended by the school as an agreed format for recording incidents. See enclosed form. This is to be completed by the Head Teacher or Deputy, alongside the class teacher of the child concerned and in consultation with parents.

Evaluation and Review

As a school we need to ensure that all adults and children are aware of the school’s response to bullying. Parents and children will be reassured if we show, both through policy and action that we will respond positively and effectively to bullying. In order to be effective, the policy has to be a whole school policy. All groups and individuals who are affected will be consulted i.e. staff, governors, TAs, mid-day supervisors, parents and pupils and a copy of the policy will be included in every classroom handbook.

Data from monitoring will be reviewed and updated annually by the S.L.T and the Personnel, Pupils and Strategic Development Committee.

Appendix 1

Additional Resource Materials include –

DCSF :
Bullying – A Charter for Action (November 2003)

DCSF:
Bullying involving Children with SEN and Disabilities (September 2008)

DCSF:
Safe from Bullying in Extended Services in and Around Schools (April 2009)