

# Mountfields Lodge Primary School



## Anti-Bullying Policy

**Aim High, Reach for the Sky**

## **Rationale behind the policy**

At our school we follow the ABC of good behaviour and learning to promote values of acceptance, respect, behaving responsibly and caring for each other. These underpin our teaching and learning in school and this anti-bullying policy.

All members of our school community deserve the right to come to school without fear and feel valued, equal and respected. The aim of this anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils in this school learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We know that tackling bullying in all its forms is central to achieving this and to achieving wider school improvement. Our school should be at the heart of a tolerant and diverse community.

Bullying takes place in schools as it does in other work places. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. Bullying has a serious effect on children's self esteem, emotional and mental health, which in turn prevents them from developing their full potential and can seriously affect their life chances. It also affects their family and other children in school.

No child should have to experience bullying of any kind and staff, children, parents and governors all have a responsibility and role in ensuring bullying is not tolerated and prevented. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.

We are a **listening** and **telling** school. This means that **anyone** who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell an adult knowing that incidents will be dealt with **promptly, effectively and sensitively**.

Whilst this policy mainly deals with bullying of children, at Mountfields Lodge School we will not tolerate bullying of any member of staff or governor by any member of the school community, and this will be dealt with in line with agreed school guidance. Bullying of parent/carers by other parents/carers should be reported to the police.

This policy relates directly to school's policies and provision for PSHE, Safeguarding, behaviour management and equality. It should be read in conjunction with these policies. It has been developed with reference to the latest guidance from the DFE and other organisations involved with anti-bullying work.

## **What is bullying?**

### **Bullying is:**

"Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."

We recognise that children do sometimes have accidents, tease or are unkind to each other. Although not ideal, as one-off events, these do not constitute bullying, and are dealt with via our whole school approach to behaviour management. If a child has been physically harmed intentionally, the perpetrator will usually receive a **Think Sheet**, as deemed appropriate with regard to the age of the child, nature of the incident and the merits of each particular case. If this unkind behaviour continues and results in the 'victim' feeling uncomfortable or unkind, this is bullying.

At Mountfields Lodge School, we define bullying as repeated acts aimed at a specific victim or victims, that intentionally hurt that person or group. The children recognise that if the unkind behaviour is '**Several Times On Purpose**' (**STOP**) this is bullying.

### ***Bullying can be:***

- **Emotional** - Being unfriendly, excluding from social groups, making someone do something they don't want to, spreading rumours, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures, name calling)
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence; taking, hiding or damaging belongings
- **Cyberbullying** – The use of technology, particularly mobile phones, email, social networking software, cameras and video facilities to upset someone else. It is different from other forms of bullying as it extends into the home and can quickly reach a wider audience. *See Preventing cyber-bullying policy.*
- **Related to SEN, disability or health conditions** – bullying of the above nature related to health, disability or Special Educational Need (SEN).
- **Racist, cultural and religious** – behaviour that makes a person feel unwelcome, excluded and devalued because of their colour, culture, religious beliefs or where they come from. This behaviour could include racial taunts, graffiti, gestures. This may also include offensive words, which have been appropriated by some social groups as terms of endearment, yet may still be considered racist or sexist by others.
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic** – bullying based on a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation. This does include regularly referring to a child as 'gay'. Although children may use this term without considering its implications, please ensure your child understands that it is unacceptable.

### **How do we deal with bullying?**

#### **Preventing**

As an inclusive school, we stress the importance to children of accepting and celebrating diversity - whether religious, gender, race, culture or ability, and actively challenge preconceptions and prejudices of through PSHE, partnerships with a special school and other community groups, and as part of our ABC of Good Behaviour and Learning.

We are a listening and telling school. The children recognise that if they are bullied or they see other children bullying they should **STOP** it – **Start Telling Other People**. This is the message that we promote at all times and with all members of the school community.

We work to prevent bullying through:

- Developing children's social skills in regular teaching of PSHE through role plays, scenarios and stories.
- Encouraging and teaching about working in a group

- Encouraging children to report bullying by telling an adult in school or at home.
- Children designing posters through Anti-bullying Week; posters are displayed around the school.
- Informing parents of the school's views on anti-bullying, its definition of bullying, and how parents and the school can work together.
- Consult with parents, staff, governors and School Council to review policy and provision.
- Holding an annual anti-bullying week to further raise awareness of bullying issues.
- Playground buddy scheme
- Mrs. Ghent, our Pupil Mentor, works with vulnerable children who are at risk of bullying others or being bullied.
- Training for staff in leading play, particularly lunchtimes.

We endeavour to empower children to respond to bullying in a variety of ways:

- Turn and say to the person who is bullying, "STOP, I don't like it!"
- Ask the person who is bullying to leave you alone whilst you are with your friends.
- Try not to fight back. We encourage a 'Hands down, shout up' approach - **STOP! (Start Telling Other People)**
- Tell an adult in school. If you feel uneasy about doing this on your own then ask a member of the school council or one of your friends to help you, or if you want to write a note.
- Tell a playground buddy
- Tell your parents.
- If the bullying continues then tell someone again.
- If you see someone being bullied in the playground and it is safe to do so, then go up and ask them if they are alright and if they need any help.
- If you don't want to approach them yourself, tell someone on duty that you think a child needs their help.
- If you see bullying take place – **STOP! (Start Telling Other People)**

**All staff, parents and children share the responsibility to prevent bullying in our school.**

## **Responding**

All staff **must** be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly, sensitively and effectively against it in accordance with this school policy. Parents should also be aware of the signs and symptoms of bullying listed below.

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. When a child shows several of these behaviours, it does not automatically mean that they are being bullied, as there are other reasons that children can behave in these ways. However, staff and parents should be mindful of these possible signs and work in partnership to discover the causes.

## **Behaviours that indicate children may be victims of bullying:**

- 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)
- 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 not to do as well in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " 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
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

## Procedures for dealing with alleged bullying

- Children or parents report alleged bullying incidents to staff.
- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be taken seriously.
- The member of staff who has been approached will promptly investigate the reports sensitively and effectively by talking to those involved and any witnesses.
- Any bullying behaviour reported to lunchtime supervisors **must** be reported to Mrs Soar.
- All alleged bullying will be discussed with Mr Hoare, Mrs Mock, Mr Coleman or Mrs Ghent
- If the incident is of a **racist** nature complete a **yellow form** and if it is of a **homophobic** nature please complete a **green form**. (All these can be found in the school office.)
- Mr Hoare, Mrs Mock or Mr Coleman will then investigate what has happened thoroughly, sensitively and effectively and decide how to deal with the bullying appropriately, as outlined below.
- Where any investigation has confirmed that bullying has taken place, parents of the perpetrator and the victim(s) will be ***informed by phone or in person within 48 hours (by Mr Hoare, Mrs Mock or Mr Coleman)*** and where appropriate will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- Relevant staff will be kept informed and if the bullying persists they will record this and inform the head teacher, who will make a record, and take appropriate further action.
- Mr Hoare will report a record of incidence of bullying to the Governing Body *termly*.
- The school will inform the Local Authority and the governors of any racist incident.

## Outcomes

Responses to bullying may vary as each case must be taken on its merits and with the age, nature of the bullying and needs of the individual children in mind. The following procedure gives an outline:

Appropriate outcomes will be decided on by Mr Hoare, Mrs Mock or Mr Coleman and they may include:

### Sanctions -

- Apologising to the victim – (written or verbally as appropriate)
- Apologising to parents of the victim – (written or verbally as appropriate)
- Completing a 'Think Sheet'
- Having a behaviour card for a specified amount of time.
- Staying in at lunchtime/break time (for a specified amount of time).
- Exclusion at lunchtime.
- Being stopped from taking part in a school activity (e.g. event or trip)
- Temporary or permanent exclusions.

It should be noted that exclusions of any kind are a last resort, must be done with the full support of the Governing Body and following procedures identified in the LA Guidance on Exclusion from School.

### Support -

### **Pupils who have been bullied will be supported as appropriate by:**

- Having a prompt opportunity to discuss the incident(s) with an appropriate member of staff (usually the class teacher or Mrs. Ghent)
- Being reassured that school will do what it can to keep them safe
- Raising their self-esteem and confidence
- Being encouraged to report further issues in a way that they are comfortable with
- Meeting with parents and class teacher to discuss ways of helping them to deal with bullying.

### **Pupils who have bullied will be supported as appropriate by:**

- Having a prompt opportunity to discuss the incident(s) with an appropriate member of staff where they will: establish which behaviour was inappropriate and why the child acted in this way and establish clearly what behaviour needs to change, and how the school can support this change and how school will deal with repeated bullying behaviour (linked to Behaviour Policy)
- Informing parents/carers of agreed actions and establishing how they can support
- Arranging a review date/time to discuss outcomes and appropriate follow-up.

If bullying persists further sanctions will be taken as outlined above and in accordance with the School Behaviour policy.

## **Responsibilities**

### **All Staff**

To follow the agreed procedures set out above (principally to take seriously, investigate *promptly*, thoroughly, sensitively and effectively any bullying that is suspected or reported).

### **Parents**

Parents can help the school by:

Being aware of the aims of this policy.

Encouraging their child never to take part in any sort of bullying behaviour.

Understanding that no bullying behaviour will be tolerated.

Reporting any suspected bullying to a member of staff, rather than confronting parents and children directly.

Cooperating fully with the school to resolve any bullying problems.

Being highly vigilant about bullying using mobile phones, social networks and the internet.

Parents are expected to actively support the policy by signing the home-school agreement and promoting behaviour that is in accordance with this policy and our school behaviour policy.

### **Children**

Children are expected to report to an adult if they witness any bullying or if they are being bullied.

## **Monitoring and review**

This policy and its effectiveness are monitored by the head teacher in the following ways:

- Learning walks for behaviour
- Behaviour/Warning records
- Complaints to Head/Governors related to bullying.
- Pupil Attitude Survey analysis and consultation with School Council
- Parental Questionnaire analysis and consultation with parents on effectiveness of provision
- Analysis of records of bullying completed by staff

This information is then used by staff to further improve how school deals with bullying, and is reported to governors at their request.