



Oughterside Foundation School

Anti-bullying policy

Issue No	Author	Date approved	Review date	Name	Position	Authorised signature
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Oughterside Foundation School Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Every child has the right to feel safe in school and enjoy their education without the threat of bullying behaviour. Our approach is to build the children's self-esteem and confidence and for our approach to be consistent across the school. We intend that the policy is clearly understood and shared by all, children, staff and parents.

Bullying: Our School's Values and Beliefs

- All pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included.
- Pupils and staff have the right to work in an environment without harassment, intimidation or fear.
- All bullying, of any sort, is therefore unacceptable.
- Pupils who experience bullying will be supported.
- We recognise the effects that bullying can have on pupils' feelings of worth and on their school work, and the school community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment.

Intentions

Our intentions in producing this policy are:

- To express our belief that all pupils should be fully included in the life of the school
- To provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear, which is conducive to the achievement of individual aspirations
- To reduce and to eradicate wherever possible, instances in which pupils are made to feel frightened, excluded or unhappy.
- To reduce and to eradicate wherever possible, instances in which pupils are subject to any form of bullying.
- To respond effectively to all instances of bullying which are reported to us.
- To establish a means of dealing with bullying, and of providing support to pupils who have been bullied.
- To provide support for pupils who are accused of bullying, who may be experiencing problems of their own.
- To ensure that all pupils and staff are aware of the policy and that they fulfil their obligations to it.
- To meet any legal obligations which rest with the school

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is an abuse of power, involving dominance of one pupil by another, or a group of others, is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour. It is a repeated, deliberate act of aggression which causes embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another. It takes many forms and may include physical attacks, verbal insults, extortion and theft, threatening and obscene gesture, spreading malicious rumours and deliberately excluding people from a group or activity.

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

It can take many forms but the main types are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking another's belongings or any use of violence
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours.
- Cyber – misuse of chat rooms, sending malicious e-mails or text messages on mobile phones, misuse of associated technology e.g. camera and video facilities.

Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which he or she may belong. Within school we will pay particular attention to:

- Racial harassment and racist bullying
- Bullying because of pupils' religious beliefs
- Sexual bullying
- Bullying because of pupils' sexual orientation (including the use of homophobic language)
- Bullying of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities.

Creating an Anti-Bullying Climate in School

Bullying will not be tolerated and we make this clear in the information we give to pupils and parents when they join our school. We will use school assemblies and collective worship to reinforce this message and also promote anti bullying during anti bullying week in November.

- We teach positive behaviour in school, promoting appropriate behaviour through direct teaching and by creating an emotionally and socially safe environment where pupils take responsibility for each other's well-being. Our school's Behaviour Policy explains how we promote positive behaviour in school to create an environment where pupils behave well; where pupils take responsibility for each other's emotional and social well-being; and where they include and support each other.
- Our curriculum is used to:
- Raise awareness about bullying and our anti-bullying policy,
- Increase understanding for victims and help build an anti-bullying ethos, and
- To teach pupils how constructively to manage their relationships with others.

Current affairs, literature and historical events are chosen to reinforce our anti-bullying approach.

- Class and small group work, including Circle Time, role plays and stories are used to show what pupils can do to prevent bullying, and to create an anti-bullying climate in school. We will use school assemblies and collective worship to reinforce this message. A central record will be kept of any assemblies or class work which have focused on bullying.
- Periodic poster campaigns will be used to remind pupils that bullying is not acceptable, and to tell them what to do if they are bullied. Posters will tell pupils about ChildLine and other sources of confidential help.
- We will advertise our anti-bullying policy on the school web-site.
- We will provide written guidance to all our pupils to explain what they should do if they are being bullied, or if they see another pupil being bullied. We will ask pupils where and when bullying occurs in school and we will supervise, and try to eliminate any unsafe areas which they report to us.
- We will provide written guidance for parents on the signs of bullying and what to do if they suspect their child is being bullied at school. (DfES guidance –see Appendix 1)
- We will provide regular training for teachers and non-teaching staff (including mid-day supervisors) on spotting the signs of bullying and how to respond to it.

Bullying will not be tolerated and we make this clear in the information we give to pupils and parents when they join our school.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged

- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

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

Responding to Incidents When They Occur

Pupils who have been bullied and pupils who see others being bullied should report this to the class teacher. Members of staff who receive reports that a pupil has been bullied should report this to the headteacher. Reports of bullying will be logged by the headteacher, who will keep records of incidents that she has become aware of and details about how she responded to them. All incidents should be dated and that the names of pupils and staff who are involved and should be written out in full and not abbreviated (at least on the first occasion they are mentioned.) Where bullying is of a racist nature, we will report this to the Local Education Authority using the Racial Incident Report Form.

All reports will be taken seriously and will be followed up by the headteacher and Chair of Governors.

We will provide support to pupils who are bullied.

- They will be reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied and this is not their fault. We will assure them that it was right to report the incident.
- We will encourage them to talk about how they feel.
- We will try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- We will engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved.
- We will try to ensure that they feel safe, discussing strategies for being safe and staying safe.
- We will ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us.
- We will affirm that bullying can be stopped and that our school will persist with intervention until it does.
- We will involve their friends/older pupils in peer support/a buddying scheme/mediation.
- We will interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in bullying separately.
- We will listen to their version of events.
- We will talk to anyone else who may have witnessed the bullying. We will reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect bullying to stop.
- We will seek a commitment to this end.
- We will affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied.
- We will adopt a joint problem solving approach where this is appropriate, and ask the pupils involved to help us find solutions to the problem. This will encourage pupils involved to take responsibility for the emotional and social needs of others.
- We will consider sanctions under our school's Behaviour/Discipline Policy.
- We will advise pupils responsible for bullying that we will be checking to ensure that bullying stops.
- We will ensure that those involved know that we have done so.
- When bullying occurs, we will contact the parents of the pupils involved at an early stage.
- We will follow up after incidents to check that the bullying has not started again. We will do this within two weeks, and again within the following half term.
- We will also work with pupils who have been involved in bullying others to ascertain the sort of support that they themselves need.

Procedures

(Refer to Safeguarding Policy)

1. Parents or children should report bullying incidents to class teacher.
2. These will be investigated and appropriate action taken. (See outcomes).
3. In cases of repeated bullying, the incidents will be recorded by the Headteacher, Mrs Jardine, who will keep all parties informed about any action undertaken.
4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour. Parental support will be expected at this stage.
6. Where appropriate parents will be informed, and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
7. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

Outcomes

1. Any reported bullying will be investigated by the class teacher and / or headteacher.
2. The bully (bullies) will be asked to genuinely apologise, either verbally or in writing, and a record kept by the Headteacher. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
3. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
4. The use of prompt questions will help those involved in bullying to discuss what happened; discover why the pupil became involved as well as establishing the wrong doing and identifying the need to change.

When Tougher Measures Are Needed

If necessary, we will invoke the full range of sanctions that are detailed in the school's Behaviour/Discipline Policy. These include

- Removal from the group
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- Detention
- Withholding participation in school events that are not an essential part of the curriculum.

It also includes fixed term and permanent exclusion from school.

Responsibilities

Everyone within school is expected to

- Act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another, and
- Adhere to and to promote the objectives of this policy.

Pupils are expected to

- Report all incidents of bullying,
- Report suspected incidents that victims may be afraid to report.
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.

Parents can help by

- Supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- Encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community.
- Discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying or involved in some other way.
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.

Bullying Outside the School Premises

Schools are not directly responsible for bullying that occurs off the premises but we know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school. The bullying may be done by pupils from our own school, by pupils from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Parents are responsible for their own child's behaviour on the way to and from school, however where a pupil or parent informs school bullying off the school premises we may:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school.
- Talk to the Headteacher of another school whose pupils are bullying.
- Talk to the police.

Concerns, Complaints and Compliments

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we would ask that this be brought to the Headteacher's notice. If the Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure, addressing any complaints to Mrs Vicky Bell (Chair of Governors).

We would also be pleased to receive compliments – feedback from parents when things have gone well.

Ownership of This Policy

The policy applies to all staff and to all pupils, whether temporarily or permanently on the school roll.

The Headteacher is responsible for introducing and implementing this policy. However, all staff, all pupils and their parents have an active part to play in the development and maintenance of the policy, and in its success.

Governors will ask for regular briefings on bullying within school, and will expect an annual report on the operation of this policy.

Evaluating the Policy

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. We will evaluate our anti-bullying policy using the following measures:

- The numbers of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period.
- Pupils' perceptions of bullying in school through structured discussions in class time.
- Pupils' perceptions of the scale of bullying through periodic questionnaires.
- The number of days of absence which are thought to arise as a consequence of bullying.
- We will investigate patterns of absence to ensure that children are not taking unnecessary days off school due to fear of being bullied.
- The number of complaints and compliments that we receive from parents.
- From the comments made by visitors and other people connected with the school.

Bullying Don't Suffer in Silence

Information for parents and families

Every school is likely to have some problem with bullying at one time or another. Your child's school must by law have an anti-bullying policy, and use it to reduce and prevent bullying, as many schools have already successfully done.

Bullying behaviour includes:

- name calling and nasty teasing
- threats and extortion
- physical violence
- damage to belongings
- leaving pupils out of social activities deliberately and frequently
- spreading malicious rumours

Parents and families have an important part to play in helping schools deal with bullying.

First, discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

Second, ask to see the school's anti-bullying policy. Each school must have an antibullying policy which sets out how it deals with incidents of bullying. You have a right to know about this policy which is as much for parents as for staff and pupils.

Third, watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents and families are often the first to detect symptoms of bullying, though sometimes school nurses or doctors may first suspect that a child has been bullied. Common symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability. It can be helpful to ask questions about progress and friends at school; how break times and lunchtimes are spent; and whether your child is facing problems or difficulties at school. Don't dismiss negative signs. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

If your child has been bullied:

- *calmly talk* to your child about it
- *make a note* of what your child says - particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened
- *reassure your child* that telling you about the bullying was the right thing to do
- explain that *any further incidents* should be reported to a teacher immediately
- *make an appointment* to see your child's class teacher or form tutor
- *explain to the teacher* the problems your child is experiencing

Talking to teachers about bullying

- *try and stay calm* - bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- *be as specific as possible* about what your child says has happened - give dates, places and names of other children involved
- *make a note* of what action the school intends to take
- *ask if there is anything you can do* to help your child or the school
- *stay in touch with the school* - let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue

If you think your concerns are not being addressed:

- *check the school anti-bullying policy* to see if agreed procedures are being followed
- *discuss your concerns* with the parent governor or other parents
- *make an appointment* to meet the head teacher, keeping a record of the meeting
- if this does not help, *write to the Chair of Governors* explaining your concerns and what you would like to see happen
- contact local or national parent support groups for advice
- *contact the Director of Education for your authority*, who will be able to ensure that the Governors respond to your concerns
- *contact the Parent line Plus helpline* for support and information at any of these stages
- in the last resort, *write to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment*

If your child is bullying other children:

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents are not aware.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- they don't know it is wrong
- they are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family they admire
- they haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends
- their friends encourage them to bully
- they are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings

To stop your child bullying others:

- talk to your child, explaining that bullying is unacceptable and makes others unhappy
- discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- show your child how to join in with other children without bullying
- make an appointment to see your child's class teacher or form tutor; explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing; discuss with the teacher how you and the school can stop them bullying others
- regularly check with your child how things are going at school
- give your child lots of praise and encouragement when they are co-operative or kind to other people

Organisations which can help:

Advisory Centre for Education, IC Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London N5 2DQ

Tel: 0207 704 9822 Tel helpline: 0207 354 8321 (Mon-Fri 2-5 pm).

Advice line for parents on all matters concerning schools

Anti-Bullying Campaign, 185 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 2UF.

Tel: 0207 378 1446 (9.30 am - 5.00 pm).

Advice line for parents and children.

Children's Legal Centre, Tel: 01206 873 820

(Mon-Fri 10 am -12.30 pm and 2 pm - 4.30 pm). Publications and free advice line on legal issues.

Kidscape, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH. Tel: 0207 730 3300 Fax: 0207 730 7081

Has a wide range of publications for young people, parents and teachers. Bullying counsellor available Monday to Friday, 10-4.

Parentline Plus, 520 Highgate Studios, 53-79 Highgate Road, Kentish Town, London NW5 1TL. Tel: 0808 800 2222. National helpline for parents (Mon-Fri 9-9; Sat 9.30-5; Sun 10-3).

Resources for parents and families about bullying:

ALEXANDER, J. **Your child bullying: Practical and easy to follow advice.** Element Books, 1998.

ELLIOTT, M. **101 Ways to deal with bullying - A guide for parents.** Hodder and Stoughton, 1997.

KIDSCAPE. **Keeping safe: A practical guide to talking with children.** Kidscape, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH, 1990.

LAWSON, S. **Helping children cope with bullying.**

Sheldon Press, 1994.

LINDENFIELD, G. **Confident children: A parents' guide to helping children feel good.** Thorsens, 1994.

MELLOR A. **Bullying and how to fight it: A guide for families.**

Scottish Council for Research in Education, 1 5 St John Street, Edinburgh EH5 5JR, 1993.

PEARCE J. **Fighting, teasing and bullying: Simple and effective ways to help your child.** Wellingborough: Thorsons, 1989.

TRAIN, A. **The bullying problem: How to deal with difficult children.** Condor Book, Souvenir Press 1985

This information sheet was prepared by the Department for Education and Employment and has been adapted with their permission. Their full antibullying pack can be found at www.DfES.gov.uk/bullying/index.shtml

Bullying Don't Suffer in Silence Information for Pupils

If you are being bullied

- *try to stay calm* and look as confident as you can
- *be firm and clear* - look them in the eye and tell them to stop
- *get away* from the situation as quickly as possible
- *tell an adult* what has happened straight away

After you have been bullied

- tell a teacher or another adult in your school
- tell your family
- if you are scared to tell an adult by yourself, ask a friend to come with you
- keep speaking up until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying
- if your school has a peer support service, use it
- don't blame yourself for what has happened

When you are talking to an adult about bullying, be clear about

- *what* has happened to you
- *how often* it has happened
- *who* was involved
- who *saw* what was happening
- *where* it happened
- *what* you have done about it already

If you find it difficult to talk to anyone at school or at home, ring **ChildLine**, Freephone 0800 1111, or write, Freepost 1111, London N1 0BR. The phone call or letter is *free*. It is a *confidential* helpline.

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