

# Bousfield Primary School

## Information on how Bousfield tackles bullying

This should be read in conjunction with the Anti-Bullying Policy and the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

## Definition of bullying

At Bousfield Primary School, we define bullying as:

- Repeated, deliberately hurtful or threatening behaviour
- Premeditated actions that usually form a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident
- Involving dominance of one pupil by another, or group of others
- **Remember STOP –Several Times On Purpose.**

The main types of bullying are:

- Physical - pushing, hitting, kicking, pinching, any form of violence, threats
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, racist remarks and taunts
- Emotional – tormenting, threatening, ridiculing, humiliating, excluding from groups or activities
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments, sexting.

There is no “hierarchy” of bullying – all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Bullying can take place face to face, indirectly or online (cyber bullying).

## Is it bullying?

It is not bullying when someone says or does something unintentionally hurtful and they do it once. This is rude.

It is not bullying when someone says or does something intentionally hurtful and they do it once. This is mean.

It is bullying when someone says or does something intentionally hurtful and they keep doing it – even when they are told to stop or can see that the person is upset.

It is not bullying when children fall out or have a disagreement. This is upsetting and children need to be encouraged to resolve their conflicts or give each other space.

It is not bullying when teasing is done in a friendly and playful way. However, the child who is teasing is spoken to and made aware that the other child does not want them to continue.

It is not bullying when children and young people of a similar age and size find themselves in conflict, disagreeing, having an argument or even fighting, without imbalance of power or use of intimidation. The experience of conflict or disagreement between friends or peers can be upsetting for those involved but this is not bullying. However, unresolved disagreements and the failure to manage anger and resentment can sometimes escalate when one person retaliates by constantly picking on the other. It is in such circumstances that a pattern of bullying behaviour can emerge if conflict is not dealt with at an early stage.

## **What is Cyber bullying?**

Cyber bullying is the use of the internet, particularly applications on mobile phones and tablets, to deliberately upset someone else.

Cyber bullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal.

The audience can be very large and reached rapidly. The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyber bullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying. Electronically forwarded content is hard to control, and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for victims to move on.

People who cyber bully may attempt to remain anonymous. This can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person cyber bullying may never be in the same physical space as their target.

Some instances of online negativity can be unintentional. It can be the result of not thinking (something sent as a joke may be deeply upsetting or offensive to the recipient) or a lack of awareness of the consequences – for example saying something negative online about another pupil, or friend that they don't expect to be forwarded or viewed outside their immediate group. If this is not repeated behaviour, then it is not considered bullying.

## **Preventing cyber bullying**

Members of staff are aware that bullying can be carried out through cyberspace. Children are encouraged to tell someone if they are being bullied in this way. Guidance is regularly given in assemblies and in Computing and PSHE lessons when the children are taught about Internet safety. Parents are reminded to keep a check on their child's use of electronic devices (see information in Curriculum – Computing and Online-Safety).

## **Promoting an anti-bullying ethos in school and preventing bullying**

Pupils are encouraged to tell the Head Teacher, Deputy Head, Class Teachers, TAs, Office Staff, Midday Meal Supervisors, if they are being bullied or observe bullying.

Pupils and staff are alert to signs of bullying and act firmly and promptly against it.

The school promotes anti-bullying strategies through assemblies, PSHE, SEAL lessons, drama, circle time and Friendship day.

Pupils explore issues such as the causes and effects of bullying, and are given advice on what to do if they are being bullied or if they observe someone else being bullied.

The school council provides a forum for children's concerns to be heard and acted upon.

Classes have 'worry boxes' in which children can post any concerns.

A safe environment is created in the playground by careful adult supervision and kindness tools such as the buddy bench, monitors and play leaders.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

All members of staff (class teachers, midday supervisors, teaching assistants, office staff, support staff, etc.) have a role to play in raising awareness, being alert to and reporting bullying.

The overall responsibility lies with the Head Teacher and Governing Body who monitor and review the effectiveness of the policy.

Parents/carers are asked to support their children and work in partnership with the school.

## **Signs and Symptoms of Bullying**

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

- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- 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"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- self-harm
- 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 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.

## **Procedure for dealing with bullying**

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision making, as appropriate.
- The headteacher or another member of leadership team will interview the victim and bully separately (and then together if deemed appropriate) to establish the facts, and build an accurate picture of events over time. If necessary and appropriate, other pupil witnesses will be interviewed.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers of both parties are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- Sanctions, as identified within the school behaviour policy, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned. These could include one or more of the following:
  - writing an explanation or apology for the incident
  - withdrawal of break or lunch play times
  - withholding participation in school trips or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum
  - fixed term exclusion
  - permanent exclusion
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, including Early Help, Behaviour Intervention Team, CAMHS or Specialist Children's Services, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.

- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.
- The case will continue to be monitored to ensure that the strategies and action taken are effective.

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied or parent to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible.
- Work with the individuals and parents to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include: advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply; providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists; helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

### **Support and Prevention**

For pupils who experience bullying:

- they know they will be listened to and their concerns taken seriously
- they know how they can get support from others
- they know how to report bullying and get help
- they are confident in the school's ability to deal with the bullying
- they recognise steps are taken to help them feel safe again
- they are helped to rebuild confidence, self-esteem and resilience

For pupils who engage in bullying behaviour:

- they know that there are consequences and sanctions for their behaviour
- they are held to account for their behaviour
- they learn to behave in ways which do not cause harm in future
- they learn how they can take steps to repair the harm they have caused
- they know there are procedures in place to help them

For schools:

- the whole school community is clear about the anti-bullying stance the school takes
- pupils, as well as staff and other members of the school, are fully engaged in developing and reviewing anti-bullying work in the school
- all pupils are clear about the roles they can take in preventing bullying, including the role of bystanders
- publicise the details of support, internal and external, including helplines and websites
- every chance is taken to celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos

For heads, governors and other school staff:

- they develop whole-school policies which meet the law and school inspection requirements
- they promote a school climate where bullying is not tolerated
- they seek to learn from best practice elsewhere

- they review the school anti-bullying policy every two years and, as a result, the policy and procedures are updated as necessary
- curriculum opportunities are used to address bullying
- pupil support systems are in place to prevent and respond to bullying
- they address school site issues and promote safe play areas
- they recognise that some members of the school community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact on others; this may include children with SEND
- all staff take part in relevant professional development and are clear about their roles and responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying
- all staff are aware of the importance of modelling positive relationships
- they provide opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building resilience and self-esteem
- information about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying work is gathered and this is used for monitoring and evaluation purposes
- they work in partnership with parents, other schools and outside agencies to promote safe communities

For parents:

- they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying
- they are aware of procedures to use if they are concerned their child is being bullied or does not feel safe to learn, including the school's complaints procedure
- they have confidence that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate/resolve as necessary and that the school systems will deal with the bullying in a way which protects their child
- they are clear about ways in which they can complement the school on the anti-bullying policy or procedures