

### Rationale

Everyone at Horsford V.A. Primary School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos.

Where bullying exists the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied children and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

This document outlines how we make this possible at our school.

### Definitions of bullying

**Bullying is not:** When a child/children unintentionally hurt someone's feelings by mistake. For example: having a laugh; knocking into people by mistake; getting angry because they are annoyed with someone or something; or when they decide they don't want to play with someone one day. It is also not when a child is involved in a 'one off' incident of physical or emotional harm. Such examples are dealt with in accordance with our behaviour and discipline policy and will be monitored closely in the future.

**Bullying is:** Deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the person concerned to defend themselves. This can take the form of name-calling, violence, threatened violence, isolation, ridicule or indirect action such as spreading unpleasant stories about someone. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply "falling out".

Bullying can include:

- teasing and/or abusive remarks and name calling
- a 'look'
- threats and physical violence
- damage to property
- deliberately leaving pupils out of social activities
- spreading rumours with the intention of causing harm
- upsetting mobile phone or email messages (cyber bullying)
- behaviours which can be described as racist. 'A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person' (Association of Chief Police Officers, Stephen Lawrence Inquiry). In the context of school: 'If a child feels the incident is racist, it is.' (Ofsted, November 2005)

Of course sometimes the incidents mentioned above can happen and not be classed as bullying as they have only occurred once or twice. It is important for staff to record these incidents on our online tracking system when they do happen to ensure we are aware when one off situations build up to become a more serious problem. Class teachers and senior leaders are responsible for inputting this data onto the online tracking system.

### **Our approach to bullying incidents**

Although we endeavour to provide a happy, safe environment for pupils, staff and parents (promoting an 'anti-bullying' culture) we know that we may not be immune to incidents of bullying. However, our approach to any bullying incident is very clear. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and is immediately investigated. Strategies have been introduced to reduce the possibility of bullying. These include raising awareness about bullying and our policies relating to bullying, discipline and positive behaviour. They increase understanding for those involved in bullying; and teach pupils how to manage relationships in a constructive way. We work with positive behaviour and anti-bullying within our school community in many ways.

## **Children**

We place our expectations for positive behaviour and anti-bullying within the curriculum so that children can regularly reflect on themselves and others in a citizenship context. We do this through:

- Weekly PATHs lessons and compliment time
- Drama activities in English and other appropriate lessons
- Circle Time when appropriate

## **Parents/Carers:**

We offer a variety of opportunities to parents/carers to discuss bullying.

- Parent/carer questionnaires
- 'Open door' policy for parents/carers to come in and talk with class teachers
- Requested appointments for parents/carers to meet with members of the leadership team

## **Teaching and Support Staff:**

All staff are involved in promoting the anti-bullying message. This is supported by...

- Clear guidelines on positive behaviour management
- INSET training days
- By regularly reviewing bullying incidents
- Ensuring Care Plans include actions to be taken for children that might be vulnerable to bullying and making all staff aware of these plans

## **With Governors:**

Governors are aware of their responsibility to ensure anti-bullying procedures are being followed in school.

- Through reports from the Senior Leadership Team at sub committees.
- By regularly reviewing bullying incidents
- Reporting to the Full Governing Body every year
- Anti-Bullying Week every year – link to the national Anti-Bullying Week initiative.
- Working with external agencies who provide best practice, support and encouragement.
- Working with extended services to ensure positive behaviour, discipline and anti-bullying
- Policies are in place, ensuring that reporting methods are clear to all users.

## **What happens when the school becomes aware of an incident?**

The Executive Head Teacher should be informed of any complaint about bullying.

Upon discovery of an incident of bullying, we will discuss with the children the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. The adult will remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each child must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

The following procedures will be followed

- Thank the person (child/children/parent/guardian) for telling you and, if appropriate, reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Discuss the nature of the bullying, recording outcomes if deemed necessary.
- Identify the bully/bullies, the person being bullied and any witnesses.
- Interview witness/es.
- Discuss the incident with the alleged bully/ies. Explain the allegations and ask them to tell the truth about the situation. Make it clear that this is only an investigation at this stage.
- If the bully admits, make it understood that bullying is not acceptable. Tell them what effect it has on the self-esteem and education of the person being bullied and the rest of the children in the class/school. Apply sanctions relevant to the type of bullying.
- If the allegation of bullying is denied, investigate further. If there is sufficient evidence that the bullying occurred, apply relevant sanctions.
- Consider whether it is necessary to have discussions with the parents/guardians of the bully/bullies and the person who has been bullied.

- Provide support for the child/children who have been bullied. A named person will monitor and observe at break times and lunchtimes, and through discussion, make sure there is no repetition.
- Provide support for the bully. This may include a programme to support behaviour. A named person will support the child during this programme.
- Provide opportunities in Circle Time or groups, for the children to discuss relationships, feelings and the effect bullying can have on individuals. This will include re-iterating that it is OK for children to 'tell' a teacher when they witness, or are subject to, bullying in the school.

### **Positive Handling**

It is rare that the use of physical restraint will be required. However, in order to prevent harm to pupils, staff, property or learning, the governors have agreed 'The Use of Reasonable Force' policy. In addition to this all staff involved in regular contact with those children at risk of needing this kind of intervention, have received 'STEPS' training.

### **Exclusions**

In serious and persistent cases of bullying, the Executive Head Teacher may have to consider excluding a pupil. Procedures will be followed according to the National Guidelines available from [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk). In general this involves the following:

- The Executive Head Teacher will be responsible for the exclusion of pupils.
- When the Executive Head Teacher excludes a pupil she/he will inform parents, the Local Authority and the Governing Body in line with requirement set out in National Guidelines.
- All exclusions will have regard to the guidance issued within current guidelines.

### **Dissemination of Information and Review of this policy**

Children are made aware of this Policy through assemblies, Circle Time, PATHS sessions and lessons. The key principles are also supported by a number of events related to promoting positive behaviour, anti-bullying and citizenship. The Executive Head Teacher ensures that parents/guardians and all staff are familiar with the arrangements set out in this Policy Statement. A copy of this Positive Behaviour, Discipline Policy is on the School website and a paper copy available from the office, on request.

### **Parental Involvement**

The parents of both (bullies and their victims) will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem. The bully will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for repeated incidents will clearly be explained to him/her. Persistent bullies may be excluded from school. A monitoring tool may also be used, usually incorporating a reward for achieving desired behaviours.

Parents need to remind children that they must tell someone at school if they are having problems. Keeping information from the school, or from their parents, will never help a problem to be solved, and will prolong the period a victim has to suffer. Whilst there is little history of bullying at our school, we believe that one case is one too many and we believe it is essential to constantly review this policy to ensure we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue. Where necessary we have and will call on outside agencies such as the Behaviour Support Service or Kidscape to support our action. This policy is seen as an integral part of our Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

K Anatola  
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Annual review