



ANTI BULLYING POLICY

It was approved by the governing body Autumn Term 2023

This policy will be reviewed in the academic year Autumn Term 2024

Statement of Intent

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. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

That 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.

The anti bullying policy takes its place within the general aims of the school. It has close links to the SMSC, Child Protection, Behaviour and PSHE policies.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.

What is Bullying?

Oakfield Primary School's definition of bullying is:

Bullying is ongoing, deliberate behaviour that upsets the victim. It is behaviour that is targeted and selective and can be direct (physical or verbal) or indirect (e.g. being ignored or cyber bullying). It may be one or a group. Bullying is repeated over time. Bullying makes those being bullied feel powerless to defend themselves.

What types of bullying are there?

- Emotional (being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening behaviour)
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing)
- Physical (pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence)
- Extortion (demanding money/goods with threats)
- Cyber (all areas of internet, e mail and internet chat room misuse)
- Mobile threats by text messaging and calls
- Misuse of associated technology ie: camera and video facilities including those on mobile phones
- Racist (racial taunts, graffiti, gestures)
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments)
- Homophobic (because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality)

What are the signs and symptoms of bullying?

A person may indicate by signs or behaviours that they are being bullied. Everyone should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if the person:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school or changes route
- Doesn't want to go on the school/public bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant

- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Becomes aggressive, abusive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Starts stammering
- Threatens or attempts suicide
- Threatens or attempts self harm
- Threatens or attempts to run away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Performance in school work begins to drop
- Comes home with clothes torn, property damaged or "missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money
- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises
- Comes home 'starving'
- Bullying others
- Changes in eating habits
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Nervous or jumpy when a cyber message is received
- Gives improbable excuses for their behaviour

What causes bullying?

People bully for different reasons. The reasons could be:

- to feel powerful
- jealousy
- to feel good about themselves
- to be in control
- because they want something (attention, possession or friends)
- to look good in front of other people
- to feel popular
- because of peer pressure
- to be big/clever
- for fun
- because they are being bullied themselves
- because they see and pick on an easy target (small, won't tell anyone, lonely or different in some way)

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts!

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

Everybody has the right to feel happy and safe.

No-one deserves to be the victim of bullying.

Bullies need to learn different ways of behaving.

Our school will respond promptly and effectively to reported incidents of bullying.

Oakfield Primary School Procedure:

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too – that is why they bully.

If bullying is suspected we will:

- Talk to the suspected victim, and any witnesses individually
- Identify the bully and talk about what has happened, to discover why they became involved. Make it clear that bullying is not tolerated
- Record all incidents of bullying
- Keep an informal log of incidents if there are concerns
- Involve all parties together to discuss the issues if agree by all parties using restorative measures
- Allow children time to sort things out. Support & empower children to resolve the conflict & understand their role in the issues
- Establish an agreement between the children where needed
- Inform parents
- Follow up with further discussions with individuals as and when appropriate
- When necessary support children individually or together

If the incidents persist and are causing a health and safety issue then the Head Teacher could instigate exclusion procedures (see Behaviour Policy)

Prevention & strategies to reinforce Oakfield Primary's Policy on Antibullying:

- We will praise positive and supportive behaviour
- Work as a school which develops empathy and emotional intelligence
- Incidents treated seriously and dealt with immediately via Talk Buddies
- All adults to deal with a situation, even if minor. Talking to the children may prevent the situation escalating
- Anti bullying week
- Children are made aware of the strategies to deal with low level issues and what to do in different situations including situations of cyberbullying
- Children participate in circle time in class as part of PSHE and SMSC
- Making use of curriculum opportunities to raise pupil awareness eg through RE, cross curricula themes, drama, story writing and literature
- A whole school reward system
- Good quality role models. Adult modelling of appropriate response to a wide range of scenarios
- Children & parents have a good knowledge of the procedure/policy
- Children have a clear understanding of their rights & responsibilities
- E-safety frequently discussed and taught
- Use of Playground Buddies
- Designated member of Pastoral team with a focus on anti-bullying

The role of Governors

- The Governing Body supports the Head Teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The Governing Body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.
- The Governing Body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the Head Teacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors about the effectiveness of school's antibullying policy.
- If parent is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident, they should follow the school complaints procedure by initially contacting the class teacher. If the concern remains, they should contact the Head Teacher. If they are still concerned, they should contact the Governing Body via clerk.

The role of the Head Teacher

- It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to implement the school Anti-bullying Policy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and Support staff) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying.
- The Head Teacher reports to the Governing Body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.
- The Head Teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is unacceptable behaviour.
- The Head Teacher ensures that all staff, including midday supervisors, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.
- The Head Teacher leads the school in making our vision a reality, where all members of the learning community nurture, value, respect and care for each other.

The role of all staff

- All forms of bullying are taken seriously, and proactive measures are taken to prevent it from taking place.
- All adults to deal with situations quickly to prevent situations escalating. All adults to follow up what they have said e.g. keeping an eye, follow up discussion etc.
- Teachers are responsible for recording of all incidents of bullying that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the school. If a child is being bullied or is bullying others, the class teacher will inform the child's parents and the Head Teacher.
- Staff record all incidents of bullying that occur both in and out of class. The school also record incidents that we are aware of that occur near the school, or on the children's way between school and home. All adults who witness an act of bullying should record it.
- When any bullying taking place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately, in accordance with the Oakfield procedure, including counselling and support for both the victim and perpetrator of the bullying.
- All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.
- A range of methods are used to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all.

The role of parents

Parents have an important part to play in our anti-bullying policy. We ask parents to:

- Look out for unusual behaviour in your children - for example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their usual standard.
- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- If a child has bullied your child, please do not approach that child on the playground or their parents or involve an older child to deal with the bully.
- Please inform school immediately and we will deal with it following the school procedures.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- Tell your child that it is not their fault that they are being bullied.
- Reinforce the school's policy concerning bullying and make sure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
- If you know your child is involved in bullying, please discuss the issues with them and inform school. The matter will be dealt with appropriately. Remember incidents are confidential, do not discuss them with other parents on the playground. Speak to school staff if you have concerns.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

If parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident, they should follow the school complaints procedure by initially contacting the class teacher. If the concern remains, they should contact the Head Teacher. If they are still concerned, they should contact the Governing Body via clerk.

The role of children

What can children do if they are being bullied?

Each term or when incidents occur, class teachers will discuss bullying and reinforce the following strategies:

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset or scared. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be strong inside - say "No!". Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- If you are getting emails, texts or messages that make you feel uncomfortable please save them and show them to an adult. Do not respond to them.
- Fighting back may make things worse - don't do it.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

What do you do if you know someone is being bullied?

- Take action! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- Tell an adult immediately. Teachers will deal with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not take direct action yourself.

This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by discussion with the Head Teacher. Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the school's review cycle, or earlier if necessary.