

Bedfont Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Bedfont Primary School is committed to preserving the rights of children in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The articles which underpin this policy are:

Article 3

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Article 12

Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously.

Article 29

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

Written: Spring 2016

Review: Spring 2018

Introduction

Bedfont Primary School is committed to providing a safe, positive and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents/carers. Our anti-bullying policy and practice plays an important role in this and should be read in conjunction with other policies e.g. Behaviour, PHSE, Health and Safety, together with Anti-Bullying Guidance from London Borough of Hounslow (November 2011).

The following principles inform our anti-bullying approach:

- Bullying behaviour is unacceptable in all circumstances;
- The school takes a proactive stance against bullying e.g. anti bullying weeks, peer mentoring;
- Bullying is a shared problem and staff and parents/carers will need to work together in partnership to resolve incidents;
- All adults in the school community (staff, governors and parents/carers) are expected to present positive role models to children;
- The safety and welfare of the children concerned will at all times be central to decisions about actions taken in response to bullying;
- Anti-bullying approaches will be consistent with preparing children for life in an inclusive society. These include incorporating an acceptance of and valuing of difference and the need to cope with difficult individuals;
- When incidents have been dealt with, all parties should be supported and enabled to move on positively.

Definition

There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:

1. Intentionally hurtful

It is the deliberate, unjustifiable and unprovoked use of aggressive behaviour. It includes actions that cause physical, emotional or mental hurt to the victim and actions that violate another person's freedom and rights.

2. A repeated experience

Being bullied is the experience of persistent or repeated anti-social behaviour. However, occasionally there can be single incidents which constitute bullying because of the fear and intimidation that projects beyond that initial incident.

3. An inequality of power.

The person/s being bullied find it difficult to reject or deal with the offending behaviour, or those involved in the bully behaviour have power over the victim. Some power imbalances can be subtle or build up over time, but more common examples include that they are bigger/stronger/older, have more friends, are more established in the school or care less about the consequences of their actions. Bullying behaviour can involve individuals or groups.

Examples of bullying include:

- Verbal bullying and cyberbullying – such as mimicking, putting people down, saying unpleasant things about family, clothes or appearance, name-calling, anonymous notes and texts, hurtful emails and inappropriate use of social networking sites or instant messaging, sending offensive or degrading images

by phone or via the internet, blackmail, and deliberately embarrassing or humiliating others;

- Physical bullying – such as hitting, pushing, hurting, hair pulling, pushing people around, kicking, deliberately disrupting work or play and extortion;
- Indirect bullying – such as spreading rumours, isolation, exclusion and getting others to be hurtful or unkind;
- Psychological bullying– such as intimidation, threats and looks to make another child feel uncomfortable or fearful.

Symptoms of bullying

Early signs that a child is being bullied could be:

- The child becoming withdrawn
- A deterioration in the child's work
- Erratic attendance or spurious illness
- Persistently arriving late at school
- General unhappiness or anxiety
- The child wanting to remain with adults
- Sudden outbursts not in common with the child's normal behaviour

All bullying behaviour is taken seriously, including subtle actions which can build up for individuals over time, eroding self-esteem and building unhappiness or a climate of fear. The school always avoids labelling pupils as either victims or bullies. It is important that pupils who have been the targets of bullying behaviours are able to see that this experience will end and that it is not the result of something about themselves that has attracted or deserved such treatment by others. Similarly, children who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be expected to resolve the matter and change their behaviour. It should be remembered that there is no typical "bully".

Not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all hurtful behaviour is unacceptable in school. Children may fall out with their friends and engage in hurtful behaviour. Such experiences can be extremely distressing to the individuals involved. Children may retaliate against the hurtful behaviour of others. Although not all hurtful behaviour is intentional, all hurtful behaviours are a matter of concern and will be dealt with by the school. Where pupils cause harm or distress without intent, the impact of their behaviour will be pointed out and any continuance will be regarded as intentional.

Reporting and monitoring bullying

All members of staff take bullying seriously. Children are encouraged to tell someone straight away if they think they are being bullied or if one of their friends is being bullied. In assemblies/PSHE lessons they are told they can tell any adult including: a member of staff, their class teacher, one of the deputy heads, the head teacher, their parents.

When it is reported that a child is being bullied (either by themselves or someone else) then action will be taken promptly and firmly. The allegation will be thoroughly investigated by the member of staff to whom it has been reported or, where judged necessary, by a member of the senior management team (SMT). Both victim and alleged bully will be interviewed separately and a record of the incident will be made. The bully will be informed that such behaviour is unacceptable and be made aware of the consequences of their actions (in line with the Behaviour Policy). If bullying persists then parents of both bully and victim will be informed and encouraged to work with the school to stop this happening again. In such cases the children involved will be highlighted to all staff to help monitor and prevent the bullying.

Responses to all bullying behaviour will be educative and seek to ensure that this behaviour will not be repeated. A child who has been involved in bullying behaviour will be expected to take responsibility for the impact of their behaviour on others, the reasons for their behaviour will be explored and they will be expected to improve and change. The aim will be to resolve incidents, rebuild relationships and restore a safe environment for all. Incidents will be resolved in age-appropriate ways. Those who have been bullied have a right to know that action has been taken.

The role/involvement of pupils

Pupils will progressively develop their understanding of bullying and related behaviour issues through the curriculum. All pupils will be expected to show concern for others across the school community. Pupils will have opportunities to develop their resilience and problem solving strategies in the face of hurtful behaviour. Concerns and worries related to incidents and bullying in general may be explored and shared in 'circle time'. Pupils will be actively involved in anti-bullying developments through the school council, curriculum work, assemblies and in special initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week.

The role/involvement of parents/carers

Parents/carers have an important role in actively encouraging their child/ren to be a positive member of the school. Dealing with behaviour problems effectively requires the school and parents/carers to work in partnership. If bullying is reported, parents/carers need to be informed in a sensitive and responsible manner as soon as possible after the real or alleged incident. If parents/carers have concerns about bullying or hurtful behaviour they should take up those concerns with the class teacher in the first instance as soon as possible. Parents/carers should raise any concerns about bullying or other hurtful behaviour directly with the school and not with the parents/carers of other parties, involved or otherwise. While we recognise that parents/carers who are friends may wish to resolve matters informally they are advised that the school should always be made aware of tensions and difficulties between children so that they can be supported appropriately. The best place to resolve conflicts between children is in school where all sides and aspects of incidents can be explored.

The role/involvement of governors

The Governing Body supports the head teacher in all strategies to eliminate bullying from our school, while still recognising that the possibility that it may occur in school from time to time. It is the responsibility of the governing body to monitor and review the anti-bullying policy and its effectiveness. They require the head teacher to keep records of all bullying incidents and to report on the effectiveness of the school anti-

bullying strategies termly. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to explain and communicate the anti-bullying policy to all interested parties.

This policy has been written in conjunction with staff, parents and governors and will be reviewed every two years.