



# Flixton Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

## Rationale

Bullying at school can have a profound effect on children's lives and can have a lasting effect on them into adulthood. It can undermine their self-esteem and self-confidence and often result in them becoming bullies themselves. Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all that we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

Flixton Primary School takes all reports of bullying seriously. We have a senior member of staff responsible for overseeing and monitoring our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies. Our Behaviour Lead is Miss Buckley-Hall.

## Aims

- We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety. We aim to create an atmosphere and ethos of trust within our school community, which values, respects and protects the rights of each of its members to be within a safe and secure environment.
- We aim to develop, within the ethos and curriculum of our school attitudes, skills and activities that will prevent all aspects of bullying.
- We aim to foster trust among members of the school community, including parents, so that bullying incidents can be reported, discussed and dealt with appropriately.
- This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

The School community includes: pupils, parents, all teaching staff, ancillary staff, kitchen staff, school management including Governors, school nurse, school police liaison officer and other visitors to school.

## What is bullying?

In guidance for schools produced by the Department for Education bullying is defined as:

*... behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in*



*care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.*

*Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.*

Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE, July 2017

To summarise:

1. Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour;
2. It is repeated over time;
3. There is an imbalance of power, which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves.

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name-calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP). Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd incident of name-calling or childish pranks. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop the necessary social skills to repair relationships.

Bullying may take various forms, including:

- Physical e.g. kicking, hitting, pushing, intimidating behaviour or interference with personal property;
- Verbal/Psychological e.g. threats, taunts, shunning/ostracism, name-calling/verbal abuse or spreading of rumours;
- Racist Bullying e.g. physical, verbal, written, on-line or text abuse or ridicule based on differences of race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, culture or language;
- Faith-based Bullying e.g. negative stereotyping, name-calling or ridiculing based on religion;
- Sexist Bullying e.g. use of sexist language or negative stereotyping based on gender;
- Sexual Bullying e.g. unwanted/inappropriate physical contact or sexual innuendo;
- Homophobic Bullying e.g. name-calling, innuendo or negative stereotyping based on sexual orientation or use of homophobic language;
- SEN / Disability Bullying e.g. name-calling, innuendo, negative stereotyping or excluding from activity based on disability or learning difficulties;
- Gifted/Talented Bullying e.g. name-calling, innuendo, ostracism or negative peer pressure based on high levels of ability or effort;
- Cyber Bullying e.g. abuse online or via text message, interfering with electronic files, setting up or promoting inappropriate websites and inappropriate sharing of images from webcams/mobile phones.



## **Inclusion**

Every member of the school community is entitled to expect equality of protection from bullying as well as protection and support from school policies and procedures designed to ensure that the school remains a safe environment in which to teach and learn. At Flixton Primary School, our policy has given careful consideration to the six equality strands: race, gender, age, religion, disability and sexuality. This is to ensure that the anti-bullying provision is provided in a sensitive and non-judgemental way that will enable all young people, staff and the wider school community to feel valued and included in effective policy and practices.

## **General Principles**

- All children have a right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from intimidation and fear.
- We do all we can to prevent bullying by developing a school ethos in which it is regarded as unacceptable.
- The welfare/well-being needs of all children and young people are paramount and pupils' needs (whether bully or targeted pupil) need to be separated from their behaviour.
- All allegations will be carefully investigated.
- When bullying concerns are identified our school will work in a restorative and solution focused way to achieve the necessary change.
- Pupils who are targeted will be listened to and supported.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will be listened to and encouraged to accept responsibility and change their behaviour.
- Staff will receive awareness-raising training regarding bullying prevention including effective, appropriate strategies for intervention.
- Children will be taught strategies to help them deal with bullying situations that they may encounter.
- Where a concern arises, staff will receive ongoing support from Senior Leadership, including the Behaviour Lead, Deputies and the Headteacher where necessary.



- Parents will be made aware of our school's practice to prevent and to respond to concerns through parent information meetings, consultation processes and where necessary, their active participation in partnership with the school to resolve concerns involving their child.

### **Suggested whole school strategies to minimise bullying**

1. Set up friendship posts where children can go if they are not enjoying playtime. 'Buddies' will monitor the posts and will be trained to deal with minor issues, whilst referring on more serious issues to staff.
2. A regular programme of PHSE work, with emphasis on role play will support this, following themes laid out in the whole school curriculum.
3. There will be regular teacher – class discussion, e.g. during circle time and PSHE lessons about dealing with friendship and/or playtime issues.
4. Peer support will be strongly emphasised: children will be taught how to effectively support a bullied child and how to resist "joining in" with bullying.
5. Cyber bullying is discouraged through the application of our Online Safety Policy. Children are also not allowed to be in possession of mobile phones during the school day.
6. Ensure all accessible areas of school, such as cloakrooms are supervised at all key times of day.
7. A new school anti-bullying code is in use, giving clear advice to children on what to do if you are a witness or a target of bullying:

If you see someone being bullied:

- DON'T rush over and take the bully on.
- DO let a teacher or other member of staff know.
- DO try to be a friend to the person being bullied.
- DON'T be made to join in.
- DO try to help the bully stop bullying.

If you are a target of bullying:

- TELL a teacher or another adult in school about it
- TELL your family.
- TAKE a friend with you if you are scared to tell someone by yourself.
- KEEP telling a person until someone listens.



- DON'T blame yourself for what has happened.

### **How the school responds to specific allegations of bullying:**

At our school we believe that it is important for us stop bullying from happening and not merely to catch and punish bullies. With this in mind we have adopted the Seven Steps approach; an initiative developed by The Behaviour Team to change pupils' behaviour, to recognise the damage bullying does to people and to stop pupils from participating both actively and passively in bullying.

Our expectation and experience is that virtually all allegations of bullying will be resolved within Stage 1 of the school's response.

Step 1 of the Seven Steps approach will normally have taken place within two working days of an allegation of bullying being made, and the Steps 2 – 6 within a working week.

Parents of the alleged target of bullying will be informed that Step 1 has taken place and that the meeting to take Steps 2 – 6 has taken place. They will receive feedback at the end of the Seven Steps.

#### **STAGE ONE**

Step 1 - Interview with the alleged target of bullying.

When the teacher finds out that bullying has happened she starts by talking to the alleged target of bullying about his/her feelings. She does not question the child about the incidents, but she does need to know who was involved.

Step 2 - Convene a meeting with the people involved.

The teacher arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved. This will include some bystanders or colluders who joined in, but did not initiate any bullying. We find that a group of six to eight young people works well.

Step 3 - Explain the problem.

The teacher tells them about the way the alleged target of bullying is feeling and might use a poem, piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise the alleged target of bullying's distress. At no time does she discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

Step 4 - Share responsibility

The teacher does not attribute blame but states that she knows that the group are responsible and can do something about it.

Step 5 - Ask the group for their ideas.

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the alleged target of bullying could be helped to feel happier. The teacher gives some positive responses but she does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.



Step 6 - Leave it up to them.

The teacher ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. She arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

Step 7 - Meet them again.

About a week later the teacher discusses with each student, including the alleged target of bullying, how things have been going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps children involved in the process. Feedback will also be provided to relevant parents at this stage.

In the rare event that the Seven Steps approach fails then school would proceed to the next stage as outlined below.

## **STAGE TWO**

Contact parent(s)/carer(s) of children involved and inform them of the incidents and the school's current actions (including the Seven Steps). Inform them of sanctions that are or will be applied, and of the following stages of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy, in the event that behaviour is not modified. The school may choose to involve the SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator) at this point to begin looking at the social, emotional and mental health needs of both the perpetrator and the alleged target of bullying, and how these needs can be met.

## **STAGE THREE**

In the event of repeated bullying behaviour, and the support offered by school not being effective at modifying behaviour over time, school will contact outside agencies (e.g. Behaviour Support Team, Longford Park, Educational Psychologist, Police) for support and advice and implement a monitoring brief, involving close and regular contact with the school's Behaviour Lead. There is the expectation that the monitoring brief will lead to a stop in bullying behaviours. If this is not the case, and bullying behaviour has not ceased, the school will move to Stage Four.

## **STAGE FOUR**

Ultimately, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy, it may become necessary to exclude a child for persistent bullying if behaviour does not change with the above support, and/or a child remains at risk from continuing bullying behaviours. The relevant sections of the school's Behaviour Policy are Management of Behaviour (Page 4) and Exclusion (Page 5). The school's Behaviour Policy can be found on the school website at <http://www.flixtonprimaryschool.org.uk/school-policies/behaviour>

## **The role of the Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors supports the Headteacher and staff in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy makes it clear the Board of Governors views bullying as unacceptable in our school and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and are dealt with. The Board of Governors will monitor incidents of bullying via the Headteacher's reports and through the Pupil Experience Committee. The Board of Governors may also be involved in the event of an exclusion taking place.



## **The role of the Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school's anti-bullying policy and to ensure all staff are aware of the policy and how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher will report to governors on the effectiveness of the policy. The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour in our school. The Headteacher ensures all staff are trained to deal with incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher sets the climate of the school of mutual support and praise for success. Making school friendly and welcoming will make bullying less likely.

## **The role of the Teacher & Learning Assistant**

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying. All staff in our school takes all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. If adults witness potential bullying behaviours or bullying is reported to them they do all they can to support the child who is the target. Where bullying has taken place a report is made to the Behaviour Lead who will record the incident. Staff will then deal with the incident as appropriate following the Seven Steps Approach.

## **The role of Parents**

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect their own child may be bullying should contact the child's teacher immediately, making a note of what has been said and any names known to them. They should reassure their child that he/she has done the right thing in telling and tell their child that if anything else happens, to tell them or school straight away.

If they suspect their child has been a target of cyber bullying, check when messages were sent and keep a copy of any offending messages. Do not delete the messages. If the bullying involves another pupil from school please contact the school with the details. Cyber bullying is a potential criminal offence and therefore you should consider contacting the police.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to encourage their child to be a positive member of school. It is important to encourage their child to follow school rules and not to be involved in any behaviours that could be construed as bullying.

Written: Autumn Term 2017 by J Redmond  
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