



MEADOW VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Anti-bullying Policy

Reviewed date	December 2022
Next review	December 2024
Ratified by	Full Governing Board

In partnership with the whole school community and through an engaging curriculum, we aspire to nurture and empower every child to flourish.

We will encourage, inspire, motivate and support them to achieve their potential so they become confident, considerate, resilient and active members of society.

Meadow Vale Primary School believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school.

There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at the school.

We recognise that it is everyone's responsibility to prevent bullying from occurring. We are a telling school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff.

Aims & Objectives

Under the aims of this policy we have high expectations to prevent or deal with any form of bullying from our community thereby:

- Providing a safe, secure and inclusive learning environment for all with a strong sense of community and good standards of behaviour
- Ensuring a friendly, supportive atmosphere in which all learners can develop their full potential
- Fostering the positive values, attitudes and skills that learners need to be confident, healthy, well-adjusted and responsible community members

This policy is intended to:

- Raise the awareness of the school community about the school's stance towards bullying behaviour
- Provide strategies for preventing, de-escalating or stopping any continuation of harmful behaviour promptly and consistently
- Increase awareness and encourage children to seek adult involvement in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously
- Give children strategies to deal with bullying, including being sufficiently assertive to object to unacceptable behaviour
- Provide protection, support and reassurance for targets of bullying
- Promote an anti-bullying ethos in the school

Definition - What Is Bullying?

DFE guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct such as physical bullying (hitting, damage to belongings etc.), direct verbal (threats, insults, nasty teasing) indirect (cyber bullying, rumours, social exclusion, being ignored and not spoken to).

Our school's definition of bullying

Meadow Vale Primary School adopts the definition used by The Anti-Bullying Alliance which defines bullying as: 'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be carried out verbally, physically, emotionally or through cyberspace.'

We help our pupils understand bullying using the following simple definition:

Several Times On Purpose – STOP!

Start Telling Other People – STOP!

Types of Bullying

We recognise that there are four main types of bullying: physical, verbal, emotional and cyber.

- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence or threatening behaviour
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, making offensive remarks
- Emotional or relational - being unfriendly, threatening, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation, exclusion from groups or activities, isolating and ostracising someone, 'gaslighting'
- Cyber - all areas of internet and wireless technology, such as email and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities

The reasons for these types of bullying may be related to the following:

- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures related to race, religion or culture
- Homophobic or Biphobic - offensive remarks or behaviour because of, or focussing on the issue of sexual orientation
- Sexual- unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Sexist - sexist remarks, offensive stereotyping or belittling of a person's sex
- Transphobic - making someone unhappy based on their gender 'variance' or because they may not be perceived as conforming to typical gender norms/dominant gender roles
- Prejudicial - physical, verbal or emotional abuse of a person based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics e.g. SEND or mental health issues
- Religious - offensive remarks made about an individual's faith or religion
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying behaviour related to home circumstances

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of 'falling out'.

Children are naturally sociable; it is vital for them to select and build friendships. The making and breakdowns of friendships are an important part of growing up. When children 'fall out' they can say and do things because they are upset. It is essential to teach children the skills to repair relationships and enable them to utilise these. If as adults we intervene too readily to help rebuild our children's friendships on their behalf, our children may not develop the necessary social skills.

Occasionally situations go beyond broken friendships or minor differences and on these occasions adult intervention may be necessary. It may not be bullying when people of roughly the same strength (including social strength) have a disagreement or physical altercation. It is not bullying when a member of staff corrects a child in line with school policies, vision aims and values.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child shows changes in their behaviour, such as:

- Being afraid or worried about going to school, walking to and from school, or taking part in organised activities with peers
- Finds or makes up excuses as to why they can't go to school
- Has lost interest in school work or suddenly begins to do poorly in school
- Appears sad, moody, teary, or depressed when he or she comes home
- Complains frequently of headaches, stomachaches or other physical ailments
- Has trouble sleeping or has frequent bad dreams
- Experiences a loss of appetite
- Appears anxious and suffers from low self-esteem

How can we recognise bullying behaviour?

A person showing bullying behaviour is likely to have power over others. They may be over-confident, loud and assertive but may also be quiet and manipulative. Sometimes they work alone and sometimes in groups. They may try to scare /intimidate people whether they are children or adults. Often they have a deep sense of insecurity and may therefore try to persuade others to join in with them. They often spread upsetting rumours about people.

What to do if you are a victim of bullying (Child)

- Tell a trusted adult
- Try not to show the bully you are upset
- Stay in a group and avoid areas where bullying can take place
- Be assertive without being aggressive
- If you are worried about telling someone that you are being bullied, then you could leave a trusted adult a written note or written message

What to do if you are a victim of bullying as an adult

- Speak to a member of staff that you trust
- Follow the agreed staff protocol and procedures in the Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Seek union advice
- Try not to appear upse
- Avoid situations where the bullying can take place; always take a witness
- Be assertive without being aggressive

Procedure for dealing with bullying

Staff principles

- The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision
- Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying
- Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another is always challenged and never ignored
- Staff act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff
- Staff always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to, or there is a safeguarding concern

- If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately
- Follow-up support is given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped

Parents

Parents should report any issues of bullying to either their child's class teacher, or a senior member of staff as soon as possible.

Procedures

When a disclosure of bullying is made, it will always be treated seriously, with appropriate discretion and carefully investigated. The procedure for dealing with bullying is set out below:

- Where bullying is reported or suspected, the class teacher will initially talk to all children involved to examine the issues
- Once the behaviour is identified as bullying the incident should be reported to the Headteacher
- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses should all be interviewed separately
- A witness should be used for serious incidents
- Written records are made of all interviews
- The victim's story should be listened to and reassured that they have done the right thing by reporting the situation
- The alleged bully should be spoken to and the reasons why s/he has bullied identified. The bully should be helped to recognise his/her unsociable behaviour and given support if necessary to address that behaviour
- The parents of both parties should be contacted and informed of the situation and the action taken. If appropriate, they should be invited into the school to discuss the matter
- Follow up meetings with the victim should be arranged to find out whether the solution has been effective or not, and the situation should be monitored for 2 weeks. At the end of this monitoring period, parents will again be contacted to review. If there is a recurrence, the class teacher will again talk to all children concerned and contact with parents will again be made as above
- A written record is made of every incident of bullying using an official incident form (see Appendix). A copy of the incident form is kept by the Headteacher. Records are monitored for trends or patterns on a termly basis

Class teachers will be responsible for passing on relevant information to teachers on duty and to midday supervisors so that vigilance can be maintained. Relevant feedback would be made to the teacher concerned when appropriate.

Sanctions

Sanctions will be applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) that pupils may have and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children.

Disciplinary penalties have three main purposes namely to:

- Impress on the perpetrator that what he/she has done is unacceptable
- Deter him/her from repeating that behaviour
- Signal to other pupils that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it

Sanctions for bullying are intended to hold pupils who bully to account for their behaviour and ensure that they face up to the harm they have caused and learn from it. They also provide an opportunity for the pupil to put right the harm they have caused.

In most cases the school will therefore follow the Behaviour Policy when enforcing sanctions. Special consideration will be given to the nature of the bullying behaviour when determining the sanctions and involving parents at the earliest opportunity.

In extreme circumstances or instances of persistent bullying situations, it may be that the serious clauses within the behaviour policy come into action in terms of fixed term or permanent exclusions.

In conjunction with disciplinary sanctions, there are a range of other strategies that the school will use to combat bullying. These include:

- Engaging with parents promptly when issues of bullying come to light, whether their child is the one being bullied or the one doing the bullying. Schools are legally required to have a complaints procedure and to make parents aware of this procedure
- Adult mediation services that may be offered by the local authority or by commercial organisations that schools can engage. Mediators work with pupils to try put an end to the bullying and mend relationships.
- Restorative approaches which hold pupils to account for their behaviour and engage with them to agree the actions to be taken to repair the harm caused
- In some cases it may be necessary to organise circle of friendship situations to support a victim (and possibly also the person bullying) to form positive playground relationships

Employed staff powers to discipline pupils in relation to out of school incidents

Teachers, and all paid employees, have the statutory authority to discipline pupils whose behaviour is unacceptable, who break school rules or who fail to follow a reasonable instruction (Section 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006).

The school is proactive in respect of bullying or unacceptable conduct which occurs outside the school premises, and reserves the right to discipline pupils based on poor behaviour witnessed by a member of staff or reported to the school by another person. This could include misbehaviour when:

- Taking part in school organised activities, e.g. offsite visits, residential visits, when representing the school at a sporting event
- Travelling to and from school
- Any misbehaviour at any time that could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school, poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public, could adversely affect the reputation of the school and includes misbehaviour online

Reported incidents are dealt with seriously and in the same way as incidents that happen in school hours where pupils are involved. Parents may be requested to escort their children to and from school under close supervision. If this is deemed appropriate. In incidents which involve other individuals, other head teachers may be contacted or the police if deemed necessary. Issues involving texting, emailing and social networking sites are also dealt with in the same way.

If the behaviour is criminal or causes threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

Preventing Bullying

We actively pursue a series of preventative strategies to ensure we maintain positive behaviour reinforcement. As a school we use the following systems to prevent bullying from happening:

- In consultation with the School Council, all pupils are given a 'Child Friendly' Anti-Bullying Policy at the start of the academic year, which has been written in a clear and concise way for pupils to understand the key messages promoted within school
- We actively engage pupils by honest discussions in School Council meetings and also involve them in the process of developing and monitoring the school anti-bullying policy
- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying (e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November or links with relevant themes as a whole school curricular focus, inclusion in assembly themes when relevant)
- Use of curriculum opportunities include: our whole school plan linking PSHE, citizenship and use of SEAL materials to whole school assembly themes; time-tabled slot for PSHE and circle time activities in each class
- The school has clear rules which are explained each term in class and in assembly
- We regularly reinforce the importance of 'values' through school values assemblies
- Classes have anti-bullying charters/contracts
- There are opportunities for school leadership to discuss behaviour issues with an open and honest antibullying ethos. E.g. monitoring of critical incidents forms by the Leadership Team; reporting and monitoring of racial and hate incidents by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Governors, and close regular monitoring of behaviour
- Members of staff are trained to be alert to signs of bullying and act firmly and promptly against it in line with the guidance appended to this policy. We implement CPD for lunchtime supervisors and children alike to develop peer support schemes and playground games

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying

Cyber-bullying takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites. Like other forms of bullying, it is the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Preventing and addressing cyber-bullying

E-safety practice is advocated at all times in school. At Meadow Vale Primary School the following will take place:

- To help prevent cyber-bullying, we will ensure that pupils understand what it is and what to do if they become aware of it happening to them or others
- We will ensure that pupils know how they can report any incidents and are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than the victim

- The school will actively discuss cyber-bullying with pupils, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be
- Teaching staff are also encouraged to find opportunities to use aspects of the curriculum to cover cyberbullying. This includes personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, and other subjects where appropriate
- Cyberbullying will be addressed at least termly through assemblies. It will be revisited informally through the year
- Safer Internet Day will be used to reinforce messages regarding the safe use of technology
- All staff, governors and volunteers (where appropriate) receive training on cyber-bullying, its impact and ways to support pupils, as part of safeguarding training
- Information for parents will be put on newsletters and published in the school's website; a meeting for parents to discuss internet safety will be offered annually
- The school also sends information/leaflets on cyber-bullying to parents so that they are aware of the signs, how to report it and how they can support children who may be affected
- All children, parents and staff sign an Acceptable Use Agreement
- All incidents of cyberbullying must be reported to the Headteacher. This can be done directly to staff or anonymously through class worry boxes
- In relation to a specific incident of cyber-bullying, the school will follow the processes set out in the school behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate or harmful material has been spread among pupils, the school will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the incident is contained
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider whether the incident should be reported to the police if it involves illegal material, and will work with external services if it is deemed necessary to do so

Whilst the school recognises that cyberbullying may take place out of school hours, it will wherever possible, step in to mediate a suitable solution.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory
- The overall implementation of this policy
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference
- Ensuring the school is inclusive
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures
- Keeping a Bullying Report Form (Appendix 1) of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members

Senior staff are responsible for:

- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary
- Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents, when more serious bullying incidents occur

Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the pupil's senior leaders of such observations
- Refraining from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support

Parents are responsible for:

- Informing their child's teacher or headteacher if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes

Pupils are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents
- Keeping evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying

Circle any elements that apply:

Form: Physical Verbal Indirect Cyberbullying

Type: Race/religion/culture Sexual/sexist/transphobic Homophobic

SEN/Disability Home Circumstances Gifted/Talented

Health Conditions Other

Parents of alleged target/targets informed Y/N

Date & Time:

Section B – Accounts of those Involved

Alleged perpetrator(s) account of the incident: Name(s) Age Year group Class

Bystanders'/ witnesses' accounts of the incident: Name(s) Age Year group Class

Parents/carers of alleged perpetrators informed: Y/N

Date &Time:

Section C – Action Taken

Details of immediate action taken

Monitoring of action taken and details of follow up and longer term action taken

Sources of further information support and help (Appendix ii)

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and children have found useful.

Name of Organisation	Telephone Number	Website
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0207 704 3370	www.ace-ed.org.uk
Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)	0207 843 1901	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Bullying Online	020 7378 1446	https://www.familylives.org.uk/
Childline	0800 1111 (helpline for children)	www.childline.org.uk
Kidscape	020 7730 3300 (general enquiries) 08451 205204 (helpline-adults only)	www.kidscape.org.uk
NSPCC	0207 825 2500	www.nspcc.org.uk
The Children's Legal Centre	0800 783 2187	www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Relationships and respect with parents and the wider community

Meadow Vale Primary School will not accept any person in connection with our organisation, feeling intimidated by any other person or indeed using intimidating behaviour towards others (this includes potential cyber-bullying and inappropriate use for example of social media sites that may be used as a platform to attack individuals on a personal level or indeed the school). The school will investigate any reports it receives of this nature and challenge such behaviours. The school will, if needed, request any such comments are removed whilst advising individuals to use the complaints procedure.

Anyone entering our property is expected to abide by the culture and ethos of our school community and speak and behave respectfully towards others. In all matters, we expect relevant parties to share views in a calm and respectful way using the complaints procedure if needed (see complaints policy).

Staff are advised to follow our lone-working policy in anticipating potential volatile issues that may arise. The Headteacher is at liberty to exclude any person from the school premises as a result of intimidating or abusive behaviour, particularly if that behaviour is in the presence of children. In this respect the school will liaise with the LA and follow their guidance.

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team and reviewed every two years by Governors and members of the School Council.

To support this process any incidents of bullying are recorded in the behaviour incidents folder and looked at on a termly basis to see if any patterns emerge. These will be discussed as a staff when appropriate and summarised for the Standards Committee.

This policy was developed in consultation with:

Pupils through the pupil survey and school council; all staff; Parents; Governors.

This policy should be read alongside the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy and E-Safety Policy.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy