



## **Fishburn Primary School**

### **Anti-bullying Policy & Guidelines (incorporating peer on Peer Abuse)**

November 2019

## **A Statement of Principle**

Fishburn Primary School seeks to prevent a safe, secure and positive environment in which children can develop and grow making full use of the range of activities available to them.

Children and an adults involved with them are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding and participate in any activity free from intimidation (see also Fishburn Primary School Management of Behaviour Policy)

At Fishburn Primary School we seek to ensure that those acting on behalf of the school:

- actively listen to children
- act appropriately on information received in order to ensure that a safe, secure, positive, environment exists at all times.

## **The nature of Bullying**

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, the Department for Education define it as behaviour that is:

- Repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

The Anti Bullying Alliance define bullying as:

“the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”.

As there is no legal definition of bullying, it is important for schools to define what they consider is bullying.

At Fishburn Primary School, we define bullying as:

‘the intentional abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent and motivation to cause distress to another individual or group, which may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature’.

Bullying is not a phenomenon that occurs solely between children, the above definition can also be seen to characterise some adult/adult, adult/child and child/adult relationships.

In more serious instances where adults abuse power over what a child does over another child bullying may be viewed as child abuse and should be seen in this context.

Not all aggressive behaviour is bullying. Behavior which appears to be bullying may be exhibited by some very young children without the intention all awareness that it causes distress.

If two pupils of equal power or strength, have an occasional fight or quarrel, this is not bullying.

Some individuals may feel that they are being bullied, even when there is no intention from others to cause them distress. Such perceptions of bullying should be taken seriously and will be part of assemblies and teacher PSHE input.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online /cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion
- Indirect - Can include the exploitation of individuals

When dealing with any forms of bullying The Equality Act 2010 may need to be taken into consideration.

Discrimination – The Equality Act 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
  - being married or in a civil partnership
  - being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are called ‘protected characteristics’. A person is protected from discrimination in the following areas:

- at work
  - in education
- as a consumer
- when using public services
- when buying or renting property
- as a member or guest of a private club or association

You're also protected from discrimination if:

- you're associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, e.g. a sibling or friend

We must also consider Peer on Peer Abuse (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018). See the relevant information later in this document.

### **Why is it important to do something about Bullying?**

Bullying is always damaging to those involved. The victim, the bully and those who witness or even know about the bullying are affected. The impact of bullying can be life-long.

### **Victims**

Victims may spend their lives in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and may believe that it is something about themselves that has led the bully to pick on them.

The victim's life may be characterised by unhappiness, a sense of desolation and desperation and exclusion from normal social experiences. These feelings can permeate all the aspects of a victim's life and may lead to a strong desire to escape from the situation by running away from home, truanting from school, and in some cases self harming.

The victim of bullying may have reduced self-esteem and self-worth and their performance in school and other areas often deteriorates.

### **Bullying Behaviour**

Bullying behaviour including Peer on Peer Abuse is taken very seriously (KCSIE 2018 (89) and all staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. It is not a natural part of growing up or 'banter' and should not be seen as such. Children who bully are likely to experience difficult and unhappy relationships with both peers and adults and frequently need help to overcome these difficulties.

Children who bully are unlikely to stop whilst they can continue unchallenged.

### **Others**

Bullying behaviour does not just affect the victim and perpetrator. Those who witness and know of bullying may live in fear that it will be their turn next.

Bullying promotes poor models of behaviour and may encourage others to imitate these models. Pupils who have been bullied in one setting may be bullies in another.

For children transferring from primary to secondary schools the fear of bullies is widespread.

Evidence has shown that bullying is a major concern for parents and children of all ages though often the term bullying can get confused with other behaviour that may, or may not fall within the school's disciplinary code.

## **Organisations**

Organisations that encourage or even tolerate bullying are less effective. Where the values and culture of the organisation are dominated by fear and subordination, individuals are less efficient, morale is lower and absenteeism more frequent.

## **Requirements**

At Fishburn Primary School, we recognise and state categorically that bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In extreme cases continued bullying will lead to exclusion.

We will endeavour to put policy into practice by identifying strategies for implementation and publishing these strategies.

We recognise that everyone has a responsibility for the safety of others.

We will continue to raise awareness of adults and children about bullying, including training as appropriate.

We will ensure that all staff and volunteers involved with children are able to maintain and develop positive relationships with them.

We will provide and encourage a safe listening environment in which adults and children feel free to discuss their concerns regarding bullying behaviour.

## **Expectations**

### **Fishburn Primary School expects that:**

- All adults and children should be alert for the signs of bullying.
- The issue of bullying should be discussed openly and regularly.
- There is a commitment to take effective and appropriate action in dealing with bullying behaviour.
- We will have an annual focus week where we identify the impact of bullying.

### **We will develop mechanisms for:**

- Making young people who allege they have been bullied immediately safe.
- Investigating incidents and clearly stipulating what action will be taken as part of that investigation.
- Keeping staff and children up-to-date with ICT and how it can create bullying issues.
- Recording incidents and the subsequent actions taken.
- Giving consideration to confidentiality issues.
- Involving parents and other organisations where appropriate.
- Monitoring and evaluating actions taken.
- Providing appropriate support for the victims of bullying.
- Provide appropriate help for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- Conducting an audit to identify where and when bullying takes place.

We will give careful consideration to how the bullying policy links with Safeguarding procedures. In particular issues of frequency, severity and

power differentials need to be taken into account when deciding whether or not a particular incident of bullying should be reported within the child protection procedures. Staff will receive regular training in order to make these judgements alongside the designated teacher for child protection issues.

We will do this by:

Creating a climate where all members of the school community feel treated with respect. We aspire to create a safe, nurturing, and positive environment.

We aim to do this by encouraging our pupils:

- To recognise each child as a unique individual.
  - To encourage everyone to treat others, as they would wish to be treated himself or herself.
- To co-operate with each other to create a caring ethos.
- To encourage children to behave in a responsible manner.
- To promote good manners, consideration and respect for others at all times.
- To provide a challenging, stimulating and enjoyable environment where the children feel valued.
- To promote honesty, trust and fairness.
- To promote respect for property, the environment and for themselves.
  - To encourage the children to be responsible for their own actions.
- To assist children in developing their understanding of right and wrong.
- Abiding by our school policies.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Peer on peer abuse is taken very seriously (KCSIE 2018 (89) and all staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers.

Education settings are an important part of the inter-agency framework not only in terms of evaluating and referring concerns to Children's Services and the Police, but also in the assessment and management of risk that the child or young person may pose to themselves and others in the education setting.

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse. When considering whether behaviour is abusive, it is important to consider:

Whether there is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or

Whether the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or

Whether there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

- In this school will not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. Peer on peer abuse can be such that girls are more likely victims and boys, perpetrators.
- Peer on peer abuse may take different forms:
  - There is recent advice on sexual violence and harassment from the DFE (December 2017)
  - Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
  - Sexting 'Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people' (2016)
  - Initiating/hazing type violence and rituals

- To support this agenda, the following steps are taken in school to minimise these risks:

Provide a developmentally appropriate PSHE curriculum which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe.

Have systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to and valued.

Develop robust risk assessments where appropriate

Have relevant policies in place e.g. behaviour policy, Child Protection policy and E-safety policy

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Allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated by a Designated member of staff.

The Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool by the Brook Advisory Service can help professionals to assess and respond appropriately to sexualised behaviour. The traffic light tool can be found at [www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool](http://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool)

Guidance on responding to and managing sexting incidents can be found at:

[http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child\\_protection/reference/index.shtml#sex](http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child_protection/reference/index.shtml#sex)

Victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by peer on peer abuse will be supported by a Designated member of staff.

Sexting: Definition to be used by Fishburn Primary School.

'Sexting is the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the internet'. Sexting is a child protection issue. Even if explicit material is sent or elicited without malicious intent the consequences are serious and put those involved at risk of serious harm. Having or sending explicit material on digital devices is also a criminal offence for those under 18. Pupils will be taught about sexting as part of their e-safety education. Incidents of writing and sharing explicit messages will be challenged, parents informed and a log kept. The School takes incidences of sexting extremely seriously, and deals with them in accordance with child protection procedures, including reporting to the police.

### **Guidelines- An introduction.**

A policy to combat bullying should be seen in the broader context of the school's code of conduct. Previous OFSTED reports have commended the general behaviour throughout school. The children have stated that bullying issues are dealt with immediately and effectively. This suggests that our policy is effective. The code is based around the tenants of Courtesy and Consideration and it is from this intention of developing cooperative behaviour that we should build.

### **Discussing Bullying Incidents with Pupils.**

Children involved in bullying other may feel justified in their actions and may be reluctant to admit them. Some children may even make false accusations to get a fellow pupil into trouble. It can be difficult to build an accurate picture of events or to be sure who is telling the truth.

If the incident is not too serious a 'problem solving' will help. The teacher should:

- Try to remain neutral.
- Deliberately avoid direct closed questions that might be perceived as accusatory.
- Allow the pupil the opportunity to speak.
- Keep the discussion focused on finding a solution and stopping the bullying recurring.
- Follow up with an informal meeting to see if the solution has been effective.

Where bullying is persistent or has had more serious consequences, the issue should be brought to the notice of the head teacher who will apply the following similar though more formal strategy.

### **A Strategy for working with pupils in bullying situations**

At Fishburn Primary School we employ the method of 'Shared Concern' pioneered by Anaol Pikas in Sweden. It focuses on both the children who are being bullied and those who are the bullies.

#### **Aims**

The overall aim of the strategy is to establish ground rules, which will enable children to coexist within the same school

It does not necessarily aim to create friendship between the pupils.

### **Method**

The method starts with brief individual chats with each of the pupils involved, usually by the Headteacher and always in a room that is quiet where there can be no interruptions.

The pupil(s) doing the bullying are seen first. (Where there is more than one pupil involved these interviews are best done individually). The talks are non-confrontational; the premise is that there is a problem- it has been witnessed by others and that the bullied pupil is unhappy and has experienced bullying. The aim of the discussion is to come to a mutual agreement that the bullied pupil is unhappy at the present time and that the pupil(s) agree to help the situation in some way.

The most common outcomes are that other pupils will leave the bullied pupils alone, stick up or be friendly for him/her.

A chat with the bullied pupil then follows. This primarily involves being supportive, but for those contributing to their own problems it also involves helping them understand that their behaviour too has to change.

A week later there are follow up talks to check on progress. A final meeting of all children involved is then held. This aims to reach a public agreement for reasonable behaviour on all sides and to determine long term strategies for maintaining co-operative behaviour. This can involve children in signing a 'contract' which helps to formalize the process with other children.

### **Effectiveness**

The method described above has been found to be effective. However, experience tells that it is not fool proof.

- Sometimes the bullying starts again after a term or so (Or bully(s) may target another pupil) In these instances it is best to combine the method with other specific actions such as parental involvement or punitive sanctions. Previously signed 'contracts' can be helpful here.
- Some pupils are unable to suggest ways of improving a situation. In these instances the teacher must take a more directive role.
- Girls find it harder than boys to perceive a middle ground between 'best friends' and 'enemies'. The teacher may have to point out that solutions do not have to involve becoming close friends with the person being bullied.
- The final group meeting is essential as it often leads to an agreement about the long term maintenance of the change in bullying behaviour.

### **Awareness Raising**

Awareness raising about bullying in schools helps individuals to understand the problem. Dispelling common myths and stereotypes about bullying behaviour enables children and adults to reflect on their own behaviour.

Children should have regular opportunities to discuss the following issues both in the classroom through the curriculum and through whole school assemblies.

### **What is Bullying? A useful definition**

This definition is written by a child and designed to be read out to children and used as a basis for discussion:

*'A pupil is being bullied or picked on, when another pupil or group of pupils say nasty things to him or her. It is also bullying when a pupil is hit, kicked, threatened, locked inside a room, sent nasty notes, having their things stolen or hidden and when no-one ever talks to them. These things can happen frequently and it is difficult for the pupil who is being bullied to defend themselves. It is also bullying when a pupil is teased in a nasty way. However, if two pupils of equal strength have the occasional fight or argument, this is not bullying.'*

### **Who are the Bullies?**

Both boys and girls bully others. The most common perpetrators of bullying behaviour are individual boys or groups of several boys. Mixed sex bullying gangs are less common. Girls who bully others are more usually in a group than on their own, often using indirect bullying (i.e. social isolation or rumour campaigns) which can be difficult to detect. Boys experience more physical violence and threats while verbal bullying such as name calling is common to both girls and boys.

Children who bully others can come from any type of family. Some may experience poor discipline at home and/or excessive physical punishment or abuse by a parent or older sibling; or little warmth in family relationships in general. Understanding their problems does not mean that their behaviour can be condoned. Other children who bully may simply take part because their friends do so, or because the opportunity presents itself.

### **Types of bullying:**

- Bullying- direct/ power based
- Cyberbullying/ phone/internet/facebook, msn etc
- Prejudiced based bullying.
- Bullying based on sex, race, religion and belief, gender assignment or disability.
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### **Who are the victims?**

Any child can be bullied. There are certain factors that make the experience of bullying more likely. These include:

- Lacking close friends at school.
- Being shy
- Coming from an over protective family.
- Being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority.
- Having SEN.
- Being a 'proactive victim'- a child who behaves inappropriately with others, barging in on games or being a nuisance.

### **Where does the Bullying take place?**

In our school some bullying behaviour takes place on the journey to and from school, the majority when it happens takes place in the playground. Toilets are also 'danger spots'. Lunchtimes are difficult to 'police' though Lunchtime Supervisory Assistants report any behaviour and this makes detection more likely. We also encourage pupils to tell a teacher, friend or parent.

### **Recording**

Any instances of bullying will be recorded within school using the SIMS system and/or CPOMS if it is felt that it could be peer on peer abuse.

All people in school are encouraged to:

- Watch for early signs of distress
- Listen, believe and act
- Keep awareness high
- Be there for others

### **This Document should also be read in conjunction with:**

Child Protection Policy

Management of Behaviour

Care and Supervision

Code of Conduct

Equality Policy

Reporting Racist Incidents.