



# Oakhyrst Grange School

## ANTI- BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY STATEMENT

### **The aims and objectives of our policy are:**

- To have a clear and consistent approach to all matters relating to bullying as they might affect everyone involved in the Oakhyrst Grange School community.
- To have a clear understanding of what bullying is, how it is caused and what are its effects.
- Where bullying has been identified, to have clear procedures in place that can be followed by all concerned to reach a satisfactory resolution to the problem.
- To identify the ways in which the school raises an awareness of the problem of bullying, its effects and causes. To outline how these issues are dealt with within the school curriculum.

### **Definition of Bullying:**

Bullying is the wilful, systematic, unprovoked, one sided, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone, it is repeated over a period of time and it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Some of the more insidious forms of bullying such as: religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, disability and cyber bullying need to be recognised and addressed. In their worst form these types of bullying can cause long-term psychological harm, even suicide. The fact that there are elements of harassment incorporated in these forms of bullying, along with threatening behaviour, must be recognised as being forbidden by law.

### **It is important to note**

- that this is an adult's definition; a child may feel bullied where the actions or words seem relatively insignificant and those dealing with an alleged incident should be sensitive to this.
- that the term 'Bullying' can be misused and it must be remembered that children need to on occasions be helped as peer relationships develop and change.

It is common to find bullying linked with aggression, i.e. the bully's expression of feelings; to a victim, it is an act of conveying a message of rejection and hostility. The victim then feels isolated and lonely.

Bullying can take many forms, including physical, e.g. hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings; verbal, e.g. name-calling, insults, racist remarks, ridicule; and indirect, e.g. spreading nasty stories, exclusion from social groups.

Bullying is counter-productive to the following:

- **Safety and happiness** of the pupils; lives are made miserable, injuries can occur, pupils can become unwilling to attend school. Over time, self-confidence and self-esteem may be lost, and some pupils may blame themselves for 'inviting' bullying
- **Educational achievement**; unhappy pupils do not concentrate or achieve, and may seek to avoid bullying by not coming to school
- **Role modelling**; other pupils observing unchallenged bullying will learn that it is a quick and effective way of getting what they want; the victims will feel let down by adult inaction

The act of bullying by a pupil can be a symptom of many situations, and the following policy includes guidelines for staff, parents and pupils as these instances require proactive actions by all parties.

The school operates a Behaviour Policy to help instill the positive attitude of the children both to one another and adults. Oakhyrst Grange School will not tolerate incidents of bullying and the following guidelines are in place to ensure that all reported cases are immediately addressed in a cohesive and agreed manner. Our duty of care to our pupils is part of our responsibility for safeguarding children, and enables our pupils to gain maximum benefit from their education.

Any allegation of bullying should be addressed initially by the Form Teacher, then if required by the Deputy Headmaster, and if further resolution is needed, by the Headmaster. The Headmaster should be informed of any allegations and investigations relating to bullying and recorded so that patterns can be identified.

The Praise, Rewards and Consequences Policy outlines, in more detail, a series of steps and possible sanctions that might be taken. An EYFS child might have their name being placed on the grey cloud. An older child might be kept in at break time, spoken to by the Deputy Headmaster or the Headmaster.

The EYFS setting will allow for a daily and constant free flow of dialogue between staff and parents in order to keep an open communication about behaviour. Most incidents of a routine nature will be dealt with internally, although staff are encouraged to keep parents informed as fully as possible. Parents will be informed about any incident wherein inappropriate behaviour has resulted in the need for intervention from a senior member of staff.

Minor misdemeanours may result in loss of free time, or detention. Repetition of poor behaviour may result in a pupil or pupils withdrawal from class to work in supervised isolation and parents will be informed. Subsequent poor behaviour might be dealt with by the removal of the child from the school for a fixed period and governors will be informed. The consequence of future misconduct could be permanent exclusion, although the option of a fixed term exclusion will be used at the discretion of the Headmaster.

The ultimate aim in dealing with all negative behavioural matters is to find reconciliation and a way forward. Corporal punishment is not an available sanction.

**Staff are advised to:**

- watch out for early signs of distress in pupils, including deterioration of work, spurious illness, isolation, desire to remain with adults or erratic attendance,
- listen carefully to accounts of alleged bullying and record all incidents
- offer immediate support and help to the victim
- make clear to the bully(ies) and his/her (their) parents how unacceptable the behaviour is, and
- outline the consequences of any repetition
- patrol all accessible areas of the School whenever possible, maintaining a high profile
- discuss matters such as bullying, name calling, fighting and racial harassment on a regular basis.
- be sure to be familiar with the ongoing PSHE programme and in particular the units relating to bullying.

**Pupils will be told the following:**

- if someone is being bullied, do not just stand and watch; this can imply support for the bully
- you should not become involved in the incident, alert an adult to the situation
- do not tolerate bullies in your social group.

**Parents are advised to:**

- watch for signs of distress; an unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches or stomach-aches, missing equipment, requests for extra pocket money, damaged clothing or bruising
- take an active interest in your child's social life and discuss friendships and playtimes
- inform the School immediately and ask to see the Form Teacher if you think your child is being bullied
- discourage your child from 'hitting back', and rather to stay with their friends
- keep a written record if the bullying persists.

### **School Strategy**

- All pupils at Oakhyrst Grange School have an assigned person, initially the Form Teacher, to whom they may talk about any concerns, knowing that it will be handled discreetly and sensitively.
- Parental reassurance; present and prospective parents are entitled to the reassurance that bullying will be dealt with firmly and immediately, and that the victim will be supported.
- The School strategy requires initial discussions with the victim, other involved parties and the parents, and requires clear documentation to be kept at all stages. Any incidents will be dealt with firstly by the Form Teacher, then by the Deputy Headmaster, then by the Headmaster. Relevant disciplinary procedures will be implemented which range from a minor punishment and warning to suspension (which may or may not go on record officially) or expulsion at the Headmaster's discretion.
- Each case of reported bullying will be followed up by the relevant staff member, who will endeavour to ensure that the victim is given as much support as possible, and to prevent a recurrence of the behaviour.
- The School's PSHE programme will cover bullying as a significant component. The syllabus and content material are available from the school office, upon request. In responding to the Safe to Learn initiative a clear and strong emphasis should be placed on the pupils being made aware of the forms and consequences of cyber bullying. Pupils should be made perfectly aware that the School regards cyber bullying as an especially harmful form of bullying and that where incidences are reported they will be thoroughly investigated.
- The Headmaster and other staff members will take formal assemblies with a view to addressing the matter of bullying. This should be followed up by tutorial work within Form groups.
- It is important to stress that bullying is a very serious matter and is very much a whole school issue. The children should be made aware of the seriousness and harm caused by bullying. Drama activities, relevant literature studies and circle time will all contain some element of raising an awareness of bullying. Any topical current affair materials should be brought in to supplement the

work being done within the School. The PSHE Co-ordinator will take an overview on all of these strategies and materials.

- All reported incidents of bullying will be recorded and logged on the school Staff Administrative system. Parents and pupils will be made aware of the existence of this log. Individual records, as appropriate, will be kept on pupil files. That is to say the detail that is specific to the individuals concerned. Where sanctions are taken as a result of investigating a bullying incident, these actions will be logged and recorded in the same ways.
- Staff are made aware about whole school policies and specific bullying situations in staff meetings which includes discussion with colleagues about cause, effects and actions. Training for all staff is included in the school's Inset programme. The school prides itself on its caring, family ethos. Staff are encouraged to be particularly vigilant for examples of rough play and unkind behaviour that could be seen as a starting point for bullying.

#### **Victim:**

- The incident will be discussed with the victim who will then be asked to record the event in writing, in his/her own words

#### **Other Parties:**

- The incident will be discussed with the 'bully(ies)', including how they would feel if they were the victim(s), and they will then be asked to record the event in writing.
- Any witnesses to the alleged incident will be asked to record the event in writing if appropriate to their age.
- The Form Teacher will record in writing his/her discussions with the victim and the bully(ies) and will keep the Headmaster fully informed.

#### **Parents:**

- The parents of the pupils involved will be asked to come in to School and will be told of the alleged incident, and of the consequences of it.
- Copies of relevant documentation will be placed in the pupil's file for a specified period.
- The parents of the pupils involved will be asked to respond in writing.

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