



Oakhyrst Grange School

Oakhyrst Grange School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. At this school we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe that every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Oakhyrst Grange School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all of our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

ANTI- BULLYING 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, transphobic, disability and cyberbullying 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.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online. Cyberbullying can include, but is not limited to; sending threatening or abusive text messages or emails, creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos, excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups or impersonation whilst online.

It is important to note:

- that at Oakhyrst Grange School we regard the anti-bullying policy as being an integral part of our overall approach to Child Protection and Safeguarding issues.
- 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 on occasions to be helped as peer relationships develop and change.
- that we are aware that bullying can often be motivated against particular groups, for example religion, race, gender, sexual orientation or special educational needs. Early interventions and discussions are vital to challenge any negative behaviours and to prevent them being dismissed as banter or horseplay. If left unchallenged, it may lead to a reluctance in behaviours being reported to members of staff within the school.

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 or ridicule; and indirect, e.g. spreading nasty stories or 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 instil 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 Head Teacher, and if further resolution is needed, by the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher 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 Head Teacher or the Head Teacher.

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. The School Council has created a set of guidelines for pupils with regard to daily life at school.

Minor misdemeanours may result in loss of free time. Repetition of poor behaviour may result in a pupil or pupil's withdrawal from class to work in supervised isolation and parents will be informed. Subsequent poor behaviour might be dealt with by the exclusion 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 Head Teacher.

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

Signs of Victim being Bullied:

- quiet and withdrawn,
- not joining in with group activities,
- attention seeking,
- indications of a drop in performance,
- increase in absence.

Staff are advised to:

- undertake continual on-going professional development in this area,
- 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.
- the process and sequence of sanctions is listed above,
- supervise and patrol all accessible areas of the School, maintaining a high profile,
- discuss matters such as bullying, name calling, fighting and racial harassment on a regular basis. Staff meetings will allow for such discussion.
- Be sure to be familiar with the ongoing PSHE programme and in particular the units relating to bullying.
- Online safety strategies should be reviewed and implemented as a part of daily teaching and routine. A designated member of staff is appointed the Online Safety Officer for the school.

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.
- Oakhyrst Grange staff have created a school environment in which all members of staff will make themselves available for pupils to talk to about any concerns.
- 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 Head Teacher, then by the Head Teacher. Sanctions that the School may employ include: the loss of house points or the loss of play time for misdemeanours. For more serious offences, sanctions might include internal isolation for part of a day or for a whole day. The next level of sanction would

be temporary exclusion for one day rising to a two or three day temporary exclusion. The final sanction would result in permanent exclusion.

- 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. A clear and strong emphasis is 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 Head Teacher and other staff members will take formal assemblies with a view to addressing the matter of bullying. This should be followed up by discussion within Form groups. Organisations such as the NSPCC are welcomed into the school to conduct awareness assemblies.
- 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. 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, if appropriate to their age.
- The victim will be offered support and help.

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 Head Teacher 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.
- Notes of any meetings will be logged and documented.
- Communication between home and school will be active and ongoing.

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