



# Tweedmouth West First School

*Respect Responsibility Resilience*

## **Anti Bullying Policy**

**January 2018**

### **Rationale**

Good behaviour and a caring attitude are qualities encouraged within the school to help promote the self-discipline and education of all the children.

We aim, as a school, to provide a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children, so that they can learn and play in a secure and happy environment.

We recognise that all schools are likely to have some problem with bullying at one time or another. We recognise that it is important to prevent bullying and ensure all members of our school community - pupils, staff, parents and others - are aware of our school policy on this issue.

**We believe that bullying behaviour is totally unacceptable.**

### **The Nature of Bullying**

There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:

- deliberately hurtful;
- repeated over a period of time;
- difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

Bullying can take many forms:-

- physical - hitting, kicking, taking belongings;
- verbal - name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks;
- indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours.
- name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics, but pupils can be called nasty names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour; sexual orientation; or some form of disability.
- cyber bullying

### **Cyber-Bullying**

There are many types of cyber-bullying:

1. Text messages — that are threatening or cause discomfort.
2. Picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
3. Mobile phone calls — silent calls or abusive messages.
4. Emails — threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a false name or somebody else's name.
5. Chatroom bullying — menacing or upsetting responses to children when they are in web-based Chatroom.

6. Instant messaging (IM) /social media— unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger) or Yahoo Chat and Facebook or Twitter

What school does about the risks from cyber-bullying:

- ☐ Teaches children how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- ☐ Teaches them to know what to do if they or someone they know is being cyber bullied.
- ☐ Encourages them to report any problems with cyber bullying. If they do have a problem, they can talk to the school, parents or the police.

## **Victims**

Any child can be bullied, and although none of the characteristics can excuse it, certain factors can make bullying more likely.

- Lacking close friends in school;
- Being shy;
- An over-protective family environment;
- Being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority;
- Being different in some obvious respect - such as stammering;
- Having SEN or a disability;
- Behaving inappropriately, intruding or being a nuisance;
- Possessing expensive accessories such as a mobile phone or computer games.

Some victims may behave passively, or submissively signal to others that they would not retaliate if attacked or insulted. Others may behave aggressively, sometimes provoking others to retaliate. Some pupils are both bullies and victims. Victims may be reluctant to attend school and are often absent. They may be more anxious and insecure than others, having fewer friends and often feeling unhappy and lonely. They can suffer from low self-esteem and negative self-image, looking upon themselves as failures - feeling stupid, ashamed and unattractive.

Victims may present a variety of symptoms to health professionals including fits, faints, vomiting, limb pains, paralysis, hyperventilation, visual symptoms, headaches, stomach aches, bed wetting, sleeping difficulties and sadness. Pupils' understanding varies with age, 4-7 year olds may confuse bullying with fighting and nasty experiences generally. While 8+ year olds develop a more mature understanding.

## **Strategies for reducing bullying**

- All staff must be aware of the school's anti bullying policy, the procedures and implementation;
- Staff to refer to anti bullying file and to log incidents initially
- Never ignore suspected bullying;
- Don't make premature assumptions;
- Listen carefully to all accounts - several pupils saying the same does not necessarily mean they are all telling the truth;
- Each incident involving 'alleged' bullying must be investigated by either the class teacher or senior management team;
- Follow up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed;
- Use the curriculum to:
  - Raise awareness about bullying and the school's approach;
  - Increase understanding for victims, and help build an anti-bullying ethos;
  - Teach pupils how to manage their relationships with others;

Explore such issues as why people bully each other, the effects of bullying and what we can do to stop bullying;

- Use 'playground friends' to resolve conflicts and encourage friendships;
- The cloakrooms and toilets must be visited regularly by staff on playground duty.
- Nominate 2 school councillors to act as anti-bullying buddies so children can confide in them.

### **Tougher Measures**

Where pupils do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying the school will need to take tougher action to deal with persistent and violent bullying.

Sanctions might include:

- Removal from the group (in class);
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges;
- Detention;
- Withholding participation in any school trip or sport events that are not an essential part of the curriculum;
- Involvement of parents;
- Fixed period exclusion.

### **Involving Parents**

When a parent contacts school to report that their child has been bullied they are often distressed. Their concerns must be taken seriously and good practice includes:

- Recognising that the parent may be angry and upset;
- Keeping an open mind - bullying can be difficult to detect, so a lack of staff awareness does not mean no bullying occurs;
- Remaining calm and understanding;
- Making clear that the school does care and that something will be done;
- Explaining the school policy, making sure procedures are followed.

Senior leadership team should:

- Ask for details and record the information;
- Make a further appointment to explain action and find out if it has stopped;
- Follow up with staff to ensure that appropriate action has been taken and that the school policy has been implemented;
- Check whether the bullying has stopped or another child has been targeted.

#### **Role of Staff**

- ☐ All staff will maintain a close watch on children and look out for signs of unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour. They will intervene where necessary.
- ☐ Encourage children to talk openly about issues causing them concern.
- ☐ Encourage children to talk about bullying issues.
- ☐ Encourage positive behaviour in the classroom and outside.
- ☐ Establish a climate of trust and respect for all children.
- ☐ Encourage children to report any observed bullying of other children.

#### **Role of Parents**

- ☐ Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be bullying another child, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.
- ☐ Parents are expected to support the school policy on anti-bullying and stay in close contact with the school should their child be the victim of bullying. Similarly, close contact is expected from parents should their child be the cause of the bullying.

- ☐ Parents are expected to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of school.
- ☐ Parents are expected to be actively involved in resolving issues of bullying.

When it is necessary to involve parents of the alleged bully these discussions are potentially extremely difficult. It is often helpful to use a problem solving approach in the first instance: "It seems your son/daughter and (other child) have not been getting on very well lately" rather than "Your son/daughter has been bullying (other child)". Blame is much more likely to make the parent react defensively and make it much harder to reach a resolution.

Some claims of bullying may turn out to be false or exaggerated. However, whatever the victims previous history, all claims of bullying should be treated seriously and not dismissed without further enquiries being made.

### **Strategies for the Prevention and Reduction of Bullying**

It is the responsibility of all within school to maintain the ethos of the school. We are committed to:

- ☐ Focus on the positive.
- ☐ Making clear what is expected behaviour and using praise and reward to reinforce this.
- ☐ Teaching good behaviour/manners through our own conduct.

Strategies for preventing bullying include:

- ☐ Making pupils aware, through class discussion, of the problems that can be caused by bullying.
- ☐ Integrating the theme of bullying in school through the PHSE curriculum assemblies a participation in anti-bullying and e safety initiatives.
- ☐ Establishing class rules which promote positive behaviour.
- ☐ Undertaking questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in school.
- ☐ Having a children's version of this policy available to every child.

### **The Playground**

Effective supervision involves moving around the grounds, talking briefly with pupils and anticipation of potential difficulties. A suspected problem should be quietly and promptly investigated.

Lunch time supervisors need to operate rewards and sanctions, refer an incident for further action if necessary and know about follow up. Teaching staff should fully support them in exercising authority.

Sometimes adults can only observe pupil interaction - being unable to hear the content of the conversation. Apparent fighting or bullying can simply be rough and tumble play or 'play fighting', which some children enjoy. Watch for:

- Smiling or laughing;
- 'Mock' blows or kicks which do not connect;
- Taking turns at being on top - or chasing the other.

By contrast, pupils who are being attacked or physically bullied often:

- Frown or look unhappy or angry;
- Try to move away from the aggressor;
- Do not take turns, the aggressor remaining dominant throughout;
- Attract other pupils' attention.

When primary children incorporate fantasy themes into play-fighting, they commonly adopt angry-looking facial expressions rather than smile. This often leads supervisors to assume they are acting aggressively. Asking participants in a friendly tone about what they are doing should clarify matters.

Boys traditionally engage in this more than girls, but the difference may be decreasing and supervisors should avoid assuming that all fighting among girls is aggressive. In most cases, play-fighting does not escalate into aggressive fighting. The majority of children and adolescents appreciate the difference and are skilled at keeping their interactions playful.

Knowing who has persistently been bullied or is bullying can increase vigilance, but avoid labelling individuals with terms like 'bully' or 'troublemaker' since this could lead to incorrect interpretation of incidents or a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Being alone a lot, being over-submissive or disrupting others' games can place some children at greater risk of being bullied. Without attaching blame, recognising this may enable supervisors to help. While some pupils are happy to be alone, others would prefer to join in with activities but lack the skills or confidence. Supervisors should help such pupils get involved, whilst preventing their disruption. This should be done subtly to avoid resentment by pupils whose game may be 'locked' to outsiders.

Supervisors can help pupils without friends form relationships by providing opportunities to be together and share common interests.

### **Role of Governors**

- ☐ The Governing Body supports the Head teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying in school.
- ☐ The Governing Body reviews the Anti-Bullying Policy annually.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be regularly monitored and evaluated. It will be reviewed annually by the whole teaching staff and any amendments will be communicated to the whole school community.

### **Complaints Procedure**

If parents are not satisfied and feel their concerns are not being addressed appropriately, they are able to consider the following procedure:

1. Discuss the matter with the Head teacher.
2. Discuss the matter with the Chair of Governors.
3. Contact the Director of Schools and Family Support

(Policy reviewed January 2018)