

ASHTREE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for promoting an anti-bullying ethos at Ashtree Primary School and Nursery.

It was developed during the summer term of 2019 through a process of consultation with teaching staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers.

It was approved by the Governing Body on 17th June 2019.

The policy will be reviewed in the summer of 2022. A schedule for the review of this, and all other policy documents is set out in the "Schedule of Policies", which is an appendix to the School Improvement Plan.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils and staff so that they can learn and teach in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils/staff should be able to tell, and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. All incidents of bullying should be reported to the Class Teacher or the Head Teacher.

OBJECTIVES

The school as a whole will work towards maintaining high levels of self-esteem both for pupils and staff. This will permeate the curriculum and ethos of the school.

All staff, governors, pupils and parents/carers should understand the definitions of bullying.

Bullying will not be tolerated.

Clear procedures for reporting bullying should be understood and followed.

The procedure for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying should be clearly understood.

The school will promote ways of preventing bullying.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

- Deliberately hurtful behaviour - physical, psychological or both, repeated often over a period of time.
- The attacks are not provoked by the victim.
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

We see bullying as repeated instances of the above behaviours. The degree of seriousness of any incident is a matter of subjective interpretation, but should be judged by the effect on the victim. Isolated cases of aggression will be dealt with according to the procedures in the Behaviour Policy.

Five types of bullying can be identified:

Name-calling which specifically refers to some attribute of the victim, e.g. their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation disability, special educational need or appearance

Intimidation which is a direct or threatened physical attack

Demaneing which is a verbal activity leading to the loss of status of the victim

Extortion which is bullying in order to gain some possession(s) from the victim

Cyberbullying which is bullying through the use of ICT technologies – e.g. mobile phones, email and social networking such as Facebook

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- Not wanting to go to school
- Being frightened to walk to and from school
- Becoming withdrawn from family and friends
- Decrease in attainment and/or progress in school work
- Changes in eating habits; not eating at lunchtimes
- Crying themselves to sleep
- Asking for money (may be the victim of extortion)
- Change in behaviour.

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING BULLYING

Incidents of bullying should be reported to a member of the school staff or the Head Teacher. All complaints will be taken seriously and records kept electronically on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System).

PROCEDURE FOR INVESTIGATING BULLYING

Whenever an incident of bullying has been reported, it is essential that the victim and the alleged bullies are interviewed as soon as possible. Interviews should take place separately. The victim's interpretation of the incident should not be trivialised. Written notes should be taken of all interviews held. Interviews should also be held with other pupils or adults who may have witnessed the incident.

All staff interviewing pupils about alleged incidents of bullying should set a good example to pupils by their behaviour towards each party. They should seek to obtain the true facts by polite, perceptive questioning.

Pupils should be encouraged to own their actions rather than blaming the victim or comparing their actions with those of others. When children are describing incidents, they should be discouraged from using expressions including the words "just" and "only" (as in "I was only playing with her...", "I just knocked his arm...").

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

Where the investigation clearly shows that bullying has taken place, action will be taken:

- to discipline the bully or bullies
- to support the victim(s)
- to inform parents of both parties
- to log incidents for data collection by Ofsted and Governors.

Any disciplinary action should be designed to help the bully change his/her behaviour. In some cases, where it is appropriate, this will involve meeting with the victim and a member of staff, and talking about the bullying from the victim's point of view.

Actions may include:

- offering an apology, either verbally or (preferably) in writing
- signing a behaviour contract with the class teacher
- one or more playtime detentions, in which some practical remedial work is done to help change the pupil's behavioural attitude. This may involve writing about the effects of his/her actions;

- devising a set of targets for his/her future behaviour; or considering the parts of the school's code of conduct that have been breached by the bullying behaviour, and how this could be repaired
- the loss of Golden Time, (as outlined in PSHE and C Policy), in which some practical remedial work is done to help change the pupil's behavioural attitude. This may involve writing about the effects of his/her actions; devising a set of targets for his/her future behaviour; or considering the Golden Rules that have been breached by the bullying behaviour, and how this could be repaired.

Support for victims may take the form of:

- counselling by a member of staff/ external agency
- role-play to increase assertiveness
- peer-support, through a "buddy" or monitoring scheme.

Support for bullies may take the form of:

- counselling by a member of staff/ external agency
- role-play to increase positive self esteem
- peer-support, through a "buddy" or monitoring scheme.

The parents/carers of both the bully or bullies, and the victim(s) will be notified and where necessary invited to the school to discuss the matter, either with the Class Teacher or the Head Teacher. Parents will be asked to support the school in its actions and to reinforce those actions at home, where appropriate.

In very serious cases of bullying, where it is clear that a bully is not able or prepared to change his/her behaviour, a fixed-term or even permanent exclusion will be considered as a disciplinary measure.

PREVENTION

In order to prevent bullying from taking place in school, staff, parents/carers and pupils will promote good behaviour by example, encourage a positive attitude to differences and promote equal opportunities. Pupils will be regularly reminded of the school's code of conduct, and the rules of the classroom and playground will reinforce the importance of respect for other people and their property. Parents/carers will also be expected to promote appropriate behaviour in their children, and to support the school in dealing with any instances of bad behaviour.

Strategies which the school may use for preventing bullying include;

- devising rules collaboratively, so that all pupils have ownership
- reading and discussing stories about bullying in class or in assembly
- use of drama and role-play to practise acceptable ways of reacting to aggression and taunts, to help bullies find other ways of behaving, and to increase assertiveness in victims or potential victims
- using circle-time to explore the issues around bullying
- holding a whole-school kindness campaign, or courtesy week, Anti-Bullying Week SEAL
- poster and painting competitions to highlight the main issues
- encouraging children to play games collaboratively in the playground
- introducing "buddies", helpers, play-leaders or counsellors.
- yellow cards at playtimes
- utilisation of SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) materials
- utilisation of Hertfordshire "STEPS" materials
- transition support
- use of external agencies.