

Sandford Hill Primary School

Anti - Bullying Policy



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Introduction

Staff at Sandford Hill Primary School have high expectations of behaviour at all times and we are committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults and children is not tolerated in any form. The school motto of “**Thoughtfulness and Respect**” helps foster discipline to support this and mutual respect between pupils and between staff and pupils is of the upmost importance. Our vision is to develop **thoughtful** individuals who **respect** the differences of others; who value the fact that everyone is different; who work together with consideration for others.

Aim

The aim of our **Anti-Bullying Policy** is to support the **Behaviour Policy**, to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Our overall aim is to provide a safe and secure environment where children are encouraged and enabled to be responsible, co-operative and self-disciplined. This policy outlines what we will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

The Sandford Hill community recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing for the victim and the perpetrator and can be a possible indicator of social, emotional and mental health needs. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our school can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

Definitions

Bullying is defined as Behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally.¹

The four main types of bullying are:

- **physical** - kicking; hitting; taking belongings;
- **verbal** - name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments;
- **indirect** - producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours;
- **cyberbullying** - sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos. (See Safeguarding and e-Safety Policy)

Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of peer on peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development. **Bullying** can happen to anyone.

¹ DfE - Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017.

Potential causes

This policy covers all types and forms of **bullying** and at Sandford Hill Primary School we recognise that bullying can occur for no apparent reason but can often be related to various factors:

- Bullying related to physical appearance;
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances;
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions;
- Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith;
- Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture;
- Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND);
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/bi-phobic bullying);
- Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying;
- Bullying as a result of underlying mental health issues.

Impact of bullying

Staff are vigilant in looking out for potential signs of bullying which may include:

- **Physical:** unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts, missing belongings, damaged clothes, or schoolwork, loss of appetite, stomach aches, headaches;
- **Emotional:** e.g. losing interest in school, withdrawn, secretive, unusual shows of temper, refusal to say why unhappy, high level of anxiety, mood swings, tearfulness for no reason, lack of confidence, signs of depression;
- **Behavioural:** asking to be taken to school, wanting to go home from school, taking longer to get home, asks for more money, using different routes to school, 'losing' more items than usual, sudden changes in behaviour and mood, concentration difficulties.

School actions

In the case of suspected bullying, the following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by a member of staff. The victim will be reassured that the report will be fully investigated;
- A clear account, detailing the allegations, will be recorded on an **Incident Form on CPOMS**;
- A Senior Leader will interview all concerned and will record the incident before referring to the school's **Behaviour Policy** regarding any necessary immediate sanction;
- The Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher will contact the parents of the victim and the perpetrator to inform them of the actions taken by the school. The actions will be added to the incident report on CPOMS.
- If the incident is related to some form of **Cyberbullying**, the staff will refer to the school's E-Safety Policy - keeping any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity, providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists and if required, working with online service providers to assist in removing offensive material from circulation.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous pastoral support;
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a senior leader, their teacher or a member of staff of their choice;
- One to one support from the inclusion team;
- Offering continuous support – shadowing around school, daily opportunity to chat with a Senior Leader for a fixed period of time;
- Restoring self-esteem and building resilience and confidence;
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance, which may support through Early Help or Children Social Work Service, or through the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change the behaviour;
- Informing parents/carers to support the school changing their attitude towards bullying;
- Providing emotional and social support, promoting self-esteem and self-discipline, in circumstances where behaviour has indicated mental health needs;
- One to one support from the Inclusion Team;
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy;
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance, which may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Children Social Work Service, or the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS);
- Shadowing them around school to ensure their actions comply with the Behaviour Policy.

Strategies are in place to teach children and raise awareness of issues surrounding bullying to ensure incidents are minimal and prevented where possible:

- Weekly assemblies cover themes including bullying and the surrounding issues.
- P.S.H.E. curriculum coverage and where possible, opportunities are provided in other areas of the curriculum.
- School Council provide peer support – friendship stops.
- Anti-bullying messages displayed around school.
- Anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week.
- Systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem are provided regularly.
- Pupils views on the extent and nature of bullying are regularly sought.

- Clear guidelines are given regularly to ensure pupils understand the school's approach by:
 - Knowing how to express worries and anxieties about bullying;
 - Being aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied should bullying occur.
- Pupils are involved in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
- Pupils are involved in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and messages embedded in the wider school curriculum.
- Pupil voice is utilised in providing pupil led education and support.
- The details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites, are publicised.

School Procedures

The school will ensure that:

- The Anti-bullying policy is not just followed as a list of procedures but through a common understanding that bullying has to be tackled from the perspective of the victim and the perpetrator by focussing on building resilience, reparation and understanding the bullying behaviour;
- Records and reports of incidents are regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied;
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning;
- The Headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate; and
- The named Governor for bullying will report on a regular basis to the Governing Body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

Working in Partnership

Bullying is defined as *'deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.'* We are conscious of the pain and distress that can be caused by all types of bullying. Occasionally children keep this pain to themselves, which means that staff are not able to deal with it. We rely on children and parents/carers to inform us of any instances of bullying so that it can be dealt with swiftly, for the benefit of the victim and the perpetrator.

This policy is based on DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017 and supporting documents; DfE Guidance "Mental Health and Wellbeing Provision in Schools", October 2018 Rebecca Brown and it also considers the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2019.