



St. Swithun's CE Primary School Anti-bullying Policy

Introduction

At St Swithun's School, we want every member of our community to feel valued and respected, and for everyone to be treated fairly, inside and outside school, on the way to and from school and when it involves our school community. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for each of our children so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. This policy is designed to support the way in which members of the school can live and work together in a supportive way and aims to promote an environment where all feel happy, safe and secure.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school and will not be tolerated. No one deserves to be the target of bullying and everyone has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Everyone at St Swithun's Primary School has a responsibility to respond promptly, effectively and fairly to issues of bullying.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is when the behaviour of an individual or a group of people, over a period of time, leaves someone feeling one or more of the following:

- physically or mentally hurt or worried;
- unsafe and/or frightened;
- unable to do well and achieve;
- 'badly different', alone, unimportant and/or undervalued;
- unable to see a happy and exciting future for themselves.

When an individual or a group of people, has been made aware of the effects of their behaviour on another person and they continue to behave in the same manner, this is bullying.

If someone is made to feel like this, or if they think someone they knows feels like this, it should be investigated. This should happen straight away as it can take a long time to build up the courage to tell someone. However, lots of things can make people feel bad, sometimes it depends on the situation we are in, and it is not always bullying – so the following two definitions are also useful:

1. Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:
 - is meant to hurt – the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it;
 - happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a 'one off' incident;
 - involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

Adapted from Bullying – A Charter for Action, DCSF

2. Bullying is 'behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally;.

Adapted from DfE guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' 2012

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist or discriminating against religion or culture – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Related to special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic – because of, or focusing on the issues of a person's sexual orientation
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber – all areas of the internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse, mobile phone threats by text message and calls, misuse of associated technology

Guiding principles

- All members of our school community have the right to feel safe and secure. They need to feel free from any threat of bullying. They need to know where to go and who to speak to if bullying occurs.
- All complaints of bullying will be treated seriously and will be acted upon in accordance with the practice and explained in this policy.
- No complaints of bullying will be regarded as 'telling tales'.
- When bullying occurs, staff will act promptly and records will be kept of incidents.
- Wherever possible and when appropriate we will develop children's awareness of issues relating to bullying through the curriculum.
- Assembly and worship time will be used to reinforce our school ethos and the fact that bullying will not be tolerated.
- All members of the school community will be informed what to do and who to go to should they observe incidents of bullying or have it reported to them
- Our Anti-bullying Ambassadors act as good role models, are involved in the pastoral support of peers and provide additional guidance
- Adults can also be bullies. All staff will ensure that they provide good role models in their everyday work with colleagues and children

Discriminatory Language

Discriminatory language not only undermines the confidence and self-esteem of individuals, but reflects negative attitudes towards a wider sub-community or group, and in some cases is illegal. A culture where discriminatory language goes unchallenged is likely to be a culture where bullying is more prevalent.

Discriminatory language of any kind is not acceptable and will be challenged, whether verbal, written (including graffiti) or electronic. Education about diversity will be delivered through, for example, the curriculum, displays and assemblies. Tolerance will be modelled by all staff. In particular, we will not accept any derogatory language that is:

- sexual or sexist;
- relating to special educational needs, disabilities or health conditions;
- gender based;
- homophobic, biphobic, transphobic;
- racist;
- relating to religion or culture;
- relating to a person's social class;
- relating to a person's home circumstances.

Discriminatory language is sometimes used without thinking, however any such comment will not be ignored or overlooked and will be challenged. Staff will:

- tell the child that such language is not acceptable in school, and explain that this language is offensive;
- if the child continues to use such language, explain in more detail the effects that discrimination and discriminatory language have on people and that it will not be tolerated.

If a problem still remains, senior leaders will be involved. The pupils should understand the sanctions that will apply if they continue to use discriminatory language. Alongside sanctions we may use a supportive/restorative approach to help repair the harm caused by the incident and help them be aware of the impact of their actions.

If it still continues, parents will be invited in to discuss the attitude of their child and to find a way forwards.

Signs and symptoms of bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. To those who know the child well this may simply be a feeling that 'things aren't quite right'. Staff are trained to be aware of these possible signs and will investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school/ public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide and/ or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay a person who is bullying)
- repeatedly 'loses' money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when an electronic message is received
- becomes withdrawn and is reluctant to say why
- their progress in learning slows
- perceives comments from others as hurtful
- displays challenging behaviour, which could be the result of intimidation

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

Dealing with a bullying incident

Bullying will be investigated and dealt with quickly, sensitively, fairly and firmly. Children can report bullying to any member of staff, pupil, Anti-bullying Ambassador or friend in the knowledge it will be passed on to an appropriate adult, that it will be taken seriously and will be dealt with effectively.

If a member of staff feels that they are being bullied, they should report it to their line manager, the Headteacher, or, if neither is appropriate in the circumstances, the Chair of Governors. Bullying of staff will be dealt with in accordance to the Oxfordshire County Council guidelines.

1. Any allegation of bullying reported to a responsible adult will be fully investigated by the pupil's class teacher, recorded in their class incident book and a log sent to the school office for central records. The children involved will be interviewed separately. The teacher(s) dealing with the situation will report the matter to the Headteacher, or, in her absence, the Deputy Headteacher or another member of the school's leadership team.
2. Staff will use/be guided by the 'Checklist for Managing a Bullying Incident' (APPENDIX 1).
3. In accordance with our 'Positive Behaviour Policy', bullying constitutes 'serious misconduct' and will be dealt with accordingly.
4. Decide what additional input is required to support pupils affected.
5. Consider what future actions may be required to reassure those involved in the incident.

Outcomes

- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled and the bully/bullies may be asked to give a genuine and sincere apology. Other consequences may take place.
- In very serious cases exclusion will be considered.
- After the incident/ incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored by staff to ensure that repeated bullying does not take place.

Support for children who experience bullying behaviour

- The child(ren) will be reassured that the alleged bullying will be investigated and actions taken as appropriate.
- 1:1 support from a member of staff will be offered, providing whatever actions are necessary to help to rebuild self-esteem, confidence and resilience.
- The child may be part of small group support such as a nurture/ wellbeing group to develop positive strategies to develop resilience.
- If necessary, external support will be accessed, such as PCAMHs.

Support for children who engage in bullying behaviour

- There will be a meeting between class teacher and/or Headteacher/senior leader and the child's parents to discuss what has happened and agree a programme of support.
- Individual or small group work with a key person may be set up to help the child to reflect on their behaviour and help them face up to the harm they have caused. This may include making amends and ensuring that they are able to make a choice to avoid bullying behaviour in the future.

- Individual or small group work with a key person may be set up to support the development of social, emotional and behavioural skills.
- If necessary support external from the school will be accessed, such as PCAMHs.

Advice for parents if they think their child is being bullied

- Listen and talk to your child. They may feel that the situation is beyond their control or feel ashamed – whether they are being bullied or are bullying. Let them know you love them and want to help.
- Be clear that it is important for the bullying to stop and that for this to happen the school will need to be involved.
- Do not advise them to retaliate as this may get them into trouble.
- Make sure your child knows they are not to blame.
- Involve and consult your child in making a plan for what should be done and how to talk to the school.
- Talk to the school as soon as possible.

Any parent/ carer who has concerns about their child's behaviour and suspects that bullying may be the cause, should raise this matter with their child's class teacher in the first instance. The matter will be investigated and dealt with in accordance with this policy.

Prevention

We use a variety of strategies for preventing bullying. These may include:

- At the start of the school year, every class writing a class charter based on our school's golden rule of acting with courtesy, consideration and respect at all times.
- Having a focus on anti-bullying on an ongoing basis in the day-to-day life of the school and also during National Anti-bullying Week every November.
- Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures to raise awareness about what bullying is/isn't, how to prevent it and how to deal with it.
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly.
- Using drama to develop children's awareness and understanding about bullying.
- Appointing children as Anti-bullying Ambassadors who work with the school's teacher who leads our anti-bullying work (our PSHE subject leader). Our anti-bullying ambassadors raise awareness of this important aspect of the school's work and they are known to the other children. If the Ambassadors become aware of any bullying issues, they report this to the teacher leading our anti-bullying work.
- Listening to our pupil's views on the extent and nature of bullying;
- Ensuring that pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying;
- Involving the children in our anti-bullying campaigns;
- Publicising the details of help lines and websites.

Professional Development for School Staff

Professional development on the prevention and identification of bullying behaviour, along with the procedure for dealing with allegations of bullying will be provided through staff meetings and/or INSET days. Professional development will be provided by the headteacher, members of the leadership team or the PSHE subject leader.

Further Sources of Support/Guidance

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) - 0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre - 0845 345 4345 www.childrenslegalcentre.com/

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) - 0845 1 205 204 www.kidscape.org.uk

Parent line Plus/ Family lives - 0808 800 2222 www.familylives.org.uk

Youth Access - 020 8772 9900 www.youthaccess.org.uk/

Bullying Online - www.bullying.co.uk

ChildLine - 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

Oxfordshire County Council - <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/help-if-your-child-being-bullied>

Related policy: Positive Behaviour

Date approved by governors	November 2016	Signed (on behalf of the governors)	
Date for review	Autumn 2019	Signed (Headteacher)	

APPENDIX 1

Checklist for Managing a Bullying Incident

NB: Follow the interview guidelines for all parties

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1. Young person tells you he/she is being bullied or incident is observed	
2. Report to a responsible member of staff	
3. Record incident following Oxon guidelines	
4. Ensure that an appropriate adult meets with the target of the bullying. Follow interview guidelines and record.	
5. Listen to other young people who may have observed the incident. Follow interview guidelines and record.	
6. Ensure that appropriate adult meets with the young person alleged to be responsible. Follow interview guidelines and record.	
7. If there is evidence or admission of bullying, issue appropriate sanctions following anti-bullying policy and behaviour policy. If you are using a restorative approach provide opportunity for young person to reflect and consider how they might make amends.	
8. If no bullying has taken place, or there is insufficient evidence, consider what further action is needed to reassure and meet the needs of those concerned	
9. Inform the target of outcomes and actions taken. Keep them informed throughout. Provide on-going support	
10. Inform the young person responsible of outcomes and actions taken, Keep them informed throughout. Provide on-going support	
11. If it was not the parents/carers of the target of the bullying who brought the situation to the attention of a member of staff in school, inform them of the incident and, in either case, offer appropriate support. Parents/carers may have additional information, as some symptoms of bullying may arise outside the confines of the school and are accordingly less evident during school hours.	
12. Contact the parent/carers of the young person responsible for the bullying. Inform them of the incident and offer appropriate support. Keep them informed throughout.	
13. Consider what additional input is required in terms of: proactive work to address prejudice or promote diversity, work with class or year group, assembly, individual or group work with young people concerned, referral to outside agencies etc.	
14. Monitor the situation and review with all parties to ensure the bullying has stopped.	
15. Review how successful your approach has been. What additional preventative measures need to be in place?	

Guidelines for interview with all parties

- Allocate sufficient time to listen
- Take the incident seriously and reassure them
- Take steps to make sure they feel safe (particularly the victim and children who may have observed the incident)
- Offer confidentiality (with usual child protection exceptions)
- Listen to the details of what happened and record.

- Consult the victim about how the incident should be dealt with as far as is appropriate. NB informed choice is an essential part of any restorative input involving the young person responsible.
- Consult the pupil responsible about how they might make amends. NB Informed choice is an essential part of any restorative work.
- Inform and consult parents/carers of both parties about management of the incident including offer of appropriate support. Ensure that you label the behaviour not the child.
- Keep everyone informed of the outcomes of action and discussions

Importance of monitoring and review

- How effective was your response?
- Has the bullying stopped?
- Does the target feel safe?
- Did the behaviour of the child doing the bullying change?
- What did we learn?
- Are current systems for responding effective?
- Do we need additional preventative measures in place?

Oxfordshire has a recommended [prejudice related incident and bullying recording form](#) that can be accessed online. This is set up on our Schools Information Management system. Please refer to our school administrator.