

## SIDEMOOR FIRST SCHOOL AND NURSERY ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



### ALWAYS TELL - IF WE KNOW ABOUT IT WE WILL DEAL WITH IT

At Sidemoor we take every opportunity to promote a caring and supportive ethos where children and adults respect the views and needs of other individuals and celebrate differences. However, all members of staff know that bullying takes place in all schools and we work to create a supportive climate in which any incidents can be reported and dealt with quickly and effectively. It is a government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. In 2003, Ofsted published *Bullying: Effective Action in Secondary Schools*. This was followed by DfES guidance for schools under two headings: *Don't Suffer in Silence and Bullying - A Charter for Action* and DfE guidance, *Preventing and tackling bullying (Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies)* October 2014. This policy reflects this guidance.

Bullying of any kind is wrong and damaging to individual children and will not be tolerated in our school. Bullying makes pupils unhappy and unable to concentrate fully on their work. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. All incidents will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

#### DEFINITION

**Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually over a period of time. Bullying can be direct or indirect.** Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms, and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical.

Bullying can be

- Physical - hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal - name calling, insulting, racist remarks
- Indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups
- Cyber bullying - using ICT such as mobile phones or the internet to upset someone deliberately

#### CYBER BULLYING

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

#### PREVENTION

At Sidemoor we promote an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest. We aim to provide an environment where children can grow in confidence and self-esteem. Issues of behaviour and bullying are discussed openly in the classroom,

in assembly, in PSHE and P4C, in role play and story, circle time and school council, through the curriculum and informally. Children are taught strategies to build resilience and the ability to deal with unwanted behaviours or attention from others in a positive way and by learning to say "Stop, I don't like that".

Children are taught that they can and should always tell about bullying.

As children do not always tell when they are being bullied, staff will use their knowledge of pupils to identify changes in their behaviour that might indicate bullying and will listen to any concerns expressed by parents.

## **PROCEDURES**

Every member of staff will deal with reported cases as soon as they arise, seeking advice from senior staff where necessary. Bullying incident forms are kept in the Headteacher's office. These must be completed in all incidences of alleged or confirmed bullying and if a parent raises a concern.

Dealing with incidents.

1. Interview bullies and victims separately
2. Obtain witness information
3. Keep a written record of the incident, investigation and outcomes and complete the on-line reporting form on Edulink.
4. Give feedback to the victim
5. Inform other staff about the incident
6. Take action to prevent further incidents. Such action may include:
  - meeting with the bully and victim together (with victim's agreement) to explain feelings and effect
  - obtaining an apology
  - sanctions
  - informing parents (of both victim and bully)
  - modelling correct behaviour
  - providing support for both victim and bully
  - monitoring

When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for both the victim and offender to establish the cause and avoid repeat behaviour, and any subsequent sanction for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, we inform the headteacher and the special needs coordinator. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the headteacher may contact external support agencies, such as the social services. The parents of the victim will also be informed and will be invited to discuss the strategies being employed. Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use P4C, drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere. Teachers take opportunities to openly discuss differences

between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability or gender and also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. We also teach children that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable.

### **ADVICE FOR CHILDREN**

Children will be helped to deal with bullying and taught what to do if they are bullied.

- Tell the bully to stop
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- Tell an adult straight away
- Tell your family
- Ask a friend to go with you if you don't want to go on your own
- Keep on speaking until someone listens
- When you tell say clearly what happened, who was involved, who saw it happening
- If the bullying does not stop straight away, tell again and keep telling until it is sorted out

Children who see bullying happening can help stop it by

- Not allowing someone to be deliberately left out of a group
- Not smiling or laughing at bullying behaviour
- Telling a member of staff what is happening
- Telling the bully to stop what they are doing
- Encouraging the victim to join in with games and activities

### **ADVICE FOR PARENTS**

Parents and families have an important part to play in helping schools deal with bullying. Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed in the school Prospectus and on the school website.

#### **If your child has been/is being bullied:**

- Talk calmly to your child about what has happened.
- Reassure your child that s/he has done the right thing to tell you.
- Explain to your child that s/he should tell the teacher about any further incidents immediately.
- Talk calmly to the class teacher about the problems your child is having. Bear in mind that the teacher may not know anything about the incident or may have heard conflicting accounts.
- Stay in touch with school. Let us know as things improve as well as if problems continue.
- Contact the headteacher if you feel that the situation has not improved.

#### **If your child is bullying other children:**

Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

Children sometimes bully because:

- they don't know it is wrong
- they are copying older brothers or sisters, or someone they admire
- they have not learnt other ways to mix with their school friends
- they are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings

You can help your child to stop bullying.

- Talk with your child. Explain that what s/he is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy.

- Discourage your child from using bullying behaviour or aggression at home or elsewhere.
- Show your child how to cope with difficult situations without using aggression.
- Show your child how to join in with other children without bullying.
- Keep in touch with school to see how things are going.
- Give lots of praise and encouragement every time your child is co-operative or kind to other people.

Further advice can be found on the WCC website. Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school. It is made clear to parents that the school does not tolerate bullying. Parents can feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they are expected to reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, we may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

## **BULLYING OUTSIDE SCHOOL PREMISES**

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as in the local community. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

## **THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNORS**

The governing body supports the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school's anti-bullying strategies.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter. The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the headteacher, and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

## **THE ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER**

The headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the headteacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished; the school also takes part in the annual National Anti-bullying Week.

## **MONITORING**

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the headteacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy. The policy and its effectiveness is reviewed annually by the Governing Body. They look out in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs. The policy is published on the school website and is available on request from the school office.

MFJ

**Signed:** *M. Jones*

**Date:** 24.1.16

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