



BUSBRIDGE CE (Aided) JUNIOR SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

Learn to love  Love to learn

This policy was updated in Spring 2021
It will be reviewed in the Spring term 2024

School Vision: *To be a school that reflects the love of Christ: **cherishing** each other as unique individuals and **challenging** all to achieve and succeed.*

Aims

We aim to create an atmosphere of friendly and relaxed relationships based on mutual respect, within a safe and secure environment. This School does not tolerate bullying and takes a pro-active stance to ensure that any incidents of bullying are dealt with as quickly and effectively as possible.

We achieve these aims through an efficient, effective and caring response to any incidents that occur, by direct teaching within the PSHE Curriculum, through the physical environment of the school and by making a varied and accessible programme of educational and social activities available to pupils.

What is Bullying?

There are many definitions of bullying but the DfE found that most have three things in common:

- it is deliberately hurtful behaviour
- it is repeated, often over a period of time
- it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

‘Bullying’ is when all of the following apply:

- the bully or bullies want to cause distress
- the victim feels less powerful than the bully or bullies
- the bully has selected the victim
- it is part of a pattern (generally bullying is persistent, but we accept that a single incident can be bullying if the other conditions suggest that this is the case)

What does bullying look like?

Bullying can include:

- Name calling
- Taunting
- Mocking
- Making offensive comments
- Physical assault
- Taking or damaging belongings
- Cyber bullying- inappropriate text messaging and e-mailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet

- Producing offensive graffiti
- Gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- Excluding people from groups and activities

Although bullying can occur between individuals, it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'

Why are children and young people bullied?

Specific types of bullying include:

- Physical bullying
- Direct verbal bullying
- Relational bullying
- Cyber or online bullying
- Bullying related to specific educational needs or disabilities
- Sexist/ transgender/ homophobic bullying directed towards a pupil or a member of their family
- Bullying related to race/religion or culture
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances

There is no hierarchy of bullying- all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Bullying can take place between:

- Young people
- Young people and staff
- Staff
- Individuals or groups

The school regards instances of bullying as a serious matter. We recognise that bullying happens in all schools and we try to encourage children to speak out when confronted with a problem, either to a friend, a parent or a teacher. The teachers are also alert to signs that a child is unhappy and may talk sensitively to the child if suspicious. If parents find a problem, the school would encourage them to share their thoughts.

We believe that children have the right to:

- be physically safe
- keep their own possessions
- be free of insult, derogatory terms and teasing
- companionship and friendship with others

At the same time they should also take responsibility for:

- the physical safety of others
- the security of everyone's personal possessions
- the freedom from hurt by name-calling and teasing
- including all pupils in play and learning activities

What can we do to stop children being bullied?

Action can be taken by children who have been bullied, children who observe bullying, staff, parents and the bully himself or herself. Children should be encouraged to devise solutions, not just make allegations.

A child who has been bullied should be encouraged to:

- report this as soon as possible
- adopt an assertive approach rather than being aggressive or timid
- attempt to ignore minor nuisance as this can deny the bully the reaction he or she seeks
- stay with friends, or ask a classmate to help
- concentrate on making the future better rather than dwelling on what went wrong in the past

(See Appendix 1 for Guidelines for Children)

Other children should be encouraged to:

- value individual differences
- offer friendship
- refuse to join in unkind behaviour
- tell an adult about any incidents

(See Appendix 2 for Guidelines for Other Children)

The content of Appendices 1 and 2, and for Years 5 and 6 the Appendices themselves, should be incorporated into the PSCH Curriculum and taught annually. Those Appendices should be drawn to the attention of all children involved, and used, whenever an incident is being dealt with.

Members of staff should:

- listen
- keep records of bullying that is persistent or causes serious distress
- inform and seek advice from senior staff, special needs co-ordinators (and external agencies if problems continue)
- establish close liaison with parents
- use strategies from the school's Behaviour Policy
- teach children how to be assertive rather than aggressive or timid
- use the Positive Approach to Resolution (see Appendix 5)
- use stories, poems and discussion to help children understand the issues
- use strategies to raise children's self esteem.

(See Appendix 3 for Guidelines for staff)

All staff should be familiar with Appendix 3. It should be drawn to their attention specifically each time this Policy is reviewed or amended.

Parents should:

- encourage children to disclose any anxieties they may have
- listen
- encourage the child to report incidents immediately to the adult who is most able to help
- concentrate on how the child feels rather than the exact details of the incident
- contact the School if the child is unlikely to tell a teacher

(See Appendix 4 for Guidelines for parents)

This Policy, and Appendix 4 in particular, should be drawn to the attention of parents annually, for example by mentioning in the school newsletter during the annual Anti-Bullying Week. The Policy should be accessible to parents via the school's web-site and available on the school's Learning Platform.

Appendix 1

Anti-bullying Guidelines for Children

What can you do if you are bullied at school?

1. **If you have been hurt or upset, tell someone as soon as possible.** The class teacher is usually the best person to tell, or the teacher on duty in the playground, the Headteacher or Deputy, or a midday supervisor. Keep reporting any incidents until you feel the problem has been resolved.
2. **Ask teachers and parents for advice.** Nobody deserves to be bullied, but adults might help you to think of things you could do that would make the bullying less likely to happen.
3. **Be assertive.** Tell the bully that you do not have to put up with what he or she is doing, and if it continues you will report it. Avoid being aggressive and hitting back as that is as likely to make things worse as to make them better (and may well get you into trouble).
4. **Don't give the bully what he or she wants.** The bully is looking for a reaction. If someone is calling you names or saying silly things, and you ignore what is happening, it may stop quite quickly. Walk away from confrontation but in a way that suggests you haven't time for this silliness, rather than you are afraid.
5. **Think about the future rather than the past.** If you have been hurt you will want to see justice done, but try to concentrate on making the future better rather than dwelling on unpleasant incidents in the past, especially when they happened weeks, months or even years ago. People's memories are not always reliable and it may never be possible to prove what happened.
6. **Understand that it may not all be one-sided.** If you have been hurt you may want the bully also to suffer, but he or she may have a complaint against you as well. Be ready to acknowledge any mistakes you may have made.
7. **Stick together.** Where possible keep with friends who will stand by you and tell the bully to stop. However don't encourage them, or older children, to attack the bully on your behalf.
8. **Believe in yourself and those who care for you.** You are unique and special. You have many gifts. There are bound to be things you can do which the bully cannot. The adults who look after you will never stop trying to help you. They can protect you because they are far more powerful than bullying children could possibly be.

Appendix 2

Anti-bullying Guidelines for Other Children

What can you do to stop other children being bullied?

1. **Celebrate difference.** Accept and enjoy the fact that everyone is different; it would be a very boring world if we were all the same. Being different is no reason to pick on someone.
2. **Do not join in or encourage bullying.** Refuse to join in any bullying you see, and that includes spreading rumours or passing unkind messages. Do not encourage people to fight by cheering them on or calling them names if they walk away.
3. **Tell.** Report bullying if you think the bullied child may not do so. Bullying is too serious a matter not to tell. If a friend is bullying, he or she may need help to stop doing this – a true friend will get help rather than keeping quiet and watching things get worse. Be a good witness; say what you remember seeing and hearing.
4. **Stick together.** Stand by anyone who is being bullied and tell the bully to stop, but do not attack the bully or that will probably make things worse, and get you into trouble as well.
5. **Make friends.** Play with and try to befriend children who are on their own.

Appendix 3

Anti-bullying Guidelines for Staff

What can you do as a member of staff do to stop bullying?

1. **Listen.** It is very important that the child knows he or she will be listened to. Always listen when a child wants to tell you he or she has been hurt or upset by someone. This can be very time consuming, but experience suggests that the number of reports will eventually reduce. This will be because of the children's social learning rather than because they think there is no point reporting things. It may be necessary to postpone the report because of other priorities, for example getting the class started on work. Sometimes a pause for a few moments can even help the child to put the incident into perspective – but the delay should not be long and the child should feel that they have had an opportunity to be heard as soon as possible.
 2. **Be alert to the possibility of bullying.** It might be a clue that a child is being bullied if he or she is:
 - not wanting to come to school, or wanting to be escorted
 - becoming withdrawn, isolated, self-conscious, avoiding contact or stammering
 - becoming anxious for approval and over sensitive to criticism
 - not eating properly or being hungry because somebody else has his or her dinner
 - going home with damaged or missing clothes, books etc.
 - having unexplained cuts, scratches or bruises
 - doing poorly at schoolwork
 - crying at night, having nightmares
 - having any sudden change in behaviour or personality
 - refusing to say what is wrong or giving implausible excuses for any of the above
- The difficulty for the teacher is that these signs could also result from anxiety about problems at home, illness, bereavement, abuse etc.
3. **Keep records.** Record incidents of bullying, particularly when it is persistent or causes serious distress.
 4. **Inform and seek advice.** Tell the class teacher if you become aware of bullying. Class teachers should inform their Headteacher if the bullying is serious or persistent. All staff will need to be alerted if a child is particularly at risk from bullying.
 5. **Liaise with parents.** Close liaison with parents is important. The victim's parents will almost certainly welcome this contact. The bully's parents may at first be defensive, but will probably also welcome involvement with the School when they realise we are trying to help the bully as well as the victim.
 6. **Have an open mind.** Never make up your mind what happened until you have heard both (or more) sides of the story. People's perceptions of events are bound to be affected by their emotions at the time.
 7. **Focus on the future rather than the past.** It may be necessary to investigate an incident carefully, but what really happened may not become known. This is a strong argument for the recommended emphasis on people's feelings rather than establishing guilt or innocence.
 8. **Teach the children to be assertive.** Explain how to be assertive rather than aggressive or timid. Encourage children to use this approach. This may mean we have to accept a child telling us how they feel about something even if it is not what we want to hear. We can, however, insist that views are expressed politely.

9. Use the Positive Approach to Resolution (see Appendix 5)

10. **Discuss bullying.** Help children to understand issues through discussion. Reading an appropriate story or poem can help a child to realise that others have been through similar experiences (or worse) and have come through them safely.

11. **Raise self esteem.** Anything that will make children feel good about themselves will reduce the likelihood of being selected as a victim, or of being a bully.

Appendix 4

Anti-bullying Guidelines for Parents

What can parents do to stop bullying?

1. **Listen.** It is very important that the child knows he or she will be listened to. Encourage your child to tell someone at school immediately he or she is bullied.

2. **Be alert to the possibility of bullying.** It might be a clue that a child is being bullied if he or she is:

- not wanting to come to school, or wanting to be escorted
- becoming withdrawn, isolated, self-conscious, avoiding contact or stammering
- becoming anxious for approval and over sensitive to criticism
- not eating properly or being hungry because somebody else has his or her dinner
- going home with damaged or missing clothes, books etc.
- having unexplained cuts, scratches or bruises
- doing poorly at schoolwork
- crying at night, having nightmares
- having any sudden change in behaviour or personality
- refusing to say what is wrong or giving implausible excuses for any of the above.

The difficulty for us all is that these signs could also result from anxiety about work, problems at home, illness, bereavement or even abuse etc.

3. **Keep records.** If the problem persists it can be helpful to keep a log so that patterns might emerge.

4. **Inform the school.** Tell the class teacher if you become aware of bullying. We want to work with you to sort out whatever has gone wrong. We are interested in helping your child, whether the victim or the bully in the situation.

5. **Advise your child.** Nobody deserves to be bullied, but some behaviour tends to make a child more likely to be bullied. An assertive approach is more likely to be successful than being aggressive or timid. Try not to advise your child to fight the bully. Research suggests that this is not particularly effective, and it will inevitably cause your child to get into trouble at school.

6. **Have an open mind.** It is likely that you will only have heard one side of the story. People's perceptions of events are bound to be affected by their emotions at the time, and memories can be unreliable. Beware of making your child promise that what he or she is saying is the truth. A change of mind at this point would indicate a deliberate lie before, which is a difficult thing to admit. If children receive very emotional responses from listeners it can make it difficult for them to accept that they have made mistakes, and tempting to repeat or exaggerate similar reports in future. This is particularly a risk if the child is seeking attention, perhaps because the family's attention is temporarily focussed elsewhere.

7. **Focus on the future rather than the past.** It may be appropriate to investigate an incident carefully, but what really happened may never be proved. This is a strong argument for the recommended emphasis on people's feelings rather than establishing guilt or innocence.

8. **Support the School's Positive Approach to Resolution (see Appendix 5).**

9. **Discuss bullying.** Help your child to understand issues through discussion. Reading an appropriate story or poem can help a child to realise that others have been through similar experiences (or worse) and have come through them safely.

10. **Raise your child's self esteem.** Anything that will make your child feel good about himself or herself will reduce the likelihood of being selected as a victim, or of being a bully.

Appendix 5

Positive Approach to Resolution

The traditional method has been to punish the bully. Research shows that the bully feels more aggrieved and therefore seeks revenge on the victim. It therefore becomes even less likely that the victim will report any further incidents, and the victim will not feel more secure. It is necessary to work with the bully/ies positively in order to change their behaviour in a way that makes them feel less inadequate, while making the life of the victim more secure.

Step 1 – interview with the victim

When the teacher finds out that bullying has happened he or she starts by talking to the victim about the bully's feelings. She does not question the bully about the incidents, but does need to know who was involved.

Step 2 – convene a meeting with the people concerned

The teacher arranges a meeting with the group of pupils who have been involved. This will include some bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying.

Step 3 – explain the problem

The teacher tells them about the way the victim is feeling, and might use a poem, piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise his or her distress. At no time does the teacher discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

Step 4 – share responsibility

The teacher does not attribute blame, but states that he or she knows that the group are responsible and can do something about it. The group should understand that what has been happening is unacceptable.

Step 5 – ask the group for their ideas

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. The teacher gives some positive responses but does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step 6 – leave it to them

The teacher ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. The teacher then arranges to meet with them again (about a week later) to see how things are going.

Step 7 – meet them again

About a week later the teacher discusses with each pupil individually, including the victim, how things have been going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the young people involved in the process.