

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Our school should be a safe place where the emphasis is on mutual respect, regardless of perceived or real differences. Our anti-bullying process is an integral part of our Behaviour Management Policy. It is evident from known research that bullying is prevalent in schools and this prompts us at Wellesbourne to avoid adopting the view that “it doesn’t happen here”. It is therefore our policy to actively and consistently monitor and discourage any circumstances or behaviour which may lead to - or encourage - bullies or bullying.

### Definition of “Bullying”

*“Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour; it is repeated over a period of time; it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.”*

*“Behaviour that causes mental distress”*

There are four main types of bullying:

**Physical** – *hitting, kicking, taking belongings*

**Technological** – *using technology to hurt an individual (text messages, internet, etc.)*

**Verbal** – *name-calling, insults, racist remarks*

**Indirect** – *threatening, spreading nasty stories, exclusion from social groups*

*(D.F.E., ‘Bullying – Don’t Suffer In Silence’)*

Bullying can take place between members of the school community. However, if two pupils of equal power or strength have an occasional fight, this is not bullying.

## **Signs of Bullying**

A child might tell you they are being bullied or you might hear about it from somebody else – a child's friends, neighbours or a child's teacher. Often though a child who is being bullied manages to hide it, they might be afraid that the bully will take revenge on them. They might feel that they are powerless and a failure. Because of this, it is important to know some of the signs of bullying and look out for them.

Some signs are:

- Becoming anxious and/or withdrawn
- Not wanting to go to school;
- A pattern of headaches or stomach aches;
- Damaged clothing or bruising;
- Missing equipment or belonging;
- Asking for extra pocket money;
- A sudden drop in standards of schoolwork;
- Fear about walking to and from school;
- Secrecy about the reason for tears;
- Change in behaviour at home.

It is important to remember that even if a child is showing one or more of these signs it doesn't always mean they are being bullied. There could be other explanations, but it is important to be aware of the possibility and look into it further.

## **Why do children bully other children?**

Research has proven that children who might become bullies could:

- Feel useless and have little self-esteem;
- Have been taught to succeed at any cost;
- Be spoiled, without controls on behaviour;
- Feel insecure in some way;
- Have been bullied or abused themselves.

This doesn't mean that all bullies have all or any of these characteristics, but understanding something about why someone bullies another child can help in dealing with them afterwards.

Bullies tend to pick on someone they see as 'different' in some way. Staff and parents need to be aware of the possibility of bullying and look out for the signs. If it does happen, the school and parents need to act quickly and calmly so that the child is safe and secure, so that any ill effects can be overcome.

## **Aims of our Anti-Bullying Policy**

- To increase self-esteem and make all children in the school feel they belong and are valued.
- To raise awareness within the school community that bullying is a shared problem and that vigilance is required, and intervention necessary, if it is to be stopped.

- To make prevention of and dealing with bullying a high priority within the school.
- To involve teachers, non-teaching staff and governors in the implementation of this policy.
- To create a climate within the school in which pupils or adults can confide in any member of staff about being bullied.
- To promote school values which reject bullying and encourage co-operative behaviour.
- To use the school's Behaviour Management Policy to deal with all acts of bullying.
- To use the school curriculum to explore issues about bullying.
- To increase self-esteem and make all children in the school feel valued.
- To ensure that any incident of bullying is dealt with following our set procedure.
- To set up a programme for the bully which will help them to understand their behaviour and how it affects other pupils in the school so they will want to learn strategies to change their behaviour in the future.
- Ensure that children are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively.

#### **How will we achieve these aims?**

- Issues relating to behaviour and bullying will be on the staff meeting agenda regularly.
- Throughout the curriculum and through collective worship we will inform and encourage children to confide and actively discourage violent and aggressive behaviour.
- Through circle time we will present children with opportunities to share their feelings.
- We will encourage all members of the school community to take responsibility for, and to reflect on, their actions, treating each other with respect.
- We will ensure that positive efforts are taken to establish a climate where bullying is rejected by all as an anti-social activity, and where a respect for rules and fair play is encouraged at every opportunity.
- These efforts will be based in curriculum projects and PSHE work where the issues of bullying will be given a high priority.
- Promote self-respect and help pupils to resolve their differences amicably.
- Ensure that there is adequate supervision at all times, but especially in areas where bullying is likely to take place, e.g. toilets, corridors, wet play.
- Ensure that all staff know that there are set procedures that are put into operation immediately if, and when, bullying takes place.
- Ensure regular contact with the community policeman.
- Trained Peer Advocate / Buddies who have specific rules in school for pupils who have worries or concerns.

## **Procedures for all staff**

When a member of staff becomes aware of an incident of bullying it is important to all follow the set procedure.

1. Put a stop to the incident immediately and remove victim and bully from any audience.
2. Talk to both victim and bully and let both have their say. Tell them that action will be taken.
3. Speak to any witnesses of the incident.
4. Make written notes.
5. If information with references to bullying is received from a third party, e.g. parents, reassure them that action will be taken and they will be informed about the outcome.
6. Inform headteacher or deputy headteacher, who will take further steps to deal with the matter by:
  - a. Discussion with all parties involved.
  - b. Counselling individuals – victim and bully.
  - c. Informing both sets of parents throughout the procedure and enlisting their support.
  - d. Using the Behaviour Management Policy to deal with the bully, i.e. severe clause.
  - e. Noting the incident in the behaviour book.
7. Remain vigilant so that episodes of bullying are not repeated, reprisals taken, etc.
8. Work on improving the self-esteem of both the bully and the victim.

## **Assisting Victims**

After a cooling off period, it may be helpful to bring the victim and bully together to work on restitution. The child will have a designated safe place, to attend, if required. The aim is to get each side to tell their story and then agree to act within a verbal contract. This contract will be monitored and evaluated so it can be adapted if necessary.

Encourage a high self regard by building up confidence and tackling low self-esteem.

During circle time or PSHE lessons and assemblies, staff can utilise the support for victims and illustrate to bullies what their peers really think about bullying behaviour. Feedback should be given in a non-aggressive, but not unemotional, way. Hearing their peers discuss their behaviour can have a powerful effect on bullies.

Discuss with pupils the differences between reporting and telling tales and why it is important to report to those who need to know and can make it stop. A crucial factor in dealing with bullying is the process of changing the attitude of all members of the school community.

While a teacher can, and should, take whatever measures are possible to stop bullying, it is also important not to over protect the victim. There will not always be an adult protector around to help them. Staff and parents can teach pupils how to stand up to a bully in an

assertive but non-aggressive manner. Assertion is a skill and needs to be practised, emphasising:

- How to look assertive rather than aggressive;
- How to think strong;
- Specific words and phrases to use to convey one's rights. These can be practised by discussing bullying situations and what you could say to stop it;
- How and when to walk away;
- That it is alright to answer bullies by saying you will speak to the teacher. The disclosure and warning often makes bullies think twice;
- When pupils start to talk, look, think and act assertively, they often feel better as they convey strength of intent and purpose.

Our Learning Mentor plays an important role in demonstrating and promoting positive behaviour throughout the school by setting up individual and group programmes for pupils on a range of issues. She can help victims:

- By taking them through problem solving situations;
- Teaching pupils basic confidence and assertive skills;
- Demonstrating to pupils how to mediate with neutrality;
- Showing pupils how to control themselves through a 'cool off period';
- Using circle time or role play to explore issues;
- Giving pupils a place for a time out to quietly reflect on their behaviour and calm down before sorting out a dispute.

### **How can parents help?**

- If you think your child has been bullied, talk to them, encourage them to be open and honest.
- Reassure them that you want to help and that you won't do anything to make matters worse.
- Give them time and don't put pressure on them to tell you everything at once. Let them know that they can talk to you when they are ready.
- Stay calm, you will feel angry or upset and want to protect your child from further bullying, but your main task is to protect your child from further bullying by listening and providing comfort and understanding.
- Talk to your child's class teacher or make an appointment with the headteacher.
- The school wants to make sure not only that the bullying stops, but that it doesn't happen again with your child or any other. The bully will also need help and support.
- Now that things are out in the open, your child will need reassurance. They are likely to feel a failure, because of what might have been said to them and because they could not stop the bullying.
- You need to make them feel good about themselves, show them how they are loved by emphasising talents, achievements and likable qualities.
- Make sure they know they can talk to you about positive and negative topics.

- Having told the school about the bullying, try to work with teachers on a plan of action.
- Let your child's teacher know how your child is at home and if there has been a change in behaviour. Ask how your child appears in school. Has their work been affected? Are they mixing with other children?
- You need to see if there are ways you can work with the school in the child's best interests.
- Encouragement and praise will help them to feel safe, secure and confident.

### **Other related documents**

Underpinning the success of this policy is the need to enforce related policies, e.g. Mission Statement, Equal Opportunities Policy, School Charter, PSHE, Positive Discipline Plan, Learning Mentors, Teaching and Learning and the Curriculum. These policies in combination will support a coherent system for facilitating a healthy social and learning environment in which all our pupils can flourish and achieve their full potential.

Our School Council have produced an 'Anti-Bullying School Policy' leaflet which outline for children how to stop bullying.

### **Evaluation of our Anti-Bullying Policy**

Evaluation is invaluable in enabling us to identify areas of strength and weakness. Periodic evaluation will ensure that this policy is adapted to changing needs, with a view to reducing the number of bullying episodes.

Information from recorded incidents will enable assessment of whether occurrences of bullying are less frequent or are changing in nature. Evaluation will also take into account feedback from staff, parents, pupils and governors, with respect to the policy in practice. Such information will influence the continuance of the current policy, or may well prompt review and possible updating of the school's anti-bullying approach. It is recommended, therefore, that evaluation of this policy is undertaken annually.

### **Implementing the policy**

This policy was compiled by discussion with all the staff following a review of our school Discipline Policy. We agreed to continue our procedures and place more emphasis on encouragement and positive rewards for children obeying school rules or raising the self-esteem of fellow pupils.