

## SECTION THREE

### ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Nominated Trustee
January 2018	October 2019	Andy Lole	EC&T Committee

#### **Introduction**

The Mulberry Bush School seeks to provide a safe, secure and positive environment in which children can learn, develop and grow, making full use of the range of relationships and facilities available to them.

Staff work best in a supportive environment, free from heavy handed management, bullying or intimidation.

Children and adults at the school are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding, and to participate in any activity free from intimidation.

#### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as 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 (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. (DofE - Preventing and tackling bullying 2017)

#### 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.(DofE - Preventing and tackling bullying 2017)

The above definitions can characterise some adult/adult, adult/child, child/adult and child/child relationships.

Our school anti-bullying poster lists definitions of bullying behaviour in child friendly language.

#### Why it is important to minimise bullying behaviour

Bullying is always damaging to those involved. The victim, the bully and those who witness or know about the bullying are affected. For children, bullying is not a natural part of growing up, and should not be seen as such. Research has shown that victims of bullying may be more likely to have mental health problems, and reduced self-esteem and self-worth. For adults, where the values and culture of an organisation are dominated by fear and subordination individuals are less efficient, morale is lower and absenteeism is more frequent. People who bully are likely to experience difficult and unhappy relationships with others.

### **Aims**

This policy aims to provide clear whole school guidance in order to:

- Prevent or minimise the instances of bullying taking place
- Ensure a clear and consistent response to bullying when it does occur
- Reduce the likelihood of children becoming bullies or victims of bullying in future life

### **Procedure**

#### Dealing with bullying when it occurs

When children complain of being bullied or when bullying is observed we expect staff to work to the following guidelines:

1. All complaints should be taken seriously
2. Incidents of bullying should be logged on 'Clear Care'. Frequency and emerging patterns of bullying behaviour are monitored by senior staff using 'Clear Care'.
3. Children who are identified as displaying persistent bullying behaviour, or have been involved in a significant incident of bullying behaviour will be expected to attend Anti Bullying Workshops and/or to attend a panel meeting.
4. Victims of bullying should be given support - The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from an adult that knows the child well, providing support through group discussions, engaging with parents or referring to local authority children's services.
5. Instigators of bullying should be told clearly that this behaviour will not be tolerated. An appropriate sanction may be used, alongside opportunities to apologise or make things better in some way. It is important not to bully the bully, as this is likely to encourage bullying. When incidents of cyberbullying occur, restrictions on the access to computers are likely to be put in place.
6. Parents and carers, and other people with responsibility such as social workers should be informed.

When staff feel they are being bullied they are expected to raise the matter with their supervisor or other appropriate line manager. When this does not feel possible the staff member should raise the matter with another manager, the Director or if necessary a Trustee. The processes outlined in the staff handbook document how the matters should be managed and actions taken.

#### Complaints procedures

The school has a complaints procedure which can be used by any child at any time if they are being bullied or if after telling adults of bullying they are not happy with how it was dealt with.

#### Independent advocacy:

Each house has a private connection to Coram/Voice, which is an independent advocacy service for children. The children can use this whenever they choose and can raise issues including bullying. The

children can also use the mainline phones to call ChildLine and the information for this is provided to each child on arrival and is on notice boards across the school.

#### Comments boxes:

Each house has a 'Comments Box' where children can comment on anything either with their name or anonymously, and this can include facts and feelings around bullying.

#### **Role of the Trustee Body**

Trustees monitor the effectiveness of this policy through their unannounced visits. They review this policy every two years.

#### **Role of the Management Team**

The management team are responsible for the oversight of the culture of the organisation ensuring a bullying free environment for all. They should monitor all incidents of bullying and ensure action has been taken to address incidents where they arise.

#### **Role of Staff**

##### Methods of prevention

- All staff at the school are aware of the potential for bullying to take place. In order to reduce the likelihood of this behaviour occurring the following practices are followed:
  - Staff take steps to find out if bullying is taking place
  - Closely supervising children in areas of the school where bullying may happen, including when using computers.
  - Empowering all members of staff to be confident to interrupt and confront potential bullying situations
  - Consistent and fair management of behaviour difficulties
  - Consistent and clear statements about the unacceptable nature of bullying behaviour
  - Help everyone understand that a reason why someone bullies another person may be to do with; them feeling bullied by someone else, being frightened or being unhappy
  - Ensuring children have good awareness of the risks when using the internet.
  - Children knowing they can use the 'Comments Box' in each house and the education area to let the adults know if there is something around bullying that they are not happy with.

##### Creating a supportive climate

The staff at the school work very hard to create and maintain a positive ethos and atmosphere in all aspects of our work. This helps to promote healthy, caring relationships between people, and develop socially acceptable and rewarding interactions. Some of the ways we do this are by:

- Valuing relationship building experiences
- Supporting children to be able to communicate openly and honestly
- Role modelling appropriate behaviour
- Promoting positive values
- Teaching good social behaviour/social skills
- Promoting the development of self-confidence and self esteem
- Rewarding non aggressive behaviour
- Developing a non-delinquent environment
- Providing a wide range of interesting, engaging activities
- Maintaining a high level of child guidance and supervision
- Working closely with families and carers
- Encouraging children to become more assertive

- Talking with children about issues such as racism or bullying
- Encouraging everyone to deal with disagreements and conflict in non-aggressive ways

Many of these things are also important for adults but in addition to the above list we value the following as ways to create a supportive environment for staff:

- Regular supervision/performance support meetings for individuals and groups
- Annual appraisals and bi-annual 360 degree reviews which focus on developing and nurturing strengths
- Reflective spaces for all staff
- High quality induction and training for all staff
- Meeting spaces to develop peer support
- Meetings to develop a collective understanding of how we work with the children's presenting difficulties
- An environment which supports staff to be alongside children rather than caught up in unnecessary bureaucracy

#### **Role of Pupils**

Pupils should develop their awareness of what bullying is. They should understand their propensity to both bully or be bullied and work closely with staff and their peers to create a bullying free environment. This may be through community meetings, circle time, group work, school council etc.

#### **Role of the School Council**

The school council should bring their developing awareness and wisdom as representatives of the child group into discussions in their meetings. They should feedback to the whole school their thoughts and ideas about how to promote a bullying free environment.

#### **Raising Awareness of this Policy (those responsible)**

Induction training, observations of practice, Management Meeting.

#### **Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy**

This policy will be reviewed every two years.