Status: Statutory

Next Review: Autumn 2018

Approved by GB

Children have the right to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve and make a positive contribution, all without fear of intimidation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the policy for 'Preventing Radicalisation.

In developing the whole child we aim:

- To provide a welcoming and stimulating environment
- To identify and monitor each pupil's needs and progress and to ensure pupil's well-being, health and safety when in the school's care.
- To promote pupils' self-esteem, self-discipline and respect for others and to establish high standards of behaviour both within and beyond the classroom
- To promote pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through all subjects of the Curriculum and through the general life of the school.
- To encourage independence in learning and to help pupils acquire knowledge, skills and values relevant to future life
- To promote a school ethos and environment that encourages a healthy lifestyle
- To achieve the above aims by whole schools policies implemented by all professionals involved in school life with emphasis on positive presentation and codes of behaviour, high standards and high expectations.

Through this policy we aim to:

- To make earlier identification of bullying
- Consider the school environment with a view to providing a "bully free" environment by taking preventative measures
- Develop a clear strategy for staff to use when dealing with any incidents arising from bullying
- Make all staff aware of the policy and the support which is available
- Include within the curriculum opportunities to discuss incidents and strategies for dealing with bullying

We consider that although there are no certain cures to deal with or actually prevent bullying, we need to have strategies to encourage prevention and to respond to actions of bullying.

Consultation Process

In producing this policy we have used the guidance from Northumberland County Council and involved representatives from staff, school council, parent governors and EWO

What is Bullying?

Bullying may be defined as:

- the abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent to cause distress to another individual or group.
- deliberately hurtful behaviour which may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature.
- repeated over a period of time, on those who feel powerless to resist, with the intention of causing distress.

Bullying should always be taken seriously. All bullying is unacceptable. Bullying does not only occur between children. The above definition can also be seen to characterise some relationships between adults or between adults and children.

In more serious instances where adults abuse their power over a child or a child abuses their power over another child, bullying may be viewed as child abuse and should be treated as such.

Bullying is deliberately hurtful. It typically has seven elements:

- an initial desire to hurt
- the desire is expressed in action
- someone is hurt either physically or emotionally
- there is an imbalance of power
- it is without justification
- it is typically repeated
- there is evident enjoyment by those who bully

Bullying can also stem from thoughtlessness, such as in name calling or stem from institutionalised attitudes, for example in relation to gender or race. That does not make it any less unacceptable.

Bullying can typically take three forms:

- Physical bullying *hitting, kicking, taking belongings*
- Verbal bullying *name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks*
- Indirect bullying *spreading nasty stories, exclusion from social groups.*

Name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics. However, pupils can be called names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour, sexual orientation or some form of disability.
The use of mobile phones to text insulting, obscene or threatening messages is both verbal and indirect bullying. The use of phones, including camera phones to harass or transmit derogatory text messages and or photographs must also be viewed as bullying. Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones to school.
Bullying is always significant to the person being bullied.

Bullying by Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation or Disability

Racist Bullying

Following the Stephen Lawrence incident, the 1999 MacPherson report defines racist bullying as "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person"

A child or young person may be targeted for representing a group. Attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse – name calling, racist jokes, offensive mockery / mimicry
- Physical aggression or threats
- Wearing offensive or provocative badges or other insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines into the school or organisation's premises
- Racist inciting of others
- Racist graffiti or other written insults including against food, music, dress or customs
- A refusal to associate with someone of other ethnic origin in work or play

For further information and guidance consult the Northumberland County Council and school anti-racism policies

Sexual Bullying

Sexual bullying is characterised by the following:

- Abusive name calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Pornographic material
- Graffiti with sexual content

In its most extreme form, sexual bullying takes the form of sexual assault or even rape. Under these circumstances police would normally be involved as these are criminal offences.

Sexual Orientation

Pupils do not have to be lesbian, gay or bi-sexual to experience this type of bullying. In most cases being different can be enough. (In a survey 82% of teachers in 300 secondary schools in London were aware of verbal incidents. Only 6% of these schools referred to this type of bullying within their policy).
Factors hindering schools in challenging homophobic bullying include staff inexperience and parental disapproval.

For further information and guidance consult the DFSC publication on homophobic bullying "Stand Up for Us"

Disabilities

Children and young people with special needs or disabilities are often at a great risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly. The bullying is usually about their specific difficulties or their appearance. This is compounded by the fact that these children and young people may not be able to articulate their experiences.

Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:
Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible.
This may include:
- looking at use of the school systems;
- identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
- Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation.
This may include:
The educationpeople.org
- Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
- Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy. (Note: Schools should ensure they access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the schools powers are used proportionately and lawfully)

▪ Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online.
This may include:

▪ advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;

▪ providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;

▪ helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

Recognising Bullying

A recent survey showed that bullying in schools is widespread. Although bullying can
occur on journeys to and from school, most takes place in school. Research shows that75% of bullying in primary schools takes place in the playground. In secondary schools it is also most likely outdoors but other hotspots are classrooms, corridors and toilets, especially when supervision is minimal.

Both boys and girls bully and can bully as individuals or as members of a group. Children who bully others come from any kind of social or cultural background. Adult bullying of children also occurs and is equally unacceptable.

Bullying always creates inequalities and is damaging to all those involved. The person being bullied, the person who bullies and those who witness or know about the bullying are all affected in some way. Those who bully can experience difficult and unhappy relationships with both peers and adults and frequently need help to overcome these difficulties. Research evidence has shown that those who bully are more likely to engage in anti-social activities and have a greater prevalence of poor mental health.

A child could have experienced both being bullied and having bullied others. Bullying is not a natural part of growing up and should never be accepted as such. Those who bully may show aggression through for example, poor control of impulsive actions, a positive view of violence or a desire to dominate. They may exhibit anxiety through for example low self esteem or difficulties in making friends. They may be easily
led in joining in bullying or in standing by whilst bullying takes place.

Those who bully may experience difficulty in admitting what they have done; be reluctant to admit that what they have done is wrong; suppress feelings of guilt; feel no remorse and repeat the hurtful action, especially if this goes unchallenged.
Those who are bullied may spend their lives in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and feel that they have done something to attract the bullying. Any child can be bullied.

Those who are being bullied may experience:

- Unhappiness
- A sense of desolation and in some cases, desperation
- Reduced self esteem and self worth
- Poor academic performance
- Exclusion from normal social experience
- A strong desire to escape the situation which may result in absconding or truanting
- A desire to self-harm or even to commit suicide

Those who are being bullied may exhibit the following:

- Unwillingness to attend or participate in activities
- Unwillingness to venture into some areas of a building

- Fear of walking to school or of using public transport
- Underachievement
- Books or clothes destroyed
- Possessions and money going missing
- Signs of distress such as crying easily, lack of appetite
- Becoming withdrawn or disruptive and / or aggressive
- Stammering
- Stealing to pay the bully or replace missing possessions
- A variety of physical symptoms including cuts, bruising, aches, pain, faints,
- headaches, stomach upsets, bedwetting, disrupted sleep patterns
- A marked change in well established patterns of behaviour

Those who are bullied are often reluctant to say what is wrong or to seek help.
organisations that tolerate bullying are less effective; morale is lower and absenteeism is more frequent.

Preventative Action
The school environment:

Having carried out a survey of the school environment we consider the following to be possible vulnerable areas:
- cloakrooms
- toilets
- lining up
- home corner
- "out of bounds" areas in the yard (behind shed, side pathways)
- children sitting together in close proximity eg tables in classroom/dining areas, on the carpet – discussion/story times/assemblies

We are aware of the need for adequate and watchful supervision and in addition, spot checks should be carried out on a regular basis.

Integration of New Children

When integrating new children into our environment all staff should use the following guidance:

- All children find a new environment different and need support to adapt to the change
- Other members of the class should be made aware of the new child's arrival and that they will need support from the class and acceptance. A new "friend" should be chosen to look after the new child throughout
- Opportunities should be created for the new child to be introduced in a caring way to the people and places within our school
- Hopefully friendships will start to be made and level of independence increased, however if the introductory stages do not appear to work a re-assessment of the situation and friendship groups may need to take place to encourage further integration
- New child and their parents should be made aware of staff availability and willingness to discuss any problems should the need arise
- After half a term the child and parents should be consulted as to how they have settled

Supporting the Child

In support of prevention :

- Concern about bullying should be discussed to show the children that we are aware, that it is disapproved of and that we will listen

- Children should be encouraged to openly express feelings through discussions, RE, creative writing, art work. Fairness of rules, responsibility to others etc should be given high profile
- Staff should aim to be accessible when necessary primarily to our own class and secondly to the whole school to support the needs of the children in our care

Dealing with Incidents of Bullying

Please read in conjunction with :

- NCC guidance section 12 Recommended strategies to deal with bullying on school premises and section 13 Recommended strategies to deal with bullying outside school premises.

If a series of incidents are identified as bullying (refer to the definition of bullying), the following stages should be carried out:

Stage 1

- Remain calm; you are in charge. Reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun and give the bully control of the situation
- Make it plain to the bully that you disapprove
- Take the incident or report seriously
- Take action as quickly as possible
- Think hard about whether your action needs to be private or public; who are the pupils involved
- Reassure the victim(s), don't make them feel inadequate or foolish
- Offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim(s)

Stage 2

- Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view
- Punish the bully if you have to, but be very careful how you do this. Reacting aggressively or punitively gives the message that it's alright to bully if you have the power
- Explain clearly the punishment and why it is being given

Stage 3

- Inform school management and/or other appropriate persons, e.g Senior Supervisor, Class Teacher, Deputy Head, Head Teacher.
- Inform colleagues if the incident arose out of a situation where everyone should be vigilant, eg unsupervised toilets
- Inform/ask your Head Teacher to inform both sets of parents calmly, clearly and concisely; reassure both sets of parents that the incident will not linger on or be held against anyone.

Dated and confidential evidence and records of the incidents and how they were dealt with/resolved should be kept by the member of teaching staff. The Head Teacher should be informed of the situation at the onset and kept up to date so that they are able to support staff, children and parents when they also become involved.

Support for the Victim and the Bully

It is important that the incident doesn't live on through reminders, but it is also important that necessary steps are taken to prevent a recurrence.   Both victim and bully may need individual support. They may need to consider:

- How could the incident have been avoided
- What other tactics could they have used
- assertiveness for the victim

- control of aggression for the bully
- Who else could they have talked to.

Support Within the Curriculum

All children at some point could find themselves in a bullying situation as either victim or bully. Within our PSHE Programme we encourage the development of assertiveness through:

- role play
- discussions
- debate
- moral stories
- games.

The programme is developed by each class teacher and may be subject to adjustment according to the appropriateness eg an incident occurs, some anti-social behaviour is displayed. The programme would then hopefully act as a preventative measure, and should be used sensitively - not to exaggerate or reinforce something which is best forgotten.

In addition the school will promote the issue each year during the national
'Anti-Bullying Week'

Communication of the Policy

- The policy will be used to support and justify any action that needs to be taken with regard to bullying
- All staff should be made aware of the importance and that in order to prevent incidents it should be adhered to
- We aim to make parents aware of the preventative measures of our policy and how these are encouraged through our social development and discipline policy and general aims of the school
- The policy should be discussed with governor representatives

Evaluation

The effectiveness of the policy will be discussed as a whole staff after a year and any adjustments made. Review of the policy will also take place on a cyclic basis and planned for in the SDP.