

ANTI BULLYING POLICY AND GUIDELINES

1. INTRODUCTION

Everyone at Hutton Henry Church of England Primary School has the right to feel welcome, safe, secure and happy in order to maintain their emotional wellbeing and achieve their maximum potential. Bullying of any kind prevents this from happening. So it is everyone's responsibility to promote an ethos in which bullying is not tolerated, to actively listen to children and adults who feel that they are being bullied and to act appropriately on the information received. This policy contains guidelines to support an ethos where children are treated with respect and understanding and can participate in any activity free from intimidation. It is consistent with the Durham County Council Anti Bullying Policy and Guidelines.

2. DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING

"Someone being hurtful to someone else, constantly every day" - Millie

Bullying is repeated behaviour that is intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally. It can take several forms:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist – racial taunts, discriminatory behaviour/acts
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic/ Transphobic – because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Written – notes, letters, graffiti which cause distress to the recipient
- Cyber – all areas of the internet, such as email, and internet chat room misuse, mobile phone threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology such as camera and video facilities.

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, small arguments or the occasional trick or joke. Children sometimes fall out or say or do things that they don't mean, particularly if they are angry or upset. When single incidents occur where a child hurts another child, physically or emotionally, on purpose, that should be recorded as a serious incident by a class teacher. This information is then passed on to the head teacher on a half termly basis and stored centrally. Teachers may use the Restorative Approach to lead discussions of this nature.

3. AIMS

- To raise awareness amongst staff, children and parents that bullying occurs in all parts of society, including schools, that it is unacceptable and that action will be taken to overcome it.
- To provide guidelines which make it clear the steps that will be taken when bullying is reported.
- To create a safe and caring school environment, which encourages resilience, whilst remaining supportive and nurturing so that all children feel secure.
- To establish a listening, telling and believing environment in which all children will be listened to in an appropriate setting and efforts will be made to establish facts.
- To be aware of children's individual needs and to meet those needs.
- To minimise confrontation and to encourage mutual respect.

4. OBJECTIVES

A safe and caring environment to be provided for all children in the following ways:

- All staff (teaching and non-teaching) taking responsibility for dealing with bullying within the school.

- The creation of a telling, listening and believing environment, where the concerns of all individuals are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and appropriately.
- The development of a sense of common purpose between staff, children and parents.
- The consistent use of clearly defined procedures for dealing with any inappropriate social behaviour.
- The common use of the curriculum, Acts of Worship, pastoral care, home/school links and staff training to promote a caring ethos in the school and an awareness of how to deal with bullying.

5. GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

The underlying assumption is that all children have the right to be safe. All staff have a responsibility to keep them safe. To achieve this, the following action should be taken:

- Create a telling environment where children are encouraged to discuss incidents that cause them anxiety or distress, including bullying, in class or more privately. Key Person and Circle Time (where issues may be discussed without mentioning names), the Worry Box and PSHCE should all be used to encourage victims and witnesses to report bullying.
- Be vigilant for signs and signals which may indicate bullying e.g. changes in behaviour, concentration or performance.
- Make time to listen sympathetically to all alleged victims (and bullies).
- Use the Restorative Approach to lead discussions between bullies and victims.
- Take all allegations seriously and investigate them promptly, thoroughly and sensitively. Talk to the victim and the alleged bully individually and, if appropriate, ask them to write down the facts as they see them. Gather information from other sources, such as staff and children.
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken within the school's Behaviour Policy. Ensure that the victim and the bully are clear that something has to be done (although this may not necessarily be publicly).
- Incidents requiring class teacher investigation and involvement should be recorded on CPOMS by the class teacher (from Spring term onwards, until that time paper records will continue to be used). The Headteacher should be copied into report.
- If on investigation it appears that the issue of concern is not one of bullying, the matter should be explained to the child in such a way that they would not hesitate to report future incidents (which could be of a more serious nature). Action may still need to be taken to resolve the incident. This must be discussed with the child.
- If on investigation it is discovered that bullying has taken place, staff must decide whether they can deal with the matter themselves within the school's disciplinary structure or whether the matter is of such a nature that it must be referred to a senior member of staff for further advice/action i.e. Team Leader, Deputy Head teacher or Head teacher.
- If bullying is of a prejudicial nature it must be reported to the Headteacher to be recorded as a Racist Incident.
- All incidents will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. Parents of the victim and the bully will be informed and involved when appropriate.
- If the bullying is persistent and severe, it may become a child protection issue. In which case, reference must be made to the school's Child Protection Policy.
- Record the incident and outcome. If bullying is shown to have occurred, this must be indicated on CPOMS (from Spring term onwards, until that time paper records will continue to be used) and the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher should be copied in. (This should always be done where evidence indicates that bullying has taken place or if an investigation of alleged bullying has taken place.)
- The class teacher and staff on duty outside will monitor the situation over a period of time, talking regularly to the children concerned and to parents if appropriate. If the situation has not been resolved within the given time frame a review meeting will be held.

6. GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN

To reinforce school policy and to promote a positive ethos, staff will use PSCHÉ, Circle Time, Acts of Worship and other opportunities like Anti Bullying Week. In ways appropriate for their age and understanding children should be made aware of the following:

- That they should tell a member of staff or post in the Worry Box if someone is making them feel unhappy.
- That they should tell a member of staff if they know that someone is making someone else unhappy.
- That they should support and befriend the victims of bullying.
- That they should not to pick on others, tease or name call and not to join in just because they are frightened that they might be picked on themselves if they don't.

Remind the children that:

- They will be listened to.
- The staff will do something about it.
- The staff might need to tell someone else but they will tell the child what they are going to do.

7. GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

The school's Anti Bullying Policy will be available to parents, on request, in the Head teacher's office.

The following advice is offered to parents who feel that their child is being bullied:

- Talk calmly and with sensitivity to your child about what is happening to them.
- If at all possible, act with your child's agreement and help them to find a safe solution.
- Contact school immediately to inform someone about the problem.
- Maintain contact with the school.
- Don't tell your child to "just put up with it" or "fight back" and don't try to deal with the situation yourself because the school will work in close partnership with you.
- Act in a way which conforms to the school Parent Conduct Agreement.