



## Anti-Bullying Policy

*Bullying takes place in every school and in the wider community and we seek to address this issue by developing both a culture of openness and a structured response to incidents.*

This policy is a response to the DfE document (1994) 'Bullying – Don't suffer in Silence' and also draws on the experience of schools within Gateshead MBC and reflects the LEA Policy. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policies on:

- PSHE/Citizenship
- Behaviour
- Equal Opportunities
- Special Needs
- Inclusion

### Aims

This policy aims to:

- Define bullying for the school community
- Communicate key issues to pupils, staff, governors and parents
- Provide a framework to address all bullying incidents effectively

### Rationale

It is everyone's responsibility to prevent bullying. In addition to statutory requirements, there are also a number of practical reasons why bullying must be addressed in school.

- The safety and happiness of all members of the school community
- Educational achievement
- Bullying is unacceptable behaviour

### Definition

#### **What is bullying?**

- It can be continuous hurtful behaviour
- It can be repeated behaviour
- It can be a one-off incident in which the recipient is intimidated or hurt.
- Not all 'fall outs' within friendship groups or class groups is bullying. Bullying is a very specific type of behaviour which is often misrepresented.

## **Bullying takes many forms, but the four main types are:**

- **Physical** – hitting kicking, taking/destroying belongings
- **Verbal** – name calling insulting, making racist, sexist and other personal comments
- **Indirect** - spreading hurtful rumour and gossip about someone or excluding them from social groups
- **Cyber** - this involves name calling, intimidation, abusive language and spreading hurtful gossip through technology. This could include mobile phones or chat rooms or any use of the internet.

## Intervention and Proactive strategies

- A clear lead from senior management with effective and repeated communication between staff, governors, parents and pupils
- Modelling positive behaviour for pupils by all adults
- Listen carefully to and support pupils, parents and staff
- Monitor pupil behaviour carefully in and around school
- Recognise behaviour change and early signs of distress (e.g. bedwetting, lateness, deterioration of work, spurious illness, isolation, desire to remain with adults, increased anxiety and fear) as an indicator of bullying. Organised initiatives (eg buddying system, peer counselling peer mediation, lunchtime club, circle of friends)
- Curriculum approaches, promoting understanding of bullying issues through drama art, PSHE, English, RE and Pastoral group work
- Draw upon the expertise and experience of outside agencies and other schools

## Reactive strategies

- Take action as soon as possible, informing other members of teaching, non-teaching and midday staff to inform the Headteacher immediately if bullying is seen or reported
- Increase vigilance at times of transition and other less structured times of the school day
- Once it has been established that bullying has taken place, parents of all pupils involved should be notified and invited to visit the school (or speak to the Headteacher by phone if not able to come into school)
- Once clear evidence for bullying is established, actions will take to ensure that there is no recurrence. These can include
  - Individual interview/ counselling for both parties by teaching staff or senior management*
  - Increased monitoring of both vulnerable parties*
  - Providing alternative facilities for less structured times (e.g. increased responsibility, access to support groups)*

*Involve outside agencies if already associated with the children*  
*Increased home school liaison at the door initially*  
*Opportunities for reparation*  
*Use of rewards/sanctions as defined in the behaviour policy*

#### Evaluation/Monitoring

Pupil's views will be communicated and considered. A regular assembly time will address the issue of all forms of bullying and provide an opportunity for children to air their views and concerns.

A confidential problem box, located near the Headteacher's office, will be available for children to express any concerns they have to the Headteacher.

Pupils are expected to share their worries or concerns with all members of staff. Adults are very interested in the views of children and will make time to listen and understand any concerns they might have in relation to the safety and welfare of every child.