

# **KNOWETOP PRIMARY SCHOOL**



## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**MARCH 2017**

## **Principles and Values:**

As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to. Bullying is not acceptable. The school will seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within school or, where appropriate, in the local community. The ethos of our school fosters high expectations of pupil behaviour and we will consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this.

## **Rationale:**

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

Most people encounter bullying at some point in their lives, but we all deal with it differently. The aim of this policy is to work together to ensure that our school is a safe place for children and adults to be; whether the school community is directly or indirectly affected by bullying or not.

## **What Is Bullying?**

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour used by an individual or group, usually but not exclusively repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. In other words, bullying at Knowetop Primary School is considered to be, 'unacceptable behaviour which occurs on purpose and causes emotional or physical upset to another person or other people.'

Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time.

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion

- Culture
- SEN or disability
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances, including poverty and pupils being Young Carers
- Sexual orientation, sexism or homophobia .

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racial - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality.
- Direct or indirect.
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber-bullying - involving all areas of internet use, such as email and internet chat, Twitter, Facebook misuse, etc. Cyber-bullying can include misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and recording facilities, I-pads, games consoles, Mobile threats by text messaging and calls are also included in this category.

Bullying can take place in the classroom, in the playground, in the toilet areas, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and in cyberspace. It can take place during group activities and between families, groups or individuals in the local community. At times outside disagreements can impact on school life.

### **Perpetrators and Victims:**

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power between one person/ persons and another/others. This imbalance can be impacted on by:

- The size of the individual.
- The strength of the individual.
- The numbers or group size involved.
- Anonymity - through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts, etc.

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying behaviours and approach issues promptly, dealing directly with the event or allegation and relating information to members of the Senior Management Team timeously. This is particularly important when children may not be aware that they are being bullied; because they may be too young or have a level of Special Educational Needs which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them.

Staff must also be aware of those children who may be vulnerable pupils; or those responding to emotional problems or mental health issues which may bring about a propensity to be unkind to others, or may make them more likely to fall victim to the behaviour of others. It is important that parents/carers share information regarding changes in home circumstances with the school as soon as possible to help staff provide appropriate and effective care and attention.

### **Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying hurts, emotionally and/or physically. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of both a victim and a perpetrator. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need support to learn different ways of behaving, whilst pupils who are being bullied need support to build resilience and sustain self-worth.

### **Signs and Symptoms for Parents and Staff:**

A child may indicate by non-verbal signs or behaviours that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs of bullying and they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school.
- Begs to be driven to school.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Becomes unwilling to go to school (school phobic).
- Begins to truant.
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Cries him or herself to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Begins to make less effort with school work than was previously the case.

- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing".
- Asks for extra money or starts stealing money.
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost".
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Comes home hungry (money/lunch has been stolen).
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Stops eating.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.
- Shows lack of eye contact.
- Becomes short tempered.
- Shows a change in attitude towards people at home.

The signs and behaviours above are not guaranteed signs of bullying and could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, however they may also indicate a bullying situation and should be investigated.

### **Outcomes:**

- All known/reported incidents of bullying will be investigated by the class teacher or by a member of Knowetop Primary School's Management Team.
- Impact of comments, etc. will be explained to those involved as it may be the case that pupils are not aware of the bigger consequences/impacts of their actions or comments.
- Parents of the pupils involved may be informed about the incident or about any concerns identified whilst matters are being investigated or at its end (depending on findings).
- The child displaying unacceptable behaviour may be asked to genuinely apologise (as appropriate to the child's age and level of understanding).
- Other consequences may take place, e.g. a parent being informed about their child's behaviour, a letter of apology may be written, the pupil may lose free-time for a period of time and a request that the parents

support the school with any sanctions or follow-up supports put in place may be made.

- Wherever possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with a child continually demonstrating unacceptable behaviour towards others, e.g. Educational Psychologist, CAHMS, Social Work, Families First, etc.
- In serious cases (this is defined as children displaying an on-going lack of response to support interventions or sanctions, that is, no change in behaviour of the perpetrator and an unwillingness to alter their behaviour choices), support from behaviour outreach, counselling, reduced timetables, or exclusion from school for a period of time may be considered.

During and after an incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be recorded in the Bullying Log (See Appendix A) and monitored to ensure that repetition of the behaviour does not take place.

### **Prevention:**

At Knowetop Primary School we use a variety of methods to support children in preventing and understanding the consequences of bullying. These include assemblies, PSHE and Citizenship lessons, Worry Boxes in some classes and inclusion of cyber-bullying input in Digital Technologies planning and delivery, Pupil Council members are available to convey concerns to staff and pupils are regularly reminded that staff are available to help at any time should they be experiencing concerns or feeling anxious as a result of bullying (either as the bully or the bullied).

The ethos and working philosophy of the school means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Good and kind/polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded in class and at assemblies via the 'Going for Gold' behaviour programme and 'Weekly Wonders' certificates..

Staff regularly discuss bullying, and ways to deal with this with pupils. This leads to open conversations and increased confidence in reporting any incidents and concerns about other children's behaviour.

Staff reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular theme and apply our equality policy; supporting every child in our school.

Staff act respectfully and support pupils with individual needs, without giving pupils advocacy to use differences to begin calling names or teasing others.

Staff show vigilance regarding groups of friends together. Friendship groups may bring about an imbalance of power and must be led towards welcoming others to join them and not excluding others from their group. Staff reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but that they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings and be kind to each other.

Children are involved in the prevention of bullying as and when appropriate, these inclusion activities may include:

- Writing a set of school or class rules.
- Writing a personal pledge or promise against bullying.
- Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying and sending an anti-bullying message.
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly.
- Making up role-plays about what to do through scenarios about bullying
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters that children who use unacceptable behaviour towards others are dealt with quickly.
- Creating an item for the school website.
- Engaging with the UNCRC Charters.

If a child feels that they are being bullied then there are several non-hierarchical procedures that they are encouraged to follow:

- Tell a friend.
- Tell your Pupil Council representative.
- Tell a teacher or adult who they feel you can trust.
- Write their concern and post it in the class 'Worry Box.
- Tell a parent or adult at home who they feel they can trust.
- Discuss it as part of your PSHE time.
- Ring Childline and follow the advice given.

### **Recording of Bullying Incidents:**

When an incident of bullying has taken place, staff must record and report it. In the case of racist bullying, this must be reported to the Head Teacher so that appropriate NLC records may also be completed.

General incidents of bullying and other behaviour concerns will be recorded by the Class Teacher. This would include incidents where staff have had to become involved and speak with children, and/or where parents have raised concerns regarding bullying. Incidents of bullying raised to Management level will be recorded in the school Bullying Log.

Incidents of bullying will be discussed with relevant staff and parents of the children involved will be notified, in order that everyone can be vigilant and that further incidents may be prevented.

### **Advice to Parents:**

As the parent of a child whom you suspect is being bullied you should:

1. Report bullying incidents to the class teacher or a member of the school's Management Team.
2. Anticipate that in cases of serious bullying, incidents will be recorded by staff and the Head Teacher will be notified.
3. Work with the school to investigate issues and support follow-up actions.

### **Please Do Not:**

1. Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child or by speaking to their parents.
2. Encourage your child to be 'a bully' back.

Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.