



## Anti-Bullying Policy

(last updated in September 2020)

Chair of FGB: ..... Date: .....

## Rationale

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that children learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Levensdale Primary School has a zero tolerance attitude to bullying. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Child Protection policy and our Online Safety Policy. This policy endorses and fully supports the UNCRC, specifically Articles 2, 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 28, 29 and 31.

## Definition

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, **repeated over a period of time**, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

*An imbalance of power:* young people who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

*Repetition:* bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

The three main types of bullying are:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
- Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups) including cyber bullying

Children must be encouraged to report bullying in school to a teacher or staff member.

This policy is designed to ensure that as a school we are alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it.

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

Bullying hurts; no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Children who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Bullying can cause stress and can affect a child's health.

Schools and parents have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

## **Aims**

This policy aims to:

- Promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour
- Ensure all teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents have an understanding of what bullying is
- Inform children and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership, which helps maintain a bully-free environment
- Show commitment to overcoming bullying by practising zero tolerance
- Identify and deal with incidents of bullying consistently and effectively

## **Signs and Symptoms**

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

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens self-harm
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares/bed-wetting
- regularly feels ill in the morning

- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go “missing”
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes unreasonable when dealing with school issues
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what’s wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

**These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems**, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## **Prevention**

To fulfil our aims, the following strategies are used:

- A structured programme to raise self-esteem in pupils. For more details on the school’s ‘positive approach’, please see the school’s Behaviour policy.
- Constant monitoring of school buildings and grounds to ensure a safe and secure environment is maintained.
- Involvement of all school staff to ensure a consistent approach is in evidence.
- An open door policy in the school.
- Encouraging pupils and parents to report bullying.
- Raising awareness of bullying.
- Paired learning and buddy systems.

## **Procedures**

It is recognised that incidents of bullying can occur in all schools. It is essential that all such incidents are taken seriously and dealt with in an appropriate manner. A pupil or parent may report an incident to any member of staff, but the responsibility for ensuring all incidents are consistently dealt with lies jointly with the class teacher and the senior leadership team.

The teacher who deals with an incident (in consultation with the senior leadership team where

necessary) is responsible for the recording of findings and actions taken. The initial report and subsequent actions resulting from this report should be logged as soon as possible on CPOMS. The headteacher will be responsible for embedding anti-bullying awareness in the policies and practices of the school.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or has seen the incident personally
- Staff investigate alleged bullying by consulting the victim(s). Appendix 1 provides a checklist for investigating an incident.
- If it is felt that an incident of bullying has taken place, then it will be taken seriously and investigated. A member of staff wishing to report an incident of bullying should approach the child's class teacher.
- The member of staff and the teacher should reach agreement as to whether this incident constitutes bullying or should be addressed as an incident of poor behaviour.
- If deemed to be bullying, the teacher responsible will speak to the pupils involved and proceed accordingly. If the matter can be resolved in school without the need for parental contact then this will be done and monitored by appropriate member of staff, teacher and /or Headteacher. It may be decided that parents should be informed immediately and this will be done by the Headteacher (or, in his absence, a member of the leadership team). A written copy of events will be kept and this will be updated until the situation has been resolved.
- In serious cases parents will be informed that their child has been subject to bullying. The parents of the perpetrator(s) will also be contacted via telephone or letter and offered a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss the incident.
- Sanctions will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.

## **Support**

### Victim

Support for the victim is essential, both immediately following the incident and during an agreed period of review. Peer support, staff support, parental support and outside agency support may all be essential to ensure that the victim does not suffer any long term effects.

After a period of time staff will meet with the victim to reassess the situation and the relationship between those involved.

Children who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their

choice

- Reassuring the pupil
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Within the curriculum, the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

### Perpetrator(s)

It is recognised that support must be given to the perpetrator. Disciplinary procedures against the perpetrator(s) are intended to change or modify behaviour rather than label anyone as a bully. Such procedures may include:

- Positive behaviour strategies
- Withdrawal of activities
- The establishment of mentoring or a buddy system
- Discussion about the effects of bullying
- Peer mediation
- Involvement of other agencies and services such as an Educational Psychologist and the Behaviour Support Team

### **Staff Responsibilities**

All staff will be kept abreast of current thinking with regard to anti-bullying and if required, support will be given to implement this policy. All staff will be made aware of the implications of the school policies to bullying and racism.

Staff will be offered training on tackling bullying throughout the year or through professional development courses.

Where staff have reasonable cause to suspect that, as a result of a bullying incident, the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, they should report their concerns to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead who will then report these concerns to the Local Authority's Children's Social Care representatives via the Children's Hub (01642 130080).

## **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

**Agreed by Staff May 2010, reviewed in June 2011    Agreed by Governors June 2011**

**Latest review (no changes necessary) - September 2020**

## Appendix 1 Checklist for investigating an incident

- Who was involved – is there or are there apparent victims? If so who is it/are they?
- In what way did the victims suffer?
- How did the incident start? Was it spontaneous or premeditated?
- What is alleged to have happened, from the perspective of all those involved?
- When did the incident take place?
- Where did the incident take place?
- Who witnessed the incident (pupils, parents, staff and others)
- Who reported it to whom and when?
- Is there any background to this incident?
- Is there any other reason for considering this to be bullying behaviour?
- Why does the reporter or investigator of the incident perceive this to have been a bullying incident?
- To what extent did the incident affect others?
- What was the response of the victim(s) if such exist?
- What does/do the victim(s) wish to see resulting from the investigation?

A 'first offence' of e.g. name calling or abusive language should be challenged, the nature of the unacceptable behaviour explained and the school policy on such matters outlined. The pupil should be told that any further occurrences, towards the same child, will be logged against them as a bullying incident.