



Policy on Bullying

1 Introduction

- 1.1 It is a government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. In 2003, Ofsted published *Bullying: Effective Action in Secondary Schools*. This was followed by DCSF guidance for schools under two headings: *Don't Suffer in Silence* and *Bullying – A Charter for Action*. This policy reflects this guidance and the principles enshrined in '*Every Child Matters*'.
- 1.2 DCSF guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful, and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (e.g. being ignored or not spoken to).
- 1.3 Appendix 1 includes further definitions, advice, action, support and discipline adhered to at Abbotsford School.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- 2.2 We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.
- 2.3 This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- 2.4 We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

3 The role of the Council of Management

- 3.1 The Council of Management supports the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The Council of Management will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.
- 3.2 The Council of Management monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The Council of Management require the headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to them on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.
- 3.3 A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of the Council of Management to look into the matter. The Council of Management responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the Council of Management notifies the headteacher, and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the Council of Management.

4 The role of the headteacher

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The headteacher reports to the Council of Management about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

- 4.2 The headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the headteacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.
- 4.3 The headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receives sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.
- 4.4 The headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

5 The role of the teacher and support staff

- 5.1 All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.
- 5.2 Teachers keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the school. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate it themselves or refer it to the headteacher. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the headteacher, the teacher informs the child's parents or carers.
- 5.3 When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim, and punishment for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, we inform the headteacher and the special needs coordinator. We then invite the child's parents or carers into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the headteacher may contact external support agencies, such as the social services.
- 5.4 Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

6 The role of parents and carers

- 6.1 Parents and carers who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed in the school Prospectus.
- 6.2 Parents and carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

7 The role of pupils

- 7.1 Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.
- 7.2 Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in the annual pupil questionnaire.

8 Monitoring and review

- 8.1 This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the headteacher, who reports to the Council of Management on request about the effectiveness of the policy.
- 8.2 The anti-bullying policy is the Council of Managements' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining where incidents of bullying are recorded, and by discussion with the headteacher. Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.
- 8.3 This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.

Ratified by the Council of Management on 2.3.2010

APPENDIX 1

Definitions, Advice, Action, Support & Discipline

AGREED SCHOOL DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is regular, aggressive, verbal, psychological or physical conduct by an individual or a group against another person or persons. The behaviour is systematic and on going. It does not involve isolated incidents. It implies a wilful conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone with the intention of causing distress.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:-

a) **PHYSICAL**

A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.

b) **VERBAL**

Verbal abuse can take the form of name-calling. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social differences, personality etc.

c) **RACIAL**

Conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin.

d) **SEXUAL / SEXIST**

Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying occurs when a pupil (or group), usually repeatedly, harms another pupil or intentionally makes them unhappy because of their sex or because they may not be perceived to conform to normal gender roles.

e) **EXCLUSION**

A child can be bullied simply by being continually excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.

f) **DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT**

Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hands over property to them.

g) **CYBER-BULLYING**

Cyber-bullying is when the Internet, mobile phones or other ICT devices are used to send or post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person.

h) **DISABILITY**

Name-calling, innuendo, negative stereotyping or excluding from activity based on disability or learning difficulties.

ADVICE TO GIVE TO PUPILS WHO FEEL THEY ARE BEING BULLIED

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is WRONG!
- b) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is difficult but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- e) Be assertive – shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- f) Fighting back may make things worse. To help you to stand up for yourself, talk to a teacher or parent/guardian first.
- g) Generally it is best to tell an adult whom you trust straight away. They will listen. All staff will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

ADVICE TO GIVE TO PUPILS WHO FEEL THEY KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED:-

- a) TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- b) If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.

ADVICE TO PARENTS:-

- a) Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- b) Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunchtime was spent etc.
- c) If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- d) It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- e) Tell your own son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
- f) Make sure your child is fully aware of the school policy concerning bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED

If bullying is suspected we talk to the victim, the alleged bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:-

A “no blame approach” initially. This means that help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies.

Step one – talk to the victim. When the teacher finds out that bullying has happened the teacher will start by talking to the victim about his/her feelings.

Step two – discuss the situation with the “alleged” bully/bullies. The teacher arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved. This will include some bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying. The teacher explains to the group about the way the victim is feeling.

Step three – pupils are encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. The teacher agrees with the group future appropriate behaviour.

Step four – The situation to be monitored on a regular basis.

WE SUPPORT THE VICTIMS IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:-

1. by offering them an opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, or another teacher if they choose.
2. by informing the victims’ parents/guardians when it is considered necessary.
3. by offering continuing support.
4. by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent a recurrence of the behaviour
5. by ensuring that issues are addressed in the PSHE curriculum

WE DISCIPLINE YET TRY TO HELP, THE BULLIES IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:-

1. by talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
2. by informing the offender’s parents/guardians when necessary.
3. by continuing to work with the offenders in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
4. by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

DISCIPLINARY STEPS:

1. Issue to be dealt with by class teacher initially. Notes to be kept by class teacher.
2. If unresolved, matter to be brought to the attention of the Key Stage Co-ordinator, together with notes.

3. The offender will be given a warning by the Head Teacher to stop offending.
4. Parents to be informed in writing if there is a further incident.
5. Following a meeting with parents of pupil/s concerned the offender to miss morning break and be excluded from the premises at lunch-time.
6. If bullying persists pupils will be suspended for a fixed period of one or two days.
7. If they then carry on, they will be recommended for suspension for a period of up to five days.
8. If necessary, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion.