



Cotsford Primary School

Anti-Bullying including Cyberbullying Policy & Guidelines

Approved by the Governing Body: October 2019
Reviewed: April 2023

Cotsford Primary is committed to the Rights of the Child. Although direct reference to this is not continually made throughout the written the policy, children's rights are at the centre of all of the school's work and underpin our ethos and values.

This policy also complies with

Article 12 'Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously'

Article 13 'Every child must be free to say what they think and seek and retrieve all kinds of information as long as it within the law'

Article 14 'Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights'

Article 28 of the UNCRC 'Every child has the right to an education'.

Introduction

This Policy should be read alongside policies such as; Acceptable Use, Online Safety, Behaviour Support and Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy.

This policy has been written in line with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure we comply with the law. Within Cotsford Primary School we promote equality and celebrate difference throughout school and we **will** actively challenge prejudice driven bullying and learn from any such incidents.

The Equality Act 2010 is a legal document that ensures all people are treated fairly regardless of cultural background, sexual orientation, race, religion/belief, ability, home circumstance etc. This runs through our policy and is also applicable to adults in school.

All people have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. No one should underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person's life. It can cause high levels of distress, affecting a child's well-being, behaviour, academic and social development right through into adulthood. At Cotsford Primary School, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. All types of bullying are unacceptable at our school and **will not** be tolerated. All pupils, and adults, should feel able to tell and when bullying behaviour is brought to our attention, prompt and effective action will be taken.

This means that **anyone** who is aware of any type of bullying that is taking place is expected to tell a member of staff immediately.

What is Bullying?

"The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online'.

Anti-bullying Alliance definition

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, ridicule, threaten or frighten someone else over a period of time where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. A bully has power over his victim and lacks empathy and guilt.

The main types of bullying are:

- Physical - pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- Emotional - isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online /cyber - posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text/email messages or whilst gaming, social exclusion
- Indirect - Can include the exploitation of individuals.

Cyberbullying can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and reach victims in their own homes. It can have a far greater reach than face to face bullying, as videos and posts can easily be shared across social media sites reaching large audiences.

Anyone can be a victim of bullying however the prevalence can be higher for some groups and situations such as:

- Females
- Religious minorities
- LGBTQ
- Disability
- Black and minority ethnic groups
- ability, appearance or circumstance

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be bullied. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving and schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- ❖ All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should understand what bullying is and what to do should bullying occur or be reported.

- ❖ As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- ❖ Bullying will not be tolerated; all members of the school community should respect one another and treat one another with courtesy and kindness.
- ❖ People who are bullying others need to learn different, acceptable ways to behave by becoming aware of their behaviour and how they should respect others.

Entitlement

Everyone at Cotsford Primary School has the right;

- To work and play in a safe and secure environment, free from aggression and abuse.
- To express their attitudes and feelings constructively and have these respected by others.
- To have an uninterrupted education.
- To have personal property respected.

Everyone at Cotsford Primary School has the responsibility;

- To behave acceptably in all situations.
- To accept the consequences of their actions.
- To understand their responsibilities in the learning process.
- To be polite and co-operative with everyone respecting their rights and feelings.
- To respect public property and other people's personal property.
- To ensure other children's rights are met.

Guidelines and Expectations for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying

Procedures for Pupils

Pupils are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying to any member of staff.

Alleged victims are

- offered an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- listened to
- taken seriously
- informed of what action will be taken
- supported and reassured that all possible steps will be taken to ensure their safety and welfare
- supported in restoring their self-esteem and confidence through one to one support, circle time, mediation or counselling where appropriate.

Alleged bullies are

- listened to
- taken seriously
- informed of what action will be taken

- supported if necessary by:
 - Discussing what happened
 - Discovering why they became involved
 - Establishing the wrong doing
 - Informing parents or guardians to help change / challenge the attitude of the pupil

Incidents will follow the responses to the 'Procedures for dealing with allegations of bullying' flow chart and may result in further referral, an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) or risk assessment being completed.

In some cases, it may be found that the child is representing the views of others including those of their family members. These views need to be challenged, whilst respecting the relationship the child has and how they will be influenced by family members. Where these views are prejudicial to equality, staff will also need to appropriately challenge the adults who hold these views.

Should staff feel that they have been unsuccessful in doing this, the police may be contacted and a referral made to First Contact. If the behaviours and views are extremist and linked to being involved with, or supportive of, terrorist activities (PREVENT Strategy) a referral through the Channel Process may be made.

Procedures for parents / carers

If you are concerned about your child and/or their behaviour, we are here to help! We advise you do the following:

- ✓ Listen calmly while they talk to you.
- ✓ Don't try to 'put words in their mouth'. Give them time to explain properly what has happened.
- ✓ Although you may feel angry it is important that you don't try to deal with the issue yourself - there may be more to it.
- ✓ Contact school as soon as you can to discuss your concerns with a member of staff.
- ✓ Try to include your child in every step so they feel like they have some control.
- ✓ Continue to support your child and praise them for talking to you about their worries.
- ✓ Work with school to help and support your child, keep school informed of any changes.
- ✓ Encourage your child to talk to someone in school. This may be any member of staff that they trust, Place 2 Be or they may self-refer to Place 2 Talk.

Parents who have reported allegations of bullying will;

Have the opportunity to discuss the concerns with a member of staff.

Be reassured that the allegations will be investigated and the pupils involved supported / sanctioned.

Be kept informed of actions taken to support their child and to deal with the bully, and are advised about appropriate action they may take to support their child.

Parents of children who bully are informed and are made aware of what action the school will take when bullying is reported. School will make suggestions about appropriate action on behalf of the parent.

Procedures for staff and strategies for dealing with bullying

- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated.
- A clear account of the incident to be recorded on Cjoms.
- Seek views of "victim".
- Seek views of "bully".
- Seek views of any witnesses.
- Pupils will be listened to seriously.
- Premature assumptions will not be made.
- Bring both parties together to discuss the incident and its effects.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled with the issues discussed and resolved.
- Set out responsibilities for behaviour, supportive to both parties.
- Involve peer groups if appropriate.
- Inform parents if appropriate.
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case/relationship will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Serious incidents will be dealt with by a senior member of staff, as with the Behaviour Support Policy.
- In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- We will use mediation, reconciliation, counselling and, where necessary, consequences to resolve the problem
- Seek further support/advice if necessary.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- A record of allegations and actions is kept.
- 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. This will be done in a diplomatic way, with no names mentioned, purely to raise awareness generally around appropriate behaviours.

Prevention

We endeavour to prevent and address bullying by enabling our children to understand and identify with the feelings of others and by setting clear and consistent expectations of considerate behaviour.

We do this through:

- Work in PSHCE and RSE
- Develop children's emotional literacy to enable them to communicate worries and concerns effectively
- Provide a safe environment where children feel confident to speak openly
- Assemblies
- Children's voice
- Developing children's knowledge of their rights and responsibilities
- The work of Place 2 Be
- The ethos and culture of our school
- Positive behaviour management in and out of the classroom

Staff

We also take any incidents of bullying against adults very seriously and will act accordingly. Any misuse of networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, MSN etc.) or misuse of technology which could be construed as bullying of staff (by other staff, parents or children) and will be investigated fully and dealt with within the guidance included in this policy and the Online Safety Policy.

Signs and Symptoms

Many children and young people do not speak out when being bullied and may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. The list below is not exhaustive and not all points apply to the age and circumstances of the children at Cotsford Primary School, however, all adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Has a desire to remain with adults
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Uses excuses to miss school (headache, stomach ache etc)
- Begins to suffer academically
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises or shows signs of being in a fight
- Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings

- Changes their eating habits (stops eating or over eats)
- Goes to bed earlier than usual
- Is unable to sleep
- Wets the bed
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives unlikely excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a text message or email is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. All school staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The school will review this policy every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. School constantly reviews incidents and seeks views from children and parents alike. We carry out a survey annually with children and parents and the results are collated and shared with staff, parents and governors. We then take this information forward and implement changes when necessary.

The Policy is available online and we see it as very much a working document which can be amended if there are relevant changes to make.

Some useful contact numbers:

CHILDLINE - 0800 11 11.

BULLYINGUK - 0808 800 2222

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/bullying

Appendices

Appendix 1: Procedures for dealing with allegations of bullying

Appendix 1
Procedures for dealing with allegations of bullying

