



Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed March 2017

Date Approved by Governors:

Next Review Date:

Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

At Merlin Top Primary Academy, 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. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a **TELLING** academy. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

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. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

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 governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is. All governors, 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.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist abuse, verbal or written
- Religious or cultural abuse, verbal or written
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic/transgender because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of social media; Facebook, twitter, email etc.
- Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
- Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities

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
- 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)
- 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
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (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 & jumpy when a cyber-message is received

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

Responding to bullying (see also 'How we respond to bullying' on page 5)

1. Pupils must report bullying incidents to staff
2. The incident will be recorded by the Class teacher or Senior Leader
3. Parents are informed and maybe asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) will be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place
2. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
3. In serious cases internal or even external exclusion will be considered
4. Bullies will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

We use different methods to help children prevent bullying. We have:

- a set of school rules (Respect, Reflection, Resilience and Responsibility)
- a behaviour log to record and monitor all forms of bullying
- a speak out box in the hall and in the Phase 2 corridor where children can write down their worries
- time set aside each week for talking about relationships and falling out
- special assemblies each term about behaviour and anti-bullying
- regular surveys with pupils and parents to get their views on how well we are dealing with bullying
- a special week each year to think about bullying

Bullying Outside School and Cyber-Bullying

This policy relates to children's behaviour when in school, when supervised by staff outside school e.g. when on school trips or at sports fixtures and when in extended school services including breakfast or after school clubs.

However the rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a much wider audience.

At Merlin Top Primary Academy the issue of cyber-bullying is explicitly tackled by learning about internet safety; however we recognise that this is a fast developing area and that we need to remain vigilant and be prepared to respond to a possible increase in incidents in the future potentially against both pupils and staff.

If members of the school community are involved in cyber-bullying against pupils, for example:- Sending abusive or threatening email or text messages, posting malicious or abusive comments on a social media site, filming or passing on inappropriate material via mobile phone - then the Principal does have the power 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site', which could lead to involving external agencies such as the police where appropriate.

Adult Bullying

From time to time, adults behave inappropriately towards each other. If any parent feels that they are being treated inappropriately within our school community, they must report this to a member of staff immediately. On occasions, when a parent suspects another child of inappropriate behaviour towards their own child, they try to take matters into their own hands.

This can result in:

- parents approaching other parents in groups
- inappropriate verbal exchanges in front of pupils
- a breakdown in communication

If children are experiencing problems with other children, parents must not try to take matters into their own hands. Parents confronting other parents or pupils in the playground is not acceptable and could be viewed as bullying. The school should be informed immediately of any concerns so that we may intervene to resolve the problem to ensure our school community remains a happy, safe and enjoyable place where everyone wants to be.

Incidents of bullying outside the school's premises

Although schools are not directly responsible for bullying off the school premises, we would still encourage victims "not to suffer in silence".

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345

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

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 020 8772 9900

Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk

Visit the Kidscape website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.

We acknowledge Kidscape as the framework of our Anti-bullying Policy. Their model policy has been adapted to fit our own anti-bullying practices.

How we respond to bullying

